## AmeriCorps

## Oakland U students join up to fight violence

"I will get things done for America to make our people safer,

America to make our people sater, smarter and healthler. "I will bring Americans togeth-er to strengthen our communities. "Faced with spathy, I will take

action.
"Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.
"Faced with adversity, I will

"Faced with adversity, I will
persevere.
"I will carry this commitment
with me this year and beyond.
"I am an AmeriCorps Member.
And I'm going to get thing done."
So reads the pledge 40 Oakland
University students made in the
last few weeks to a new program
President Bill Clinton announced
in September.
Soon after Clinton created AmeriCorps more than a year ago, or

gammandons across the country be-gan applying for their programs to be listed under the head of and funded by this "domestic Peace Corns"

funded by this donester a con-Corps."

The Rochester Hills program is one of the nine in Michigan cho-sen from 45 applicants. A South-field program, scheduled to begin after the first of the year, was also

inful program, seather the state of the year, was also selected.

In Rochester Hills, Joyce Esterberg is in charge of the 40 partime volunteers, all Oakland University students, who began their year of AmeriCorps service last week. Oakland University is working in connection with seven other "partners," including the Oakland County Probate Court and Pontiac schools, to reduce youth violence in Pontiac.

"Part of reducing violence is providing alternatives to violence," Esterberg said.

To do this, kids need enriching programs after school, on weekends and during the summer, she said, something she hopes to provide through her AmeriCorps program.

"Barlosly, we're roins to try to your selection of the try we're roins to try to your selection."

said, something she hopes to provide through her AmeriCorps program.

"Basically, we're going to try to build up the saif image of the young people, help them feel more confident," Esterberg said.

In doing so, she believes their behavior will improve.

A main focus of these programs will consist of nonviolent conflict resolution, or learning to resolve things peacefully.

One form of conflict resolution AmeriCorps volunteers will employ in the junior high and high schools is the formation and use of peer groups. These groups, made up of students themselves, shift some of the judgment and disciplinary action from the hands of school administrators.

"Their peers are probably harder on them than the school personnel would be," Esterberg said.

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Southfield's program, called Circlenet, will have 20 volunteers,

"They don't want to have to go before their poers." Many of the programs volunteers will implement have not yet been created. Part of the program involves volunteers putting into action what they see needs to be done in the areas they are working in. In some cases, the students they work with will be lastrumental in the creation of programs as

well.

Volunteers got involved as part
of the first wave of this new national program for different rea-

For some, it was the positive in-fluence they knew they could have

For some, it was the positive influence they knew they could have
on others.

"I just wanted to help young
kids any way I could," said
Queshewn Baffield, an OU freshman from Detroit.

Baffield will teach kids bow to
work with computers through the
Boys and Girls Club.

For others, like second-year
student Jennifer Robinson from
Troy, it is the contacts they are
sure to make that may help them
get jobs in the future.

Jaimie Franchie, a volunteer
from West Bloomfield, thinks she
can gain experience by learning
from the kids she will be working
with at Camp Oakland, a facility
in Orford that houses children
with problems at home.

"I guess I'mm just hoping to
get them out of trouble," she
said.

Still for others, it is something
from their own lives that they

see the out of trouble," she said.

Still for others, it is something from their own lives that they know can help them help others.

Tanika Sikes, a freshman from Detroit, thinks her background will help her in her work with kids from dysfanctional families at the Sanctuary.

"I sort of come from a dysfunctional family, so I have experience with the problems they're going through," she said.

"As part of the AmeriCorps program, Oakland's 40 volunteers receive a living attend of about \$180 every two weeks and health benefits. At the end of their nine months of service, they will each be swarded more than \$2,000 in money to put toward education.

The program works so that even if volunteers do not have immediate plans for school when the program finiahes, the money will wait for them until they make such plans. The OU program also offers class credit for its volunteers.

who have not been chosen yet.
Unlike those in OU's program,
these participants will work fulltime and are not required to be
students. Full-time volunteers
receive the same living stipend as
part-time, but end up with double
the amount of education money.
Organizers are still receiving applications from area residents to

Volunteers will work with 100 young people who have development and shallities. The purpose of this AmeriCorps program is to provide each young person with a Big Brother or Big ster and a circle of friends."

"Our main goal is to help the young people become more inde-



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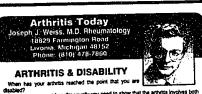
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A program to help "Keep The Heat On" this winter for needy people in the western suburbs of Detroit

The Good Neighbor Team is designed to provide furnace service and repair (non-emergency), and in some instances, parts and furnaces and the thought the service will be dening the first who have no financial or other means of keeping their furnaces operating this winter. Up to 500 hours of service will be donated to those in

Indications that this program may be able to assist you:

• Marginal furnace operation

• Continuous failing of furnace

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 Requests for service assistance will be monitored by the Salvation Army,
 Phone 313-953-2048 to request assistance on an automated answering service. Leave complete information, including name, address, and daylime phone where you can be contacted by the Salvation Army.

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