

Orchard Ridge Is Accredited

By KATHY MORAN
 The Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College received word last week that it has been accredited as an "operationally separate" associate degree-granting institution by North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The campus received notification of its accreditation at the same time as the two other OCC campuses were notified, though all three were given separate accreditation. "Ridge" Provost S. James Manilla was pleased with the Commission on Higher Education in Chicago last week to give a final brief presentation to the NCA and to answer questions.

Manilla said that from the positive tone of the questions asked at the meeting, he was reasonably certain at that time that they would be accredited. Notification came shortly afterwards. The accrediting teams visited OCC's three campuses in March for the second time in a year. In the first visit, just one team saw all three campuses and, rather than granting accreditation, they extended OCC's candidacy for accreditation. If they hadn't extended the candidacy period, the college would have been forced to wait three years before applying again. After the first visit, OCC officials complained that the evaluation was wholly insufficient and that each of the campuses should have been evaluated separately. As a result, NCA sent the three teams out in the spring at their own expense.

MANILLA SAID the team evaluated educational effectiveness of Orchard Ridge, instructional programs, student and faculty morale as well as how well students do after leaving the campus. "One thing they looked at is if a campus shows innovativeness and creativity in programs it is trying to implement and the new instructional strategies being implemented," he said. He said the evaluators were concerned that each campus does not have the full range of community college programs. "We indicated to them that there are some programs we do not try to duplicate on all campuses," Manilla said. Programs where expensive equipment is needed are located on different campuses, he said. For example, the automotive program is concentrated at Auburn Hills whereas data processing and food service technology programs are located on Orchard Ridge's campus.

DISRUPTIONS that occurred on the Orchard Ridge campus came when the team of evaluators was there, but had little effect on the evaluation, Manilla said. Students had presented administrators with a list of demands just prior to the visit. On the last day of the visit, two pipes exploded in the biology lab. Since then, two non-students have been arrested in the bombings.

Though accreditation will affect mostly transfer students and the application for certain government funds, being denied accreditation is what could have hurt the college. As Manilla explained it, "There is a stigma attached that maybe some of the innovative things you are doing are not so good," when accreditation is denied. Now that the campus is accredited it will be subject to reevaluation periodically and will be listed in the North Central Association Quarterly along with all the accredited institutions.



WHAT A PRIZE! — Sidney M. Hiller, of Scenic Drive in Franklin, is all smiles as he accepts the two-week trip to Italy for winning the attendance prize at the recent open house for customers of the Abner A. Wolf Wholesale Grocery Co., of Detroit. Jim Kunstel, vice president of the Wolf Co. is pointing out places of interest to visit during the two-week stay.

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