

Monday, Mar 20, 2017

## OU to host World Autism Awareness Day event

On Sunday, April 2, the Oakland University community will join a worldwide movement to mark **World Autism Awareness Day** by bringing blue light to the Elliott Tower. This is Oakland's third year hosting an event on its campus to highlight autism as a growing global health priority.

This year, the **Oakland University Center for Autism** (OUCA) will be holding a free family event for those on the Autism Spectrum on the second floor of the Engineering Center Atrium at 6:15 p.m. A short walk to the Elliott Tower will begin at 7:30 p.m. to light the Elliott Tower with bright blue lights.

The OUCA invites community members, students, faculty and staff to gather at the tower wearing blue. This event is free for all families and will include light refreshments, games for children and adults, guest speakers, information tables and a blue balloon ceremony.

"For most Michigan families, April 2 is spring break, when folks plan on having fun and taking a break from our long winter," said Chaturi Edrisinha, Ph.D., director of research for the OUCA and coordinator of the event. "But for families that have someone with ASD, there are very few places they can go to have fun, where their loved one will be welcomed and not just accommodated. We want our families to know that OU welcomes them with open arms."

The Light It Up Blue campaign was created in 2007 by Autism Speaks, the world's largest autism advocacy organization, following the UN's adoption of April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day. Each year since its inception, Light It Up Blue participants show support by wearing blue. In addition, iconic landmarks are lit up in blue light to spread awareness and understanding of autism, celebrate unique tales of people with autism and bring attention to the needs of those with autism.

For more information, contact Brent Fragnoli at (248) 370-2179 or email [ouca@oakland.edu](mailto:ouca@oakland.edu).



*The Elliott Tower will be awash in blue light when Oakland University celebrates World Autism Awareness Day on Sunday, April 2.*