

AUGUST 2015

OU helps empower educators through national Teach to Lead initiative

Leaders in Oakland University's School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) are engaged in a national movement to help teachers revolutionize student learning by taking an active role in building- and district-level reform. The Teach to Lead initiative, created in 2014 by the United States Department of Education and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, is a grassroots effort to cultivate new ways for teachers to promote student success through leadership activity. The Galileo Institute for Teacher Leadership at Oakland is one of nearly 70 sponsor organizations that are helping teachers develop and lead innovative programs for students in their districts.

Cynthia Carver, associate professor of education, has helped coordinate Oakland's involvement with Teach to Lead. She explained that sponsorship does not involve financial support, but rather, allows Oakland faculty members to "serve as ambassadors and spread the word" about how teachers can become part of the Teach to Lead movement. OU leaders also provide support and technical assistance to local schools and districts interested

in supporting and growing local capacity for teacher leadership.

Through the SEHS Galileo Institute for Teacher Leadership, Oakland is partnering with nearby Auburn Elementary School, in the Avondale School District. Over the past several months, Auburn teachers have attended two Teach to Lead summits, joining educators from around the country, to brainstorm ideas for enhancing student learning through teacher-led projects. Through these experiences, Auburn teachers developed a plan for expanding their Teacher Lab, a program that enables teachers to observe each other's teaching methods across a range of disciplines, including music and art. They are also in the midst of expanding their Earth Force program, which blends elementary education with civic engagement.

"In the Earth Force curriculum, students learn math, science, social studies and other disciplines by learning about their own communities," said Dr. Timothy Larrabee, the OU professor who oversees the program. "This is then tied to a community project chosen and led by the students. The teacher

serves as a facilitator, providing access to resources the students need to learn about their communities and carry out their community improvement plans."

The Teach to Lead summits – three to date – have spawned hundreds of ideas for giving teachers a central role in providing student-focused learning opportunities. Organizers recently chose 10 ideas to represent the broad spectrum, including one from Marshall Middle School, in Marshall, Mich. With the help of representatives from the Avondale School District and Oakland's Galileo Institute, school officials refined their plan, which consists of creating data profiles of each student in order to identify and better meet the needs of the school's lowest performers.

"The Teach to Lead initiative empowers teachers to make schools more vibrant places for students and their teachers, which is at the heart of our work at the Galileo Institute for Teacher Leadership," Dr. Carver said. "When teachers are encouraged and allowed to exercise leadership and influence, everyone wins."

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Oakland University student says in Cuba I discovered a lot

Upon her return to the United States after a recent study trip to Cuba, Oakland University sophomore Annabelle Chidiac said “I went there to discover and discovered a lot,” Despite the recent thawing of diplomatic relations between the two countries, educational trips are one of the few exemptions for which Americans can obtain travel visas to visit the island nation.

Chidiac had no predisposition about the country, it’s people or customs. The sociology course taught her Cuban history, culture and the native language.

Younger Cubans, Chidiac said, have a more favorable and optimistic view of relations with their neighbors to the north. “It was interesting to go there with an American perspective of what Cubans think of us. The reality is, a lot of people like America.”

Cubans are very educated, Chidiac said, adding she noticed their buildings and architecture are very different from what is seen in the United States. She also remarked at what seemed to be a “liberal” Cuban government in terms of social issues like health care, gender and sexuality.

Chidiac stayed in Havana with a host family, from whom she picked up a great deal of the language.

“I used my Spanish dictionary a lot,” she said. “Living with them and being forced to speak it taught me a lot. ... We spoke no English.”

Chidiac said she is still in contact with her host hosts, who offered her a “very warm welcome.” Born in France of Lebanese descent Chidiac said she contradicted many Cubans’ perception of Americans’ appearance. “To them, Americans are all blond-haired, blue-eyed Europeans,” she said.

Chidiac said she was happy to return home after the life-changing experience, but would welcome the opportunity to return to Cuba.

Grizzly unveils new way to chauffeur kids



A 2012 study found that one third of parents spend between 10 and 49 hours driving their child around to their activities. Now in 2015, Oakland County native and Oakland University student Aireal Taylor has created a solution.

Taylor had to come up with her own product for an assignment in a class she was taking at Oakland Community College.

After a brainstorm session with her husband, she came up with "Kidz Cab."

Kidz Cab is a transportation service for parents who don't have the time to drive their kids to various activities. Kidz Cab will take care of transporting children anywhere they need to go.

“I started thinking maybe I can do this in real life,” Taylor, founder and CEO said. She put those ideas to action and hosted the Kidz Cab launch event in Bloomer Park in West Bloomfield Township this past Saturday. The event served as her introduction to Oakland County, where she will begin her company’s service.

Maintaining their child’s safety is a big concern for parents. Kidz Cab has a variety of safety measures to ensure that parents are comfortable. Every vehicle is equipped with safety seats for any aged child. Parents won’t have to provide their own for their child either.

Kidz Cab is also using technology to ease parents’ concerns. Parents can monitor the trip with a real-time map and vehicle tracker and will receive a destination alert when their child reaches their designated stop.

“I think it’s going to benefit the adults in a huge way,” Taylor said. “One of my big taglines is ‘What will you do with your time?’ Many parents spend so much time in the car chauffeur their kids around.”

STATE AND NATIONAL HEADLINES

Policymakers studying the problem of paying for college

From town hall gatherings on the presidential campaign trail in New Hampshire to hearing rooms at state capitols and city halls across the country, identifying solutions to the problem of college affordability and student debt has become not just an educational challenge, but an economic one.

As the cost of attending college climbs, a four-year education at a public or private university slips further out of reach for many families, according to experts, which can negatively impact not just a student's long-term earning potential, but growth in burgeoning business sectors.

Underlying the question of affordability is another issue: How do policymakers make college seem like an attainable goal for low-income families?

Both topics could heat up on Beacon Hill this fall when the Committee on Higher Education plans a hearing on dozens of bills focused on investing in higher education and making college more affordable.

State House News Service
August 13, 2015

Clinton to offer plan on paying college tuition without needing loans

With Americans shouldering \$1.2T in student loan debt, and about eight million of them in default, Hillary Rodham Clinton on Monday will propose major new spending by the federal

government that would help undergraduates pay tuition at public colleges without needing loans.

Mrs. Clinton does not go as far as her Democratic presidential opponents in promising to end tuition debt altogether, since her plan would still require a family contribution that could involve parents taking out loans to cover some tuition.

But her proposals, which would cost \$350 billion over 10 years and include new refinancing options for those already struggling with debt, are an aggressive response to what many Americans — Democrats and Republicans alike — see as a worsening crisis forcing young adults to move back home with their parents and struggle to get out from under repayment bills.

The New York Times
August 10, 2015

Texas Higher Education Board Wants 60 Percent More College Degrees by 2030

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) rolled out an ambitious college and career plan that intends to boost college degrees and/or other post-secondary credentials in the state 60 percent by 2030.

Called *60x30TX*, the 15-year plan by the Texas Education Higher Education Board targets Texans aged 25 to 34 as the demographic the coordinating board wants to see an increase in higher education certification.

The strategic plan seeks for 550,000 students to complete a certificate, associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree from an institution of higher education in Texas. Its other core goals are that all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills; and undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions.

Breitbart
August 5, 2015

Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board adopts plan to let lagging colleges keep funds

A plan that would allow Arkansas colleges and universities whose students aren't progressing toward graduation to keep state funds they are at risk of losing has been adopted by the state's Higher Education Coordinating Board.

A policy approved Friday would permit colleges and universities to develop improvement plans to address their deficiencies. If the plans are approved, the institutions will receive part or all of their funding that is tied to students' progress, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported Saturday (<http://bit.ly/1V1I9ce>).

“For an institution that doesn't meet the minimum performance score, clearly there



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State and National Headlines *CONTINUED*

are some issues there that have caused that low score," said Brett Powell, director of the state's Department of Higher Education. "For an institution in that situation, to take additional funding away probably exacerbates an issue that's already occurred. So we're suggesting that that funding ... be set aside."

The Republic
August 1, 2015

Purdue generates more patents than Harvard, Duke

Say, hypothetically, a refinery spilled ammonia into Lake Michigan. Emergency responders would have to go out, take samples in bottles and send them to a lab, which would need anywhere between 48 hours and seven days to determine how badly drinking water had been contaminated.

But a research team at Purdue University Calumet devised a way for them to know on the spot, in five minutes or so, how much ammonia contamination existed.

NWI.com
August 16, 2015