Dear Supporters,

Spring has sprung. Each spring on our campus is signaled by the blossoming of the many dogwood trees on our Oakwood University campus. At our recent Alumni Weekend, so many of our returning Alumni commented on the beauty of the grounds and the colorful landscaping that brought about so many memories of their days at Oakwood.

Another overarching memory that continues to stay with our Alumni is the lasting impact of the Oakwood Experience. You will hear me talking about this experience more and more in the coming days, because it is one of the unforgettable memories that bring the Oakwood alumni, students, faculty, and staff into a common unity.

Here is my effort to briefly describe what that experience has meant to me:
The Oakwood Experience impacts our entire lifetime; it lasts, not simply for four years, but for 40 years! It is academically rigorous and emotionally gratifying—faith is integrated with learning. The Oakwood Experience is set in the American South, and it transcends the South. It arises from the blood-soaked sod of a former slave plantation. It flows east, and west, and north, and around the world—wherever Oakwoodites are found! Its music is bathed in the rhythms of black-church spirituality. The Oakwood Experience is connected by lasting friendships and joyous reunions. Caring teachers, loving staff, wonderful students—the experience spans generations. It is God-appointed, faith-grounded, and service-centered. The experience puts God first! It is transformational, inspirational, exhilarating and stimulating. To know it is to love it! And to love it is to never leave it. The Oakwood Experience—it’s you and me and ‘we’.

Enjoy this Spring edition of PFYI . . .

Leslie N. Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., MBA
President, Oakwood University
Oakwood University is in the midst of an exciting and highly interactive strategic planning process. When completed, it will cover a period of 13 months of strategic visioning and planning.

The process began with a Strategic Actioning Session (SAS) September 18-20, 2012. Under the guidance of Marble Leadership Partners, Inc., a group of 60 Oakwood stakeholders participated in three days of engaged reading, conversations, visioning and, finally, decision-making. Representation from students, faculty, staff, administration, trustees, alumni, and our K-18 and civic communities provided widely varying perspectives. Those decisions received unanimous support. The process was inspiring and the outcomes have helped to fuel a continuing conversation on campus.

The momentum started by the SAS has been followed up by a series of meetings in which stakeholders across campus have been given opportunities to provide feedback on each of the following areas:

- The Mission and Vision of the University
- Our Values
- Our Goals
- The strategic initiatives that should become the priorities for the next several years.

On April 1 and 2, President Pollard convened a lock-in of selected administrators to review all the stakeholders’ feedback, to recommend a Mission Statement (retooled, possibly) and institutional values, and to select from the SAS those decisions which remain Oakwood’s priorities.

An updated Strategic Plan will continue to develop over the next several months, through: Board of Trustees’ feedback (April); on-campus document review and feedback sessions (May and August); and a final Board vote (October).
Helen Miller Kanion was born in 1915 to Elder Henry and Mrs. Elizabeth Miller. Elder Miller is considered one of the pioneer black Adventist ministers and Mrs. Miller was the first full-time black bible worker for the Mid-America Union Conference. The Millers’ were strong believers in Adventist Christian education.

Helen was educated in Adventist schools from kindergarten through college. She was enrolled in Oakwood Academy in 1930 and graduated from Oakwood Junior College. Helen always wanted to be a nurse but due to racial barriers at that time, she could not do clinical nurse training in some Adventist hospitals. She instead enrolled in the School of Nursing at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee and graduated as a registered nurse (RN). After graduation, Helen remained in Nashville to work at Riverside Adventist Hospital. She soon decided to pursue further education and enrolled at Emmanuel Missionary College, now Andrews University, and completed her BSN degree.

Helen married William Kanion in 1949 and together they had four children: Will Kanion, Dr. Zavon Kanion (Jackie), Neva Kanion Artis (Dr. Keith) and Dr. Shaun Kanion (Vickie). All four children were educated in Adventist schools kindergarten through Oakwood College.

Of note, Neva Kanion Artis is a graduate of the first nursing class at Oakwood College and Helen’s daughters in law, Jackie and Vickie, are both nurses. Helen Miller Kanion’s commitment to health care and service to others has passed through her children to her grandchildren as Dr. Tiffany Kanion Simpson, Dr. Ashley Artis, and Dr. Adriene Artis are all physicians.

In addition, one other grandchild is a hospital administrator and another is currently enrolled in Meharry Medical College School of Dental Medicine. Nicholas Kanion is currently an Oakwood University sophomore.

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Helen Miller Kanion has lived a life of service to others. She was engaged in nursing for sixty years. As a member of the church in Kansas City, she has served as pianist, choir director, Sabbath school superintendent, Pathfinder Leader, camp meeting nurse and many other church tasks over the years. She now is enjoying retired life and keeping up with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren as much as she can.

To honor Helen Miller Kanion’s love of Oakwood University, Christian education and her commitment to a life of service to others through a career in health care, Dr. Zavon and Mrs. Jackie Kanion have established the Helen Miller Kanion Scholarship. Their initial gift of one hundred thousand dollars is to assist in the education of future health care providers who have the noble goal of a life of service to others.
PROBLEM AWARENESS:
The Sodexo Dining Campus Student Surveys, done once each semester, had plummeted to an abysmal 17% level at “the Café” in spring 2011 – against a national 45% norm – before Mike Beutel came to Oakwood as general manager for Sodexo, our outsourced dining services company.

PROCESSES’ EXECUTION:
First, Beutel conducted needs-analysis revealed that the cause of the low satisfaction rate was lack of leadership out on the floor during peak meal times; overseeing floor operations was key to improving customer satisfaction.

Additionally, he stressed the importance of looking at the operation through the customers’ eyes. Next was customer service in-service opportunities for the workers. The cafeteria and market push the SET strategy which includes “A smile, eye contact, and a thank you. All of these details make our dining areas a welcoming and hospitable environment for students. Sodexo sees feedback as a very important tool for great customer service.”

Then, a Food Service Committee was created using USM students that recruit freshman, sophomores, junior, and seniors that met Beutel monthly, to provide feedback on the simple things that improve the dining experience for all students.

PRODUCTS’ AFFIRMATION:
• Customer Satisfaction Scores, Spring 2011 - Cafe - 17%, Market - 46%;
• Fall 2011 - Cafe - 31%, Market - 49%;
• Spring 2012 - Cafe - 40%, Market - 50%; and
• Fall 2012 - Cafe - 55%, Market - 91%!

Finally, Madison County Weekly Restaurant Health Ratings Best Restaurant Health Scores (2/15/13):
• Sodexo/Oakwood College Market 7000 Adventist Blvd (90)
• Sodexo Cafeteria at Oakwood 7000 Adventist Blvd (94)
All accredited Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities are expected by the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges and Universities (AAA) to have a Spiritual Master Plan. This plan identifies the spiritual goals and outcomes of the institution and how the institution plans to assess them.

On March 24, 2013, President Pollard and Dr. Howard Weems, Special Assistant to President for Spiritual Life, convened a “Spiritual Life Retreat” to revamp and update OU’s SMP, utilizing current LifeCore data. Dr. Garland Dulan, Education and Social Science Dean Dr. James Mbyirukira, Faculty Development AVP Dr. Prudence Pollard and OSL’s Pollard, Pearson and Sauls spent two days together at the Marriott Shoals in Florence, Alabama reading through research data, analyzing the master plan, and establishing programs, goals, outcomes, and assessment measures.

The result was the development of a fine-tuned document that will assist the institution in executing its spiritual mission.
Oakwood University launches $9M Capital Campaign’s first step

A totally renovated Carter Hall freshman women’s residence and an expanded Ford Hall facility to include a re-constituted communication department and new media center to initiate the Oakwood University Broadcasting Network, will serve as the first-phase projects of OU’s $9M capital campaign.

A capital campaign is a time-limited effort by a nonprofit organization to raise significant dollars for a specific project; often, the money raised is to fund the acquisition, construction, or renovation of a building (source: About.com).

“As we seek ways to enhance the Oakwood University Experience*, the Board of Trustees and the Administration have approved a number of capital plans to enrich the lives of current and future Oakwood University students,” explained President Dr. Leslie N. Pollard. “We believe the Building on the Past: Framing the Future Campaign is the first step in a series of plans to upgrade and modernize the current buildings on the campus and revitalize our mission.”

Miss Kisha Norris, Advancement & Development Executive Director, outlined the first-phase projects as:

1. Bessie Carter Hall, built in 1966 to house the growing female population in the late 1970’s, will be renovated completely – a $5.5 million project.

During this 12-month restoration freshman women, housed there traditionally, will be

“Go ye into all the world and preach” was Jesus Christ’s commission to His disciples. As followers of Christ, the Oakwood University Office of Spiritual Life (OSL) plans to do likewise under the branding OU4HHIM:

- Oakwood University 4 (corners of the Earth); and
- HHIM (His Hands in Mission).

According to Associate Chaplain Ronald Pollard, the OSL program includes local and national mission experiences for students, faculty and staff as well as community supporters who wish to participate.

The places chosen for the mission service include:

- **Memphis** - Because already churches are there to connect readily with Oakwood, as well as its own historical importance to African American experience.
- **Orlando** - Because of important contacts already made during the latest national youth congress held by BAYDA.
- **Kenya** - Because of previous experiences with a ministry formerly known as “heritage missions.” There has been much success during the past 13 years of mission work in Nairobi and Mombasa.
- **Madagascar** - Since it is part of the faculty and staff development extended to OU employees.

The goals of this spiritual experience are:

- **Evangelism** - Several Revivals and Youth Rallies are planned for Mombasa.
relocated to the Wade Hall residence hall, as the university will lease out apartments in University Place, adjacent to OU on Wynn Drive, to accommodate the upperclass women housed normally at Wade;

2. H.E. Ford Science Hall was built in 1954, for teaching quantitative sciences; since 1971, it has housed the student center.

Soon, it will house the reconstituted communication department whose offices, studios, labs, and classrooms are now scattered across the campus; and

3. A newly-constructed Media Center will become the newest addition to our historic campus, to be erected between Ford Hall and the newly-renovated Cunningham Hall on the campus mall.

“Not only will the Media Center be a learning environment for our communication students, but we plan also to begin ‘to tell our story’ by establishing the Oakwood University Broadcasting Network – ‘OUBN,’ as we’ll called it informally.

“This Oakwood story of God-ordained ministry is something that needs to be spread to the corners of the Earth. We believe that OUBN will serve as the first step in blanketing the gospel message to places that others cannot reach,” President

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the Gospel…”

- **Community Service** - Distribution of clothing and teaching of children at orphanages will be provided.
- **Slum Cleanup** - The slums of Kibera and Tehuda will receive hope through preaching, food, and clothing supply.

“All may participate through prayer. Many may donate funds to these initiatives as we have the present reality of raising funds for students and projects,” Chaplain Pollard explained.

Very shortly, he continued, the website will be operating with needed information. There will also be brochures and information videos.