

President's Report
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents Meeting
February 7, 2019

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Board of Regents:

If you had told me at the beginning of the year that there would be a week in which we had to cancel classes for three days, I would have told you it was very unlikely. Of course, that is what Eastern Michigan and many organizations faced last week due to the double whammy of a snowstorm followed by a deep freeze. Additionally, the campus was closed yesterday morning due to hazardous ice conditions.

I recognize the challenges of closing for our students, faculty and staff and its impact on course schedules and planning. Safety of everyone in our community was our number one priority in these decisions. I want to thank our students, faculty and staff for their adjustments to the scheduling. I also want to note my sincere appreciation to the housing and dining staff, facilities staff, grounds crew members, public safety officers, WEMU staff, and others who made sure the needs of our students living on campus were met, and who worked to keep campus safe and the community informed.

In just a short time from now, we will gather in the atrium of our newly renovated and expanded Strong Hall for an open house and dedication to celebrate this remarkable addition to our campus. The completion of Strong Hall marks the final phase of the Science Complex project, which the University began in 2008 with great vision and foresight. The entire Complex encompasses 367,000 square feet. To get a sense of the scope, that's equal to six and a half football fields, or five and a half White Houses or about the same as three Manhattan city blocks.

To say that it capitalizes on Eastern's powerfully successful STEM programs is a serious understatement. Simply put, Eastern's new Science Complex, with the completion of Strong Hall, establishes Eastern as having one of the finest settings for education in the sciences in the Midwest. We should all be very proud of this distinction! I hope you will join us at 3 p.m. for our opening event.

As you move around campus, you will see that Strong Hall is not the only facilities project on our plate, and we are equally excited about several other projects. We have started work on a complete overhaul of the REC/IM building – recognizing a longstanding wish of our students and employees. The REC/IM project is targeted for completion by fall 2020.

Crews are currently working on Sill Hall, home of our College of Technology. When completed, the entire 92,000 square foot structure will be renovated, with an additional 16,000 square feet in new academic space to be constructed.

Construction of the University's new health center, built in collaboration with St. Joseph Mercy Health System and IHA, is proceeding on the northwest corner of campus. Roadwork and ground preparation is well underway, with target completion for the beginning of next year.

And, the new Athletics and Sports Medicine Training facility also is well underway on the north end of Rynearson Stadium, with an expected completion this July.

Together, these projects continue to transform Eastern's campus, revitalizing our spaces for academics and for student, faculty, staff and community well being.

Speaking of transformations, Eastern Michigan University has been reclassified to the second highest tier of research activity in the Carnegie Classification. This reflects the growing level of research activity at the University – and is a designation that applies to only 3 percent of the nation's colleges and universities. Eastern is now categorized as a Doctoral University with High Research Activity (R2).

The new Carnegie Classification reflects the leadership of our outstanding faculty and academic administrators who have worked diligently to expand Eastern's footprint in research and creative activity. This translates to expanded community engagement as well as more exceptional experiences for our students.

In other acknowledgements:

- Assistant Professor of Biology Emily Grman was awarded a Bradshaw Medal from the Society of Ecological Restoration for her research publication on the growth of plant species in prairie restorations;
- A team of Eastern students studying human resources took first place in a statewide HR competition;
- The Integrated Marketing Communications online graduate program was ranked in the annual list of the nation's top online graduate business programs by U.S. News and World Report;
- Student-athletes at Eastern finished last fall with the second-highest term GPA in University history at 3.232. Overall, it is the 18th consecutive semester our student-athletes have earned higher than a 3.0; and,
- Eastern is receiving considerable positive attention for an innovative program developed by the Engage@EMU office. The program, Eagle Engage Corps, provides student debt forgiveness with community service – to help students complete their education.

On a final note, I would like to formally welcome our newest Regent, Rich Baird, to the Board of Regents.

Other accomplishments are listed in the Appendix to this report on the University website. Thank you, Chairman Webb.

James M. Smith, Ph.D.
President

Recognition

- EMU students **Kimberley Dixson-Ferrell** and **Nailah Bush** were honored January 21 for the ways in which they powerfully honor diversity, community service and the values of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dixon-Ferrell received the annual Evans-Strand Diversity Award and Bush received the annual **Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Award**.
- Human Resources students **Brian Eggenberger, Banpreet Kaur, and Hailey LaMay** took first place in a **statewide HR games competition** held in the fall at the Michigan Council of the Society for Human Resource Management Conference.
- EMU faculty will engage in a variety of activities to be funded by the **Brickley Endowment for Faculty Professional Development and Innovation Awards**. Those receiving awards are **Brittany Albaugh, Cassandra Barragan, Anne Caspar, Chong Man Chow, Brian Connolly, Matthew Cook, Arman Dabiri, Jason Ferguson, Charles Graham, Jillian Graves, Naomi Hashimoto, Tareq Khan, Heather Khan-Welsh, Andrew Mansfield, Camilla McComb, Jacquelyn McGinnis, Laura McMahan, Cristina Mirtes, John Palladino, Gary Pederson, Paul Price, Heather Shouldice, Robert Stevens, Amanda Stype, Stephanie Wladkowski, and Bonnie Wylo**.
- Students from the **College of Technology** showcased its latest technologies and programs at the **North American International Auto Show** during media and industry preview days on January 14-17.

Events

- The **School of Art and Design** hosted a two-day seminar on January 25-26 to deepen understanding of how ideas of 'place' are defined, transformed, and negotiated, and how place informs (and is informed by) who we are and rituals we perform.
- EMU students participated in the **Environmental Science and Society Internship Symposium** on January 23 where they met with representatives from state and federal government, conservancy groups, watershed councils, and others.
- The **33rd annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration** at EMU was held Jan. 17-22. A wide range of activities were held to acknowledge and celebrate the legacy of Dr. King, and to encourage and inspire the EMU community to strive to foster a more ideal and just society for all.
- The second annual **Southeast Asian Student Association Culture Night** was held on January 19.

Athletics

- Student-athletes **Blake Banham, Natalie Czmas, Brody Hoying, Sydney Meyers, Kristin Nason, Steven Nielsen, Mallory Rajewski, Jordan Smith, Mike Van Hoeven,** and **Austin Wicker** named as **MAC Distinguished Scholar Athletes.**
- EMU student-athletes finished the fall semester with the second-highest term GPA in school history with a 3.232. The women's Soccer team led all sports with a 3.607 GPA, and Baseball, Men's Cross Country, and Football each set program records. 46 student-athletes earned perfect 4.0 GPAs.
- Cross Country (Women): **Natalie Cizmas, Madison Distelrath, Sydney Myers,** and **Ashleigh Simonis** were named to the Academic All-MAC Team.
- Cross Country (Men): **Ian Cook, Solomon Costa, Phoenix Myers,** and **Austin Wicker** earned Academic All-MAC honors.
- Football (Men): **Blake Banham, Jake Donnellon, Jeremiah Harris, Jeremy Hickey, Clay Holford, Brody Hoying, Tyler LaBarbera, Freddie McGee III, Steve Nielsen, Breck Turner, Ville Valisti,** and **Mike Van Hoven** were named to the Academic All-MAC Football Team.
- During the fall semester, **176 student-athletes volunteered to read to second-graders and donated 420 books to the Ypsilanti community,** as part of a program promoted by The 2nd and Seven Foundation.

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