



C O M E R I C A

H O M E F R O N T



Since 2001, Oakland University's Entrepreneurship Institute has served more than 7,000 students from Detroit and the surrounding communities. During the Entrepreneurship Summer Camp, area teens participate in team-building exercises, attend classes and work in small groups to develop business plans for their products or services.

Oakland University, Comerica partnership paves way for future entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs are the backbone of America's economy.

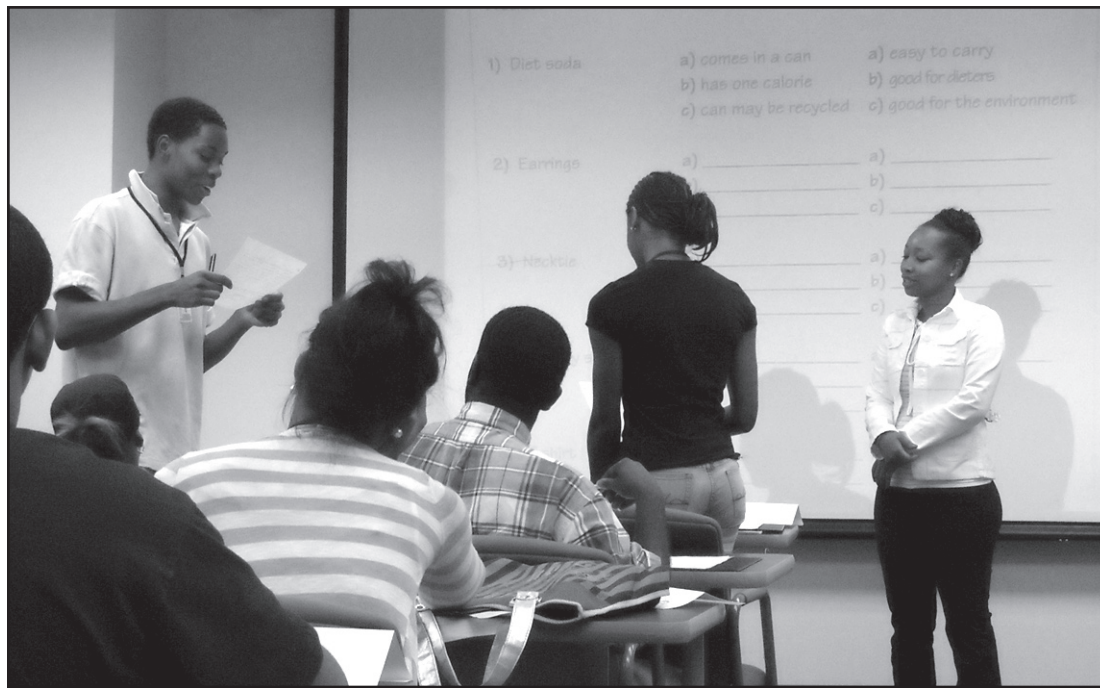
According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses create 75 percent of the net new jobs in our economy and pay more than 44 percent of the nation's private payroll.

For America's economy to rebound, now more than ever, entrepreneurship must be encouraged and existing and future entrepreneurs must have access to essential tools that will help ensure future success.

And thanks to Oakland University's Entrepreneurship Institute, promising area teens have experienced what it takes to run a successful business, paving the way for the next generation of entrepreneurs in our region.

Since 2001, the Entrepreneurship Institute, in Oakland University's School of Business Administration, has served more than 7,000 students from Detroit and the surrounding communities through a variety of mentorship programs. The program was bolstered in 2004 when the Comerica Charitable Foundation pledged a five-year, \$250,000 commitment to help develop the Entrepreneurship Summer Camp.

"Comerica is proud to support this program because it effectively reaches students, who in most cases would be first-generation college graduates," said Caroline Chambers, president of the Comerica Charitable Foundation. "It exposes them to the real possibilities of building a business from idea to reality through development of



a real business plan and gives them invaluable connections to business leaders who serve as mentors in guiding their business plan development.

"Comerica colleagues serve among those mentors and it's a wonderful opportunity for them as well, to support a very worthwhile program."

Each year the Entrepreneurship Summer Camp brings together approximately 25 high school students with local business leaders and OU students from the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) organization.

During this year's camp, held July 7-17, the teens participated in team-building exercises, attended classes and worked in small groups to develop business plans for their products or services. The students then pre-

sented their plans to a panel of judges, who chose the top three business ideas.

"Many of these students think about going into business, but they don't know much about business practices yet," said Wayne Blizman, director of the Entrepreneurship Institute.

"At the camp they gain experience in business development, market research and sales. The exposure the students get to the academics of entrepreneurship and the interfacing they do with local business leaders is excellent. In addition, students gain a glimpse of what college life is like, attending classes and living in the dorms for two weeks under the mentorship of OU students."

The Entrepreneurship Summer Camp primarily tar-

gets high school students who will be entering their senior year in the fall. Each student who completes the camp receives a \$500 scholarship toward attending the college or university of their choice. Those who attend Oakland University's School of Business Administration receive a matching award of \$500. Winners of the top three business plans also receive additional scholarships ranging from \$500 for first place to \$100 for third place.

Applications for the program typically go out around March and are sent to schools and other places of learning. For additional information on the Oakland University Summer Entrepreneurship Camp, please contact Wayne Blizman at 248-370-4091 or blizman@oakland.edu

Comerica Profile: Rachel Edwards White

Banking center manager nears career milestone

Closing in on her 10-year anniversary with Comerica Bank, Rachel Edwards White likes to keep the focus on her customers and colleagues.

"I manage a staff of eight," said Edwards White, who joined the bank in September 1999 and currently manages Comerica's Ann Arbor-Lilley banking center in Plymouth.

"My primary duties include providing financial need assessments, managing a retail and business portfolio, executing sales processes that retain and grow the banking center deposit relationships, and managing day-to-day operations.

"I enjoy helping people and informing them about different accounts and services that can help them meet their financial goals. My typical week includes daily debriefs of sales progress, managing customer and staff requests, conference calls, and recommending accounts and services to meet customers needs.

"I pride myself in providing exceptional customer service."

Away from her office the Detroit resident is the youth chairperson for the National Council of Negro Women-Detroit Section and a board trustee for the Michigan Interfaith Trust Fund. She also is a member of the Urban Financial Services Coalition.

"My family supports me in all of my endeavors," said Edwards White, who earned a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Michigan and is pursuing an MBA from Walsh College.

"Having a supportive husband and a 4-year-old son who enjoys — most of the time — attending many of my after-work meetings or activities is a true blessing.

"I am successful because I am surrounded by family and friends who love me and continue to encourage me."



Rachel Edwards White

Making A Difference

Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation

The power to uplift a community resides within its people, as Angela Reyes demonstrated

The Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation's (DHDC) mission is to make a difference by creating life-changing opportunities for youth and their families. Located at 1211 Trumbull, DHDC addresses human needs throughout the community it serves by providing innovative and culturally-appropriate programs and services, primarily in Southwest Detroit.

In 1997, Angela Reyes founded DHDC, a non-profit organization, from her living room because she was "tired of burying children." To reduce the violence, DHDC's initial program, formed after forging a truce with the leaders of several rival gangs, encouraged the gang members to "retire" in return for jobs in local Hispanic-owned manufacturing companies.

Since its founding, DHDC has grown to include a wide range of comprehensive, bilingual services.

"We are promoting a robust regional economy through our educational programs and Community Technology Center," said Reyes.

"And we support a thriving arts and cultural community through our Urban Arts Academy which provides young people with creative outlets in music, video and art, which also serves to amplify their voices.

"Through our collaborations DHDC has developed new ways of working together with partners from many sectors. Through these joint efforts we are working to address issues related to crime reduction, educational reform, health disparities and environmental justice."

One of the many organizations that Reyes and DHDC have developed relationships with in the community is Com-

erica Bank.

"DHDC provides unique services that are vital to a sustainable and flourishing community," said Comerica Vice President Monica Martinez, who heads the bank's Hispanic Business Initiative.

Martinez and bank colleagues representing the Initiative recently visited DHDC, as part of an "Extreme Makeover" event.

"I thought the makeover event was excellent," said Diane Renaud, Comerica Bank vice president of Corporate Marketing. "The benefit of our participation was that we were able to get our hands dirty and do the fundamental building and ground maintenance, so that the DHDC was empowered to spend their time on the true mission of their organization.

"It was a humbling experience to know that regardless of the changes we have all gone through in the banking industry, we are so fortunate compared to our neighbors right down the street, who are having much larger challenges.

"The day after the makeover event the DHDC hosted a memorial service for the son of one of their member families, who was caught in the middle of an unfortunate act of violence."

A goal of DHDC is to provide bilingual information and direct services to individuals through programs centered in the community. DHDC is successful by working together with the individual, the family, and related institutions such as schools, the judicial system and other organizations within the community.

For additional information, please call (313) 967-4880 or visit www.dhdc1.org.

Tomorrow's Leaders:

Highland Park student Brittney Edwards receives Comerica scholarship

Brittney Edwards, a 2009 graduate of Highland Park Community High School, was the recipient of a \$2,000 Comerica Scholarship. The award was earned through the Highland Park School District's Harvey C. Jackson Jr. Memorial Scholarship system, co-sponsored by the Mothers Club of Highland Park.

Edwards will attend Eastern Michigan University in the fall.

The Harvey C. Jackson Jr. Memorial Scholarship system memorializes the Highland Park School District's first African-American professional employee, a visiting teacher and counselor in the community's schools from 1941 until his death in 1967.

"Comerica is proud to do its part in supporting the Harvey C. Jackson Jr. Memorial Scholarship system," said Loretta Smith, Comerica Bank vice president of Public Affairs.

"In doing so, we honor the legacy and vision of a true community trailblazer, while making an investment in our future.

"We wish Brittney continued success at Eastern Michigan."



BRITNEY EDWARDS, a graduate of Highland Park Community High School, is presented a \$2,000 Comerica scholarship by Highland Park school board member Robert Davis.