



EASTERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY

**President James Smith**

**Significant accomplishments 2016-2022**

- **Stabilized University budget:** Upon arriving in July 2016, President Smith inherited \$65 million in operating deficits that had accumulated over the previous six years. Under his leadership, the University ended the deficit spending and (aside from the one-time deviation caused by COVID-19 shutdowns in FY20) began generating balanced operating returns or surpluses.
- **Fundraising success:** Developed, launched, and nearing completion of the University's \$100 million comprehensive fundraising campaign "Give Rise: The Campaign for Eastern Michigan University." The last five years have been EMU's best fundraising years in its history.
- **COVID-19 mitigation:** Successfully led the University during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was the most disruptive event in the history of higher education. Highlights include:
  - Launched an on-site testing center with most tests obtained at no cost or low cost, resulting in repeated requests from other universities for advice on how they could duplicate EMU's system
  - Maintained relatively low case counts through proactive case management, which won repeated public praise from local health authorities
  - Engaged stakeholders early in the process through the "EMU Safe Steering Committee"
  - Put student success at the forefront of decision-making
    - Example: ensuring that isolation/quarantine rooms were well-equipped by adding refrigerators and microwaves
    - Example: hand-delivering meals to isolation/quarantine students
  - Launched community service programs, including free cable for Ypsilanti Community Schools students and face mask production
- **New tuition models:** Developed new tuition models to adjust to the increasingly competitive market, including:
  - Block tuition (simplified model for students that promotes a faster path to graduation)
  - In-state tuition for international students

- **Strategic facility improvements:** Invested in significant facility improvements tied to the University's strategic priorities:
  - Student success:
    - Launched Welcome Home 2025 student housing plan
    - Renovated Rec/IM
    - New Campus Wellness Center
    - New Student-Athlete Performance Center
    - Completed the 2013-2019 Technology Refresh program
    - Launched the 2021-2027 Technology Refresh program
  - Academics & research:
    - Completed \$40 million renovation of Sill Hall; expanded engineering and technology campus
    - Completed \$30 million renovation of Strong Hall, the final element of the University's expanded and modernized Science Complex
  - Operational effectiveness:
    - Invested \$19.6 million in a power cogeneration unit designed to supply approximately 98% of the heat and 93% of the electricity to Eastern's campus and achieve annual net energy savings to the University of more than \$2.8 million
- **Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI):** Enhanced the University's existing status as the most diverse public university in Michigan by focusing on equity and inclusion initiatives:
  - Created the position of Chief Diversity Officer, reporting directly to the President, and appointed long-standing faculty member Dr. Doris Fields to the inaugural position
  - Continued to invest in our excellent veteran service programs, which have won nationwide rankings
  - Initiated the "You Are Welcome Here" campus campaign in collaboration with other universities across the nation to encourage international students to study in the United States. Eastern has evolved the campaign to become, "All Are Welcome Here"
  - Expanded international enrollment partnerships, including a partnership with Beibu Gulf University in China which, to date, has enrolled 380 new students; opened a new student recruitment center in the Middle East
- **10-year accreditation:** Re-secured the University's 10-year accreditation in 2017, and secured a very favorable mid-cycle review from the accreditor (Higher Learning Commission) in 2021.
- **Community engagement:** As part of EMU's strategic priority to engage with and serve our surrounding communities, President Smith remains actively involved in connecting EMU with many of our regional partners.