

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Career Tool group recognized with 2017 OU Team Award

A team of Oakland University administrative professionals, students and alumni have pooled efforts over the last several years to help both prospective and current students get a better idea of the careers they would like to pursue and the academic paths that will best position them to find success in those careers.

The strategic, comprehensive and well-vetted work of the Career Tool group has won them the 2017 Oakland University Team Award. This honor was recently created to recognize significant contributions that support strategic plan initiatives or strengthen and improve the university's effectiveness as a service-oriented institution.

Development of the **Oakland University Career Tool** – overseen by individuals in University Communications and Marketing (UC&M), the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs – has given students a one-stop, online destination providing detailed information about OU's 130 undergraduate majors, as well as many academic minors and related graduate programs.



The Career Tool development team.

“This tool touches all areas of student life at OU, so working in collaboration with other departments to deliver compelling content and important calls to action – all within a pleasing and interactive framework – was critical to ensure its success,” said Todd Nucci, director of digital and web services and a Career Tool team member.

In addition to program descriptions, degree checklists, school and department contact information and career ideas, some Career Tool pages also offer information about job salaries, important professional organizations and related academic majors and minors.

On a broad level, the team focused its efforts on supporting the Oakland University 2025 Strategic Plan goal of fostering student success through “a robust teaching and learning environment and comprehensive student services.”

Within that context, the team's focus has been to ensure broad functionality within a user-friendly online environment. The team has also created a biannual review process to ensure sustainability, and has begun discussing a second phase of the project that will focus on updating to expand and enhance the user experience.

Sara Webb, director of the First Year Advising Center and a Career Tool team member, said, “We had not found any examples of a comprehensive resource like this before. It's now easy for prospective and current students to have immediate access to degree and career planning information all in one site. Feedback from students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.”

In addition to Nucci and Webb, members of the Career Tool team include:

- **Brittani Hobbs**, First Year Advising Center
- **Jon-Paul Bakaric**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Kathleen VanHarken**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Jason Willis**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Evan Zusy**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Gregg Phelps**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Kelly Smith**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Lauryn Roycraft**, University Communications and Marketing
- **Shane Lewis**, Undergraduate Admissions
- **Wayne Thibodeau**, Career Services
- **Lauren Creed**, former graduate assistant, currently in School of Health Sciences
- **Bani Bordolai**, former graduate assistant, currently in School of Business Administration

- **Jack Reynolds**, former student employee and alum
- **Alex Kissel**, current student and former student employee
- **Lizzi Tyrpak**, former graduate assistant and alum

Each member of the Career Tool team will receive a Team Award plaque, an invitation to a president-sponsored luncheon celebration and formal recognition at a Board of Trustees meeting. The group will also be formally recognized at the Exemplary Employee Award Recognition and Celebration, scheduled for Monday, June 12. [View the Career Tool.](#)