

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Foundation & Alumni

..... AWARD-WINNING E-NEWSLETTER



MAY 2026

Owens Outstanding Graduates: Their Stories Begin With Your Support

Every May, Owens Community College celebrates the students who have gone above and beyond — not just in the classroom, but in life. This year's outstanding graduate class is no exception.

From a student who crossed three continents to earn her degree, to a nurse who returned to finish what she started after losing her father, to a culinary arts graduate who made himself a promise during a battle with cancer and spent 16 years keeping it, this year's graduates have stories that go far beyond a diploma.

They are first-generation college students, caregivers, veterans, parents and professionals who chose to invest in themselves and in the communities they serve.

Thanks in part to the support of donors like you, Owens is able to provide the programs, resources and environment that make these journeys possible.

Read the full stories of this year's outstanding graduates at owens.edu/success-stories and see for yourself what your support makes possible.



Goodwill CEO Amy Wachob Delivered Keynote at Owens' 60th Spring Commencement

Amy Wachob, president and CEO of Goodwill Industries of Northwest Ohio, delivered the keynote address at Owens Community College's 60th Spring Commencement — the first keynote speaker at the ceremony in seven years.

An Owens graduate, Wachob began her career with Goodwill in 1991 and was named president and CEO in November 2016. She brings more than 30 years of business leadership experience to the role.

Under her leadership, Goodwill has become a regional force addressing critical social challenges, including reentry support, homelessness, at-risk youth and the mental health and wellness of first responders.



Board of Trustees Celebrates Three Students for Academic and Community Excellence

At its May meeting, the Owens Community College Board of Trustees presented Certificates of Recognition to three students whose dedication to learning and service exemplifies the best of what Owens students offer.

Raiden Browning, a Social Work Transfer Pathway student, was honored for Exemplary Academic Achievement. His nominator praised his critical thinking, empathy and deep commitment to the values of the social work profession.

Chalisa Rocker, a psychology student and two-time student organization president, was recognized for Exceptional Student Leadership and Student Life Involvement. A spoken word artist, podcast host and youth mentor, Rocker brings her commitment to empowerment both on campus and throughout the Toledo community.

Emilia D'Amore, a Dental Hygiene graduate earning a 4.0 GPA in her program, received recognition for Extraordinary Community Engagement and Volunteerism. From oral cancer screenings at Toledo's Tent City to a medical mission trip to Guatemala, her service record is as broad as it is meaningful.



Conversations Podcast: A Career in Education with Dr. Veronica Motley

Dr. Dione D. Somerville welcomed Dr. Veronica Motley, superintendent of Sylvania Schools, to the latest episode of the Conversations podcast.

In this engaging and thoughtful discussion, Dr. Motley reflected on a 35-plus-year career in education -- starting in northeast Ohio and including a stop at the University of the Bahamas -- as she prepares for retirement. She shared insights from her time leading Sylvania Schools since 2020, highlighting a strong, tradition-rich community and the importance of instruction, teaching and learning.



The conversation also looked ahead, exploring how educators can help future-proof students in a rapidly changing world shaped by technology and AI. Dr. Motley emphasized resilience, reminding us that students are often more adaptable than we think.

She also spoke to the strength of the Owens–Sylvania Schools partnership, calling Owens “a gem” that meets students where they are and provides an affordable, accessible pathway to success.

Listen now: rss.com/podcasts/owensccconversations. Also available on Amazon, Apple, Google, iHeart Media and Spotify.



President's Blog: How Data and Goodwill Are Driving Owens Forward

Owens' work doesn't happen in isolation; it happens in partnership.

In Dr. Somerville's latest blog, she reflects on how data helps us better understand community needs and how trusted relationships across the region help transform insight into real impact. Together, data and goodwill are shaping how we strengthen student pathways and serve the northwest Ohio region.

Take a few minutes to read the blog and see how this work is helping guide Owens' future. [Read the President's latest blog here.](#)

Owens Celebrates 2026 Alumni Hall of Fame Class at Spring Commencement

Owens Community College celebrated the induction of four remarkable alumni into the 2026 Alumni Hall of Fame during Spring Commencement at the Huntington Center in downtown Toledo.

The day began with a special luncheon honoring the inductees before they were recognized in front of hundreds of graduating students and their families. Tom Daniels — Owens class of 1993 and Chair of the Alumni Hall of Fame Committee — led the introductions at the ceremony.

This year's inductees represent the extraordinary range of paths an Owens education can unlock. Andrew Kleopfer is a performing arts educator and theatre company founder. Ed Kubiak is a global technology leader who never stopped teaching at Owens. Dr. Nilgün Sezginis is a pioneering health information management program director at the University of Toledo. And Mark White is a career-technical education innovator who has spent 30 years shaping Ohio's workforce.

**Congratulations to all four honorees.
We are so proud to call you Owens alumni!**

Read their full stories at owens.edu/news-releases



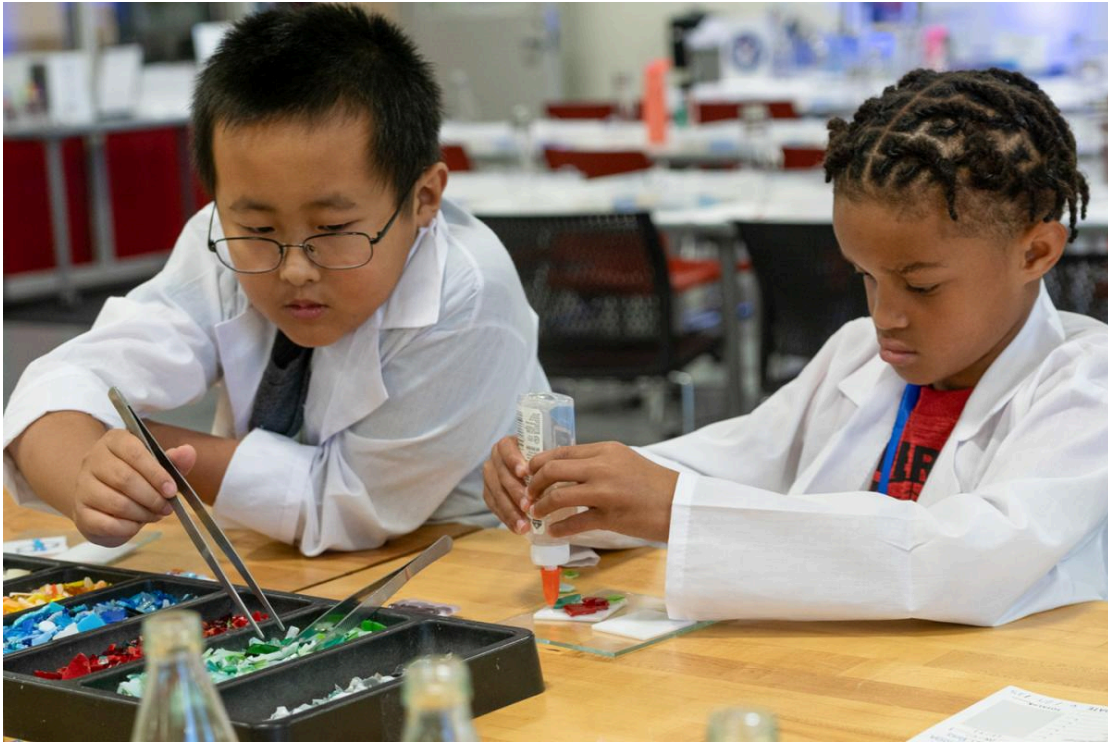
Tee Up for Students at the Foundation Golf Classic

The Owens Community College Foundation Golf Classic returns Monday, Sept. 21, at Belmont Country Club in Perrysburg and every swing supports student success.

Proceeds from this year's event will fund strategic college initiatives, including equipment purchases, program support and student scholarships. It's a direct investment in the students and programs that strengthen our region's workforce and communities.

Whether you're a seasoned golfer or simply looking for a great reason to get outside and connect with fellow supporters of Owens, the Golf Classic is a meaningful way to make a difference. Through the generosity of sponsors and participants, the Foundation is able to advance its mission and create lasting impact right here in our community.

Information on sponsorship opportunities or how to register for the event can be found at owens.edu/golf.



Learn, Grow and Play This Summer with Owens

Summer is the perfect time to invest in yourself or give your child an adventure they'll never forget. Through the Work and Play program at Owens Community College, there's something for everyone this season.

Adults can choose from a wide range of in-person and online options designed to fit a busy schedule. Whether you're looking to launch a new career, earn a short-term certificate or simply try something new, options include real estate and Microsoft Office training, robotics, photography, ceramics, phlebotomy, CPR and leadership development.

For younger learners, summer camps offer hands-on fun with a purpose. Kids can explore the world through the World Travelers camp, build coding skills with Scratch Jr. or dive into the brand-new AI and Machine Learning camp — a great introduction to one of today's most exciting fields.

Registration is open now. Browse hundreds of classes and camp options at owens.edu/camps.



Share Your Expertise. Shape a Student's Future.

Your career experience is more valuable than you might think, and Owens students are eager to learn from people who've been where they're headed.

The College offers a variety of ways to volunteer your time and talents. You might serve as a mock interviewer at Career Services or the School of Business, helping students

