

# *About Dr. James M. Smith*

Dr. James M. Smith was selected as the 23<sup>rd</sup> President of Eastern Michigan University by the University's Board of Regents on February 12, 2016. He assumed his duties as President on July 1, 2016.

Before joining EMU, Smith served as President of Northern State University (NSU) in Aberdeen, South Dakota since June 2009.

He has been an active fundraiser and was instrumental in helping NSU obtain the largest donation in its history, a \$15 million gift. Another NSU success was collaborating with the University of Jinan, in Jinan, China, to develop the first and only Confucius Institute in the Dakotas.

Smith, who grew up near Columbus, Ohio, in Washington Court House, knew early on he wanted to be a teacher. He always had admired teachers and enjoyed school. He became an elementary and middle school teacher after earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education, from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in 1979. He would go on to earn a Master of Education, Educational Administration, from Xavier University in Cincinnati and a Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Leadership, from Miami University.

Over the next 28 years, he served as an elementary school principal, a teaching fellow and assistant professor at Miami, director of the Experiential Program for Preparing School Principals at Butler University in Indianapolis, and director of the Educational Leadership Program and coordinator of doctoral studies at West Texas A&M University. Smith also was vice president for Economic Development at Bowling Green State University, before heading to NSU.

Smith's wife, Dr. Connie Ruhl-Smith, has an impressive resume of her own. She has been a teacher, author and administrator, and has done extensive work in student retention and student academic support, introduction of international partnerships, and much more.