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CONTACT: Michael Earl
(248) 858-7766, extension 221

OU STUDENTS WORK TO IMPROVE FAMILY SERVICES IN SE MICHIGAN

SIM internship puts students at forefront of social entrepreneurship

(PONTIAC, MI – August XX, 2008) Today's sputtering economy has an impact on everyone's lives. As individuals and companies scrutinize every dollar spent, funding nonprofits traditionally rely on is shrinking while economic pressures increase demand for services these organizations provide.

With the support of United Way for Southeastern Michigan, three local organizations -- Oakland Family Services (OFS), Macomb Family Services and Wayne County Family Services, and Family Services of Detroit -- formed the Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan (Alliance) to better address the behavioral health challenges confronting families and children. Two graduate students from Oakland University's School of Business Administration (SBA) are assisting in the consolidating of resources.

The Alliance will create new business opportunities, lower management and overhead costs, and make more money available for the organizations involved, so that they can provide better direct services to their clients.

"We estimate our efforts will achieve ongoing savings in the range of \$300,000 each year, increasing our ability to serve an additional 900 to 1,500 people per year," says Michael Earl, president and CEO, OFS, and managing partner of the Alliance. "This is the first time such an alliance has been created in Michigan and only the second time it has been done in the country."

Mohan Tanniru, dean of OU's SBA, says he is proud of the two grad students involved in this program, as they are placing themselves at the forefront of the social entrepreneurship movement.

"It's the kind of experience that benefits society, the state and our graduating students. Applying business skills in the nonprofit world is a win for everyone involved," says Tanniru.

Through the internship, Pallavi Inamdar, a recent MBA graduate, and Dean Przymusinski, a master's student in SBA's Information Technology Management program, have analyzed and made recommendations on how to integrate the three organization's business practices, including technology, billing, quality assurance, purchasing and more.

"The OU students brought a unique perspective, an incredible energy, and a very professional approach and execution to the analysis," says Earl. "What is most impressive is how they seamlessly integrated with a fast-moving, dynamic management team. We are very grateful to the Society for Information Management (SIM) for their sponsorship of this project."

The internship also proved invaluable for the students.

"I learned so much through this experience. I have done everything from task assignment to creating a project scope. I have been able to apply everything we learned in our project management class. I also learned how to effectively communicate with people, keep the project on time and manage deliverables," Inamdar says.

Przymusinski says that for him, the experience provided him with a great opportunity to talk and learn directly from industry experts.

The internship was made possible with support from SIM's Detroit Chapter.

About the Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan

Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan is a collaboration of family service agencies designed to improve the quality of behavioral health throughout the region. Family Service Inc. of Wayne County, Macomb Family Services, and Oakland Family Services serve as charter members of the alliance.

About Oakland University

Oakland University, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007, is recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as one of the nation's 83 doctoral/research universities. The university offers 129 bachelor's degree programs and 99 graduate degree and certificate programs. Dedicated to delivering a distinctive undergraduate experience complemented by the strength of its graduate offerings and research accomplishments, Oakland University is organized into the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Business Administration, Education and Human Services, Engineering and Computer Science, Health Sciences, Nursing, and The Honors College. Visit Oakland University on the Web at www.oakland.edu.

About OU's School of Business

Oakland University's School of Business Administration sustains its 40 years of educational excellence by remaining relevant to the ever-changing global business environment and providing students a distinctive educational experience that integrates classroom learning with real-world business experience and research. Its accredited business school offers undergraduate and graduate degrees as well as special programs that satisfy many educational interests while supporting the employment needs of the business community.

About SIM

Established in 1968, the Society for Information Management (SIM) is the premier network for IT leaders comprised of more than 3,600 members including CIOs, senior IT executives, prominent academicians, and foremost consultants. SIM is a community of thought leaders who share experiences, apply rich intellectual capital, and who explore future IT direction. Through its 31 chapters, SIM provides resources and programs inspired by IT leaders for IT leaders that enable CIOs to further develop their leadership capabilities and those of the emerging leaders in their organizations. SIM provides the collective voice to advocate policy and legislation on behalf of the IT profession.

About Oakland Family Services

Oakland Family Services is a private, nonprofit, human service agency providing prevention, education, support and treatment programs to families and individuals throughout Oakland County and Southeastern Michigan since 1921.