

President's Report
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents Meeting
Feb. 13, 2020

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

It is my distinct honor to share with you, and with the entire Eastern Michigan University community, some of the important developments that are taking place at the University.

We are one month into the new year of 2020, and the start of a new decade. It is good time for us to look ahead – to look to the future.

By the end of this year, we will have a new Sill Hall, home of the College of Engineering and Technology.

We will have a revitalized REC/IM – a complete overhaul and facelift to this vital campus and student-oriented building.

And, in just one month from now, we will have a new, expanded home for Counseling and Psychological Services and the Psychology Clinic in the new Campus Wellness Center. A ribbon-cutting event is scheduled for Thursday, March 12 at 4 p.m.

These are transformative projects, and follow last year's opening of Strong Hall and the new IHA Health Center at EMU.

While these projects are important for Eastern in the short term – they are even more important in the long term. With your help, we are, together, shaping the future of the University in a positive way for decades to come.

And, while we continue to improve the bricks and mortar of our facilities, it is the academic and student success that drives Eastern's overall impact in our community, our state, our nation and globally.

Examples of that success can be seen in the work of our Moot Court team and the national championship we celebrated just a few moments ago. Our outstanding students, led by outstanding faculty, achieved a level of national recognition that has excited the entire Eastern Michigan University community.

Other recent examples of our high quality academics include:

Brittany Venglarcik, a master's graduate student of Polymers and Coatings Technology, has been selected to receive a FOCUS (Future of Coatings Under Study) Research Scholarship of \$7,500 for the 2019-2020 school year. The [scholarship is awarded by the Detroit Society for Coatings Technology](#), a regional professional society of leading automotive executives, coating materials and equipment suppliers, consultants, entrepreneurs and academics.

The [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) is featuring the work of Education Professor Ethan Lowenstein, a national leader in the place-based education movement. The New York Times, The Detroit News, and other news media have covered the work of the SEMIS Coalition, which he leads.

Mary-Elizabeth Murphy, an associate professor of history and women and gender studies, has been named the [inaugural recipient of a social justice fellowship](#) funded by longtime EMU supporters Kirk and Sharon Profit. The fellowship enables Murphy to conduct research on her book project: "Before the Freedom Riders: African Americans, Bus Companies, and Black Protest Politics."

Dean Dana Heller of the College of Arts and Sciences [has been appointed to the board of jurors for the Peabody Awards](#), bestowed each year for excellence in television, radio and digital media. The jurors are made up of media industry professionals, media scholars, critics and journalists. Dean Heller is a professor of cultural studies.

Dr. Eric Portenga, Assistant Professor, Geography and Geology, was awarded a \$221,014 grant from the National Science Foundation for his project studying the affects on wildlife of fires in the mountains of Santa Monica, California.

Fourteen faculty members are first to receive funding from the [GameAbove Faculty First \\$2 million gift](#) to support faculty research and professional development. A variety of initiatives have been funded, totaling nearly \$50,000. Faculty can submit funding applications at the [GameAbove Faculty Professional Development and Innovation Fund webpage](#).

[GameAbove](#) is a diverse group of passionate Eastern alumni who desire to give back to the University through supporting campus initiatives focused on research, entrepreneurship and innovation. Since November, the group has donated more than \$13 million to academic, student support and athletic programs.

Our celebration of Black History Month kicked off with a successful Black Leadership Summit on January 29, hosted by the EMU Black Student Union. The remainder of the month's events can be found on the University calendar.

On March 20, we will kick off the Week of Excellence, beginning with the Graduate Research Conference and culminating with the 40th annual Undergraduate Symposium on Friday, March 27. The week of activities are a true celebration of all that Eastern Michigan stands for - high quality academics and outstanding student-faculty interaction and mentorship.

Other accomplishments are listed in the appendix to this report on and the University website.

Thank you, Chairman Webb.

James M. Smith, Ph.D.
President

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Recognition

- **Chocolate Brooks, Katrina Seals, and Quentin Washington** were honored and **earned \$500 scholarships** for sharing their perspectives and experiences in an essay contest detailing how they have overcome and continually will “**Rise Up Against Injustice,**” the theme for this year’s Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at EMU.
- **Allanah Morales and Kyra Mitchell** were honored for the ways in which they powerfully honor diversity, the promotion of peace, community service and the values of Martin Luther King, Jr. Morales was presented with the **Evans-Strand Peace Award** and Mitchell received the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Award** at the President’s Luncheon.
- **Online graduate programs in the College of Education** moved up a dozen spots in the annual list of rankings of the top online graduate school programs compiled by U.S. News and World Report. The online programs ranked were **in Educational Leadership, Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Social Foundations in Education**
- The online **Integrated Marketing Communications** master’s degree program in the College of Business has again been highly ranked in the annual list of top online graduate school business programs compiled by the U.S. News and World Report.
- The **Beta Alpha Psi accounting honors organization** was recognized as “superior” for the 20th consecutive year. The EMU chapter performs hundreds of hours of community service each semester, including work on behalf of other organizations such as Meals on Wheels, the Walk to Fight Cancer, Habitat for Humanity and Food Gatherers. In addition, they also filled out the tax return for more than 100 low-income people in the Ypsilanti community during the past year, an annual activity for the club.
- **Emeritus professor Ronald Woods** was honored by the state of Michigan with a **special tribute signed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer**. During Woods 43-year career at EMU he served as a lecturer in the Afro-American Studies program, a professor, and head of African American studies. He received a variety of Eastern’s highest honors, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award, the Ronald W. Collins Distinguished Faculty Award and the John W. Porter Distinguished Service Award.

Of Note

- **GameAbove** and the **Mr. October Foundation** announced a collaborative effort and **\$500,000 in annual funding to expand the Digital Divas/Dudes program** that encourages and supports more girls and boys, particularly from disadvantaged areas, to enter technology-related careers.
- EMU honored **Governor Gretchen Whitmer** with the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award** for her distinguished service to the state of Michigan at the annual MLK President's Luncheon.

Events

- The 40th annual **Undergraduate Symposium** will be held on March 27. The Symposium features exceptional academic work of undergraduate students, showcasing their research and creative projects from a wide variety of disciplines.
- The **Graduate Research Conference** will be held on March 20. Eastern graduate and doctoral students will present research and creative activity in a professional conference format.
- The **34th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration** was held January 16-22. The keynote speaker at the President's Luncheon was Dr. Terrence J. Roberts, one of the "Little Rock Nine." Programming events were held to explore, inform, and inspire the EMU community to engage in meaningful action as it strives to foster a just society for all.

Athletics

- Baseball (Men): The baseball team and Head Coach Eric Roof with Team IMPACT, a national nonprofit that connects children facing serious or chronic illnesses with local college athletic teams, welcomed **Bentley "Bennie," Booth**, a nine-year old from Belleville, to sign on as the 35th member of the team.
- Cross Country (Women): **Natalie Cizmas** and **Emily Smith** were named as MAC Distinguished Scholar Athletes for excellence in athletics and academics.
- Cross Country (Men): **Owen Day** was named as a MAC Distinguished Scholar Athlete for excellence in athletics and academics.

- Football (Men): **Kobie Beltram, Jake Donnellon, Dylan Drummond, Mike Haney, Brody Hoying, Marcellus Johnson, Freddie McGee III, Steven Nielsen, Thomas Odukoya, Yannik Rohrschneider, Chad Ryland, Carter Stagner, Breck Turner, and Mike Van Hoeven** were named to the Academic All-MAC Team.
- Football (Men): **Dylan Drummond** and **Brody Hoying** were named as MAC Distinguished Scholar Athletes for excellence in athletics and academics.
- Soccer (Women): **Simone Chiodo, Maria Cobetto, Peyton Davis, Mabel Dunn, Kylie Frantz, Alia Frederick, Kristin Hullibarger, Parys Kerr, Kennady Kuhlman, Aubrey Martin, Maggie McCullough, Sabrina McNeill, Tessa Osborne, Nicole Remedios, and Haley Tausend** were named to the Academic All-MAC Team.
- Soccer (Women): **Sabrina McNeill and Nicole Remedios** were named to the United Soccer Coaches Scholar All-Region teams.
- Soccer (Women): The women's soccer team was awarded the **Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Award** by the United Soccer Coaches. They were the only MAC team to be recognized and were one of 143 teams to earn the honor for the 2019 season.
- Swimming & Diving (Women): The College Swimming & Diving Coaches Association of America (CSCAA) announced that the team was named a **Scholar All-America Team** for the Fall 2019 semester.
- EMU student-athletes finished the fall semester with an overall GPA of 3.201, the fourth highest in school history. 47 student-athletes finished the semester with perfect 4.0 GPAs.
- **Donald Scott**, an Eastern track alumnus is aiming for a spot on the U.S. Olympic Team for 2020 Tokyo. Making the team would extend Eastern's streak of 15 consecutive Summer Olympics with a representative from the men's and women's track programs.
- Toronto Blue Jay's pitcher and EMU alumnus **Matt Shoemaker** hosted a Pro Pitching Development Camp in Ypsilanti in February.
- Former Eastern Eagle **Andrew Wylie** played in and won the Super Bowl with the Kansas City Chiefs on February 2.

- EMU's **Eagle Crest Golf Course** was recognized by Golf Advisor travel guide as among the **top 25 college courses** in the country.