

President's Report
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents
Dec. 7, 2023

Madam Chair and Distinguished Members of the Board of Regents:

In just 10 days, the University will celebrate the most special of times on a college campus – commencement. I am thrilled to join members of the Board of Regents, University administrators, and our esteemed faculty and staff in congratulating more than 1,200 students who will conclude this part of their academic journey on Dec. 17. We are delighted to welcome our new graduates to the Eastern Michigan University alumni community, which numbers more than 186,000 worldwide. Here are some interesting facts about next week's graduates:

- 18 are international students
- 10 are graduating with doctoral degrees
- 255 are graduating with master's degrees
- 903 are graduating with bachelor's degrees
- One is an ROTC student who will join the military to serve our country
- 157 are graduating Cum Laude with a 3.5 to 3.69 grade point average
- 191 are graduating Magna Cum Laude with a 3.7 to 3.89 grade point average; and,
- 128 are graduating Summa Cum Laude with a 3.9 to 4.0 grade point average

Our commencement speaker is metro Detroit business leader and philanthropist Gary Torgow. He is the chairman of the Board of Directors of Huntington Bank and will receive an honorary doctor of commercial science degree during the ceremony. We look forward to Mr. Torgow joining us for this special day.

The University's graduate program in entrepreneurship has been ranked among the top 50 in the nation and ninth best in the Midwest by The Princeton Review and Entrepreneur magazine. The College of Business program continues to be a source of pride for the University, enabling students to gain extensive and in-depth knowledge about entrepreneurial processes while participating in many co-curricular activities. Congratulations to Dean Ken Lord and Professor of Entrepreneurship and Director of EMU's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Sanjib Chowdhury, and faculty and staff who support the program.

Thank you to the nearly 1,000 donors who supported University programs during our annual #GivingTuesday last week. More than \$526,000 was raised, supporting dozens of EMU programs, scholarships and initiatives. Among the many benefitting programs

was Swoop's Food Pantry. Thanks to a \$12,000 matching gift from GameAbove, more than \$32,000 was raised to help us address food insecurity. Another \$20,000 matching gift helped WEMU raise more than \$40,000. You can learn more about the programs that received donations on EMU Today.

This past Sunday, we learned that the Eastern Michigan football team was selected to participate in the 68 Ventures Bowl in Mobile, Ala., on Dec. 23. This is the program's third bowl game in the last three years and sixth in the last eight years. It follows last year's 41-27 win over San Jose State in the Idaho Potato Bowl. Needing wins in the last two games of the season to become bowl-eligible, the team finished strong. Congratulations to Athletic Director Scott Wetherbee, Coach Chris Creighton, his assistants and staff, and our student-athletes who continue to represent Eastern with pride on the playing field, in the classroom, and the community.

As I close, please join me in offering a special thank you to Regent Emeritus Phil Incarnati for his \$2.5 million gift to EMU Athletics and the renaming of the Student-Athlete Performance Center to the Incarnati Athletic Center. Coupled with his previous gifts of \$1.5 million, his total giving to EMU Athletics is now \$4 million. Regent Emeritus Incarnati is the president and CEO of McLaren Health Care, one of Michigan's largest employers. He is a two-time graduate of Eastern and was a student athlete on the football team. He served as a member of the Board of Regents for 18 years from 1992-2010, including 10 years as the Board Chair. I am grateful that the University will recognize him for his tireless work and dedicated commitment to supporting this institution.

Additional information and accomplishments are listed in the appendix to this report on the University's website.

Thank you, Chair Jeffries.

James M. Smith, Ph.D.
President

Recognition

- Eastern seniors in the **Interior Design** program were recognized for their rendering skills and creativity, with **Avianne Cole** taking second place honors and **Autumn O'Halloran** taking third place at the **National CET Student Rendering Awards**.
- **Fatemeh Fallah**, a doctoral student studying **Polymers and Coating Technology**, has earned the **Best Technical Poster Award** at the **36th Biennial Western Coatings Symposium and Show**.
- **Jason Folk**, a freshman studying **Philosophy** and **Political Science**, has been selected to serve on the **Michigan Collegiate Student Advisory Task Force**. Members act as student liaisons between the Michigan Department of State and their campus populations. The task force will ensure that young people's voices are heard in Michigan elections.
- **Shayla Mostyn**, a sophomore honors student studying **Sociology**, was interviewed by **Fox2 Detroit News** about being an ambassador for **The Friendship Circle**. The nonprofit organization is dedicated to providing basic human rights of support, friendship, and inclusion to individuals with special needs.
- **Karen Craig**, associate professor of **Finance**, has been appointed as the chair of the student chapters committee for the **Financial Management Association (FMA) International** organization. She will assume a three-year term and oversee, direct, and supervise FMA's student programs and the National Honor Society.
- **Intelligent.com** has ranked Eastern 11th in the nation for **Best Online Master's in Educational Psychology Degree Programs**.
- Eastern's graduate program in **Entrepreneurship** has been ranked among the top 50 programs in the nation by **The Princeton Review** and **Entrepreneur**. The program has been a source of pride, showcasing a track record of graduating students who establish successful companies and businesses.
- Eastern has been recognized for having one of the **Best Online Graduate Certificate in Human Resources Degree Programs in Michigan**, ranking 14th in the nation by **Intelligent.com**.
- **Intelligent.com** has ranked Eastern 12th in the nation for **Best Online Nutrition Degree Programs**.
- Eastern has been recognized for having one of the **Best Online Bachelor's Paralegal Studies Degree Programs in Michigan**, ranking fifth by **Intelligent.com**.

- Eastern has been acknowledged by **Intelligent.com** for being one of the **Best Online Colleges in Michigan**, ranking fourth among other Michigan colleges.
- Eastern has been recognized for its outstanding **Social Mobility** by the **U.S. News and World Report**, tying for first among Michigan universities for advancing mobility by enrolling and graduating a large proportion of economically disadvantaged students.
- Eastern earned a spot on the **2024 Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges**, highlighting the institution's commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainability.
- **Aric Kirkland**, director of desktop and classroom technology for EMU, was recognized by the **Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC)** as a recipient of their **Outstanding Service Award**.
- The **62nd Annual Alumni Awards** were held on October 6. The Office of Alumni and Donor Engagement in partnership with the Alumni Association Board of Directors and the Recognition, Awards, and Scholarship Committee, celebrated four deserving award recipients for 2023. **Chaz Stewart-Bunting** received the **Outstanding Young Alumni Award**, **Brian James Egen** received the **Alumni Achievement Award**, the **Hon. Daniel Opperman** received the **Distinguished Alumni Award**, and **Dr. Linda Pritchard** was honored with the **Dr. John W. Porter Distinguished Service Award**.

Of Note

- The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** has awarded the **Southeast Michigan Stewardship (SEMIS) Coalition** \$500,000 for a project titled "Community Resilience from the Youth Up: A Place-Based Education Strategy for Southeast Michigan." Led by **College of Education** professor and SEMIS Coalition Director **Ethan Lowenstein**, the project addresses the urgent need to increase resilience in Detroit and southeast Michigan by partnering high school students and teachers with place-based educators, climate scientists, adaptation professionals, municipalities, and community organizations.
- **EMUiNVENT** has been awarded a **Lemelson-MIT InvenTeam** grant of \$7,500 to create an invention geared toward aiding community-dwelling elderly in changing positions safely. The InvenTeam will work with **Muhammad Ahmed**, professor of **Engineering**, and **Ryan Horne**, instructional coach of Howell Public Schools, who will guide students through the development of their invention. Additionally, the team will partner with **Spark East Innovation Center**, **Michigan STEM Network Region 2** and the **Toyota Driving Possibilities Program**.

- The November episode of "**Enlighten U**," an EMU podcast for students, focused on alcohol use. **Chrissie Zavicar**, a 2004 EMU graduate, and **Dr. Brenna Breshears**, assistant professor of Clinical Mental Health Counseling, discussed the issue with EMU co-hosts **Lolita Cummings**, professor of public relations, and **Melissa Thrasher**, executive director of media relations.
- Two new sculptures have been installed by sculptor **Benjamin Victor** and funded by **GameAbove**. The two sculptures are located outside of the **GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology**.

Events

- The **Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center** invited faculty and students to attend **Flipping the Script**, a student-led teaching and learning conference on November 30 to empower the learners to become the teachers, and the teachers to become the learners.
- The **Center for Digital Engagement** hosted its 13th annual **Digital Marketing Workshop**, "The Age of AI," with keynote speaker EMU alumni **Chris Prucha** on November 17.
- **EMU, the Hundley Foundation, Chartwells, and Golden Limo** hosted the second annual **Thankful for You** community event on November 16. They kicked off the two-part event with a "Thankful Meals to Go" giveaway, followed by a sit-down meal for community members, distributing 1,000 Thanksgiving-themed meals at the two events.
- **EDining** held its annual **Thankful** event for students to enjoy a Thanksgiving-themed menu and activities to bring friends together to celebrate the holiday on November 16.
- The **College of Education** held a **Dean EduTalk** with keynote speaker **Mama Sōi** on November 14.
- The **LGBT Resource Center** collaborated with **Alpha Sigma Tau at EMU** and invited students to participate in their **Cis Day of Action** to help paint the free speech wall with messages of support and care for fellow gender-diverse peers on November 13.
- The **College of Health and Human Services** hosted its annual **Excellence in Interprofessional Education simulation event** on November 10.
- The **GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology** hosted a **Digital Dudes** event on November 10. More than 350 high school boys from 21 schools

explored a wide array of hands-on workshops, covering topics such as coding, finance, drones, nursing, chemistry, orthotics and prosthetics, first aid, manufacturing, and electrical engineering.

- The **GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology** hosted its **Digital Divas STEM Conference** event on November 3. More than 600 girls attended from 21 schools, marking the culmination of over a decade of dedicated efforts to inspire young minds to explore the world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- **Campus Life** hosted **Pumpkins on the Patio**, with Halloween festivities such as pumpkin carving, a haunted house, and cider and donuts, on October 31.
- The **Admissions Welcome Center** held its annual **Rise Higher: First-Generation Day** to celebrate first-generation, first-year students, on October 28.
- The **Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)** hosted a **Student Development Conference**, with Q & A session speakers from **Henry Ford Health, EMU UACDC, Bosch, UofM School of Public Health, Ozone House, Airfoil, The Henry Ford, and Ilitch Sports Entertainment** on October 27.
- The **Latinx Student Association** held its annual **Dia De Los Muertos** event on October 26 to celebrate the lives of the loved ones who have passed.
- **Peter Blackmer**, assistant professor of **Africology and African American Studies**, led the launch of **Reckoning with Racism, Resistance, and Emergency Management: Voices from the Grassroots**, a community-focused oral history project, on October 26.
- **Eastern** hosted a **Welcome Home Furniture Fair**, showcasing furniture options for the new on-campus apartments, Lakeview and Westview, on October 24-25.
- The **Center of Race & Ethnicity** hosted a **Treat Yourself Meet and Greet**, for students to meet the CORE staff on October 24.
- The **EMU Symphonic Band** held a concert on October 22.
- Eastern's **Honors College** hosted its annual **Fall Festival**, a time for students to relax, paint pumpkins, games, while snacking on some fall treats, on October 21.
- The **EMU Wind Symphony**, under the direction of **Dr. Mary K. Schneider**, presented its first concert of the semester on October 20. The concert featured **John Dorsey**, professor of percussion.
- Eastern held its annual **Swooptacular Spooktacular** on October 20.

- The **Theater Program at EMU** presented the musical **Sweet Charity** on October 19-22.

Athletics

- Cross Country (Women): The Eagles took **second place** at the **MAC Championships**. **Esme Davies** took second place in the competition.
- Cross Country (Women): **Esme Davies** and **Paige Marchant** both earned **All-MAC First Team** accolades and **Marta Moreno** was named to the **All-MAC Second Team**.
- Cross Country (Men): The Eagles took **fifth place** at the **MAC Championships**.
- Cross Country (Men): **Marcus Kemp** earned **All-MAC First Team** honors.
- Football (Men): **Mitchell Tomasek** earned **All-MAC First Team** honors for the second consecutive season, becoming the first EMU punter to do so in back-to-back years. **Brian Dooley**, **Jaylon Jackson**, **Tanner Knue**, and **Joe Sparacio** earned **All-MAC Second Team** nods.
- Football (Men): **Brian Dooley** has been nominated for the **Wuerffel Trophy**, which is presented annually to the top community servant in college football. **Dooley** was also named one of 20 semifinalists being considered for the 2023 **Jason Witten Collegiate Man of the Year**.
- Football (Men): **Tanner Knue** has been named a nominee for the 2023 **Burlsworth Trophy**, given annually to the most outstanding football player who began his career as a walk-on.
- Soccer (Women): **Kate Robinson** and **Olivia Sipsock** were named to the **MAC All-Freshman Team**, and **Kate Robinson** was named **MAC Freshman of the Year**.
- Soccer (Women): **Sophia D'Ambra**, **Mary Grimes**, **Ella Holland**, **Secora Johnson**, **Meagan Lukowski**, and **Lily Spotak** have been named **College Sports Communicators Academic All-District**.
- Track & Field (Men): **Callum Robinson** competed for Canada in the Pan-American Games in Santiago, Chile in November.
- Volleyball (Women): **Callie Menshew** was named to the **All-MAC Second Team**.

- Former EMU football player and current Las Vegas Raiders standout **Maxx Crosby**, along with his wife **Rachel Crosby**, former EMU soccer student-athlete, have committed \$1 million to the EMU Athletics Department.

- In a heartwarming celebration on November 18, Eastern Michigan University paid tribute to the legacy of former Men's Basketball Head Coach **Ben Braun** by officially naming the court inside the George Gervin GameAbove Center as "**Ben Braun Court.**" Braun's coaching tenure at EMU spanned 11 seasons, during which he accumulated an impressive list of achievements, including 185 victories, three Mid-American Conference (MAC) Regular Season Championships, three MAC Tournament titles, and three NCAA Tournament selections. His success was further underscored by three MAC Coach of the Year awards and a remarkable 106-35 home record.

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