

GEMConnect™ App to Provide Guided Career Pathway for OU Students

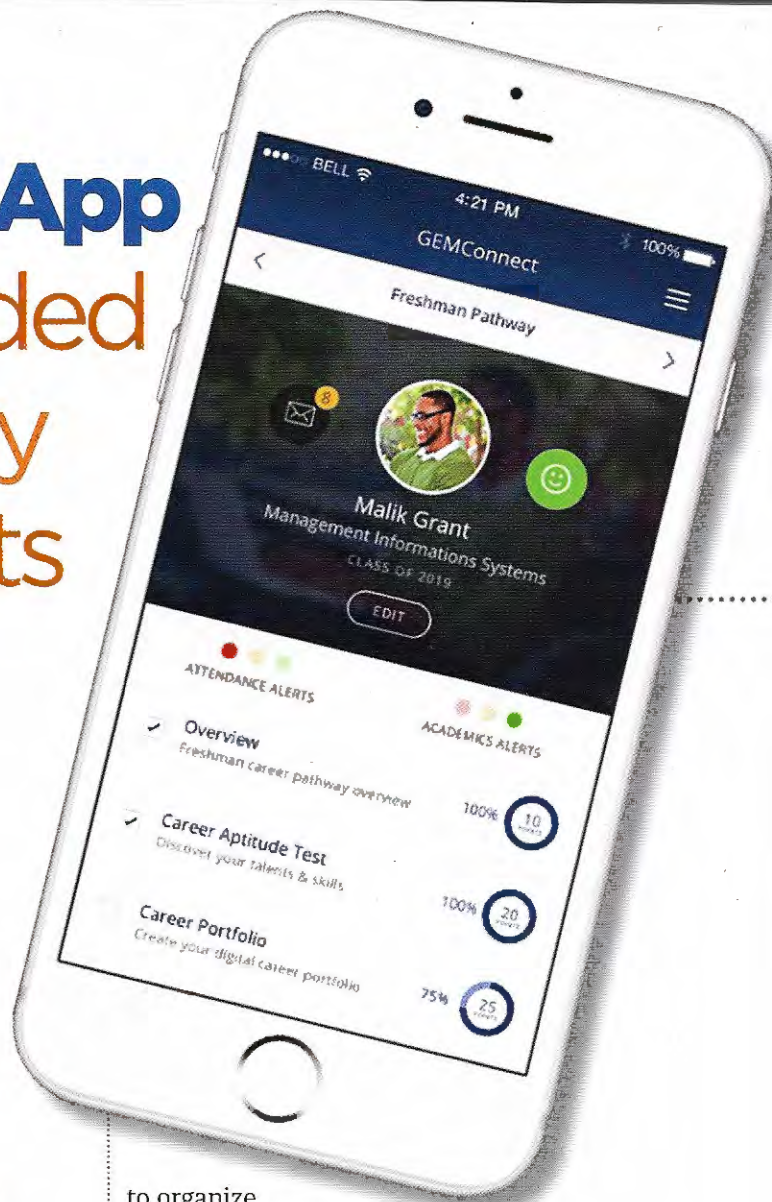
By Prudence Pollard, and
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Recently Oakwood University was the lead university in a 3-university cluster to receive \$6,000,000 to build and maintain pathways to completion, graduation and career success.

Oakwood's grant award from the UNCF Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) aims to improve career placement outcomes for students graduating from four-year Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs). Funds from the CPI grant were directed to Oakwood's Career Pathways to Gainful Employment for Minorities (CP-GEM) program which seeks to increase the number of Oakwood graduates that successfully transition into meaningful jobs within their chosen fields shortly after graduation.

CP-GEM is a comprehensive and integrated program that goes beyond helping students to simply attain a college degree. Under the direction of Dr. Prudence Pollard and Oakwood's academic administrators, faculty and career services team, the CP-GEM program was designed help students develop the skills and career competencies they will need to compete in a 21st century job market.

At the center of CP-GEM is a suite of innovative software solutions that are being implemented



to organize data and information in new ways that will enhance Oakwood's ability to assist our students in their pursuit of successful career outcomes.

INTRODUCING GEMCONNECT

One of these software solutions is GEMConnect, a mobile application which provides students with a career pathway checklist for each academic year leading up to graduation. Students can login to GEMConnect using their smartphone or mobile device to learn about and complete a variety of career objectives such as, skills and career assessments, professional certifications, career advising, mentoring, and job placement assistance.

Other cool features of the app include, job and internship opportunities, a digital career portfolio, alumni advice videos, and the ability to direct message the students career advisor. Incentives are being integrated into the application to encourage student participation.

Oakwood University is also exploring the pos-



UNCF® Career Pathways INITIATIVE

sibility of making GEMConnect available to high school students that wish to take advantage of the career advising, skills assessments, and professional certifications prior to enrollment.

Faculty and Career Advisors will also be able to login to GEMConnect to view a student's progress with their career oriented checklist, set up

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appointments, and communicate via the direct message feature. GEMConnect will be a great tool for facilitating conversations between advisors and students about the importance of leveling up the career skills and competencies for each year they attend the University.

One final benefit that we're very excited about is the Alumni Connection section of the app where students will be able to view a database of alumni profiles that contain career advice videos that share career related advice and lessons learned that would benefit aspiring students.

The Alumni Relations Office is currently reaching out to Oakwood alumni that would like to submit advice videos for the Alumni Connection feature within the app. If you're interested please contact Richard Hodnett at (256) 726-7663.

GEMConnect is expected to launch in August 2017 just in time for freshmen orientation. 📱

