

President's Report
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents
April 21, 2022

Madam Chair and Distinguished Members of the Board of Regents:

Tomorrow marks the last day of classes in what has been an outstanding winter semester. The return to more typical operations as overall COVID-19 rates remain relatively low has led to a return of many of the campus events that had been held virtually for the past two years, such as the Undergraduate Symposium and next week's Commencement ceremonies. Our strong and supportive campus response to COVID-19 has been impressive from the outset. As I have acknowledged since the beginning of the pandemic, our students, faculty and staff deserve enormous recognition for adopting and following EMUSafe measures that have protected our campus community.

It is important to state, however, that we are by no means out of the woods as new variants continue to come to the forefront. We must remain ever-vigilant. One thing is certain, where there was no playbook for a pandemic of this nature two years ago – we have all learned a lot about mitigation strategies and supporting one another -- and this will benefit all of us in the future.

The end of the semester also brings us to Commencement ceremonies, which will take place next Saturday, April 30. More than 1,700 students are eligible to participate in ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

We are pleased to welcome John Tuttle, vice chairman and chief commercial officer of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) Group, who will serve as commencement speaker and will receive an Honorary Doctorate of Commerce. He is an esteemed alumnus of our great University and we look forward to welcoming him back to campus. We are also pleased to honor Dr. Donald Loppnow who has graced our University for more than 40 years. Dr. Loppnow started at Eastern in 1974 as a lecturer in sociology, and later became a professor of social work, department head, and served in a variety of administrative roles during his career at Eastern including provost and interim president on three occasions. Dr. Loppnow will receive an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

As I noted at the beginning of the report, the commencement ceremonies will be held in person, and a live stream will also be available on the [Commencement home page](#). Attendees are asked to follow the University's safety protocols which require face masks worn by all individuals while inside the George Gervin GameAbove Center regardless of vaccination status.

Summer commencement ceremonies will be held on Aug. 13, for students who will complete their degree requirements during the summer of 2022. We're pleased to also offer an in-person graduation experience on that date for students who graduated in April 2020, December 2020, and April 2021 and did not have an in-person ceremony due to the pandemic. Details are being finalized and we will announce them when completed.

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A short time from now, at 3 p.m., many of us will gather in Sill Hall to celebrate the opening of the building and to dedicate two labs in the names of prominent alumni.

The naming of the Woods Construction Construction Management Lab recognizes the longstanding commitment of Woods Construction and its president, EMU alumnus John Bodary. Over the past 30 years, Woods Construction, John and his wife Michelle, who also attended Eastern, have provided significant support for EMU's Construction Management program.

The Jack E. Roush Automotive Lab is named in honor of American motorsports icon and EMU alumnus Jack E. Roush. As chairman of the Board of Directors of Roush Enterprises and co-owner of Roush Fenway Racing, Jack Roush has long been recognized as a leader in automotive innovation and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in 2017 and the NASCAR Hall of Fame in 2019. EMU awarded him an honorary doctorate of commercial science in 2019. He has provided significant support to EMU, creating endowed funds for math preparation and tutoring programming across the University, and to support the GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology.

As I conclude today's report, please join me in congratulating the EMU's Forensics Team, which just captured third place in the United States at the National Forensics Association competition. The team competed against more than 60 universities from across the country.

- Auyron Azar, our incoming student body president, is the 2022 National Champion in After Dinner Speaking;
- Geoff Gauthier took second place in Impromptu Speaking;
- Sarah Dubinsky and Auyron Azar took fourth place in Duo Interpretation;
- Sarah Dubinsky placed sixth in Dramatic Interpretation;
- Estelle Hackos was named the 2022 Novice National Champion in Persuasion; and, she took second place in the Novice Impromptu category.

The national showing extends the tradition of EMU Forensics, one of the most successful teams in the nation. EMU Forensics has placed in the top 10 nationally for more than 40 years, and has won more than 40 Michigan state team championships.

EMU Forensics began its tradition of success with its first national championship in 1973. Notable past EMU National Champions include Brenda Alten, lead of Human Resources Communications with the J.M. Smucker Company; and the late Emeritus Professor Judy Sturgis Hill, a distinguished professor and EMU's first National Champion, for whom the building that houses the University's School of Communication, Media and Theatre Arts was renamed in her honor.

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

- **Kristeana Banks**, a junior majoring in Political Science, has been chosen for the **2022 Public Policy and International Affairs Program Junior Summer Institute** at the **University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy**. The seven-week, graduate-level preparation program is intended for students committed to public service careers.
- **Alex Chumney**, a junior Biology major with a concentration in ecology, organismal diversity and evolution, received a **Goldwater Scholarship**. This honor places her among the nation's top young scientists. Of the more than 5,000 applicants in 2022, just over 400 received scholarships.
- **Odia Kaba**, a Quantitative Economics major, has been chosen for the **2022 Public Policy and International Affairs Program Junior Summer Institute** at **Princeton University**. She is also a finalist for the Harry S. Truman Scholarship.
- **Dr. Eric Schulz**, professor of Management, has been awarded the **\$2,500 Darrell H. Cooper Presidential Endowment Academic Research Award**. The award supports research related to leadership and all management disciplines.
- The **Aviation Program** was recognized among the **top 10 most valuable programs in the country** – and the only aviation program in Michigan – offering the greatest return on investment (ROI) for students upon graduation by Preston Cooper, a higher education research fellow at The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity.
- The **Bachelor of Information Assurance and Cyber Defense** degree has been ranked **7th in the nation** as the best online bachelor's degree in Cybersecurity by AcademicInfluence.com. The program was the only university in Michigan to rank in the top 10.
- The **Occupational Therapy** program has been ranked among the **top 50 graduate programs in the nation** by U.S. News & World Report. The digital media company also recognized several other programs, reinforcing the University's strategic mission to deliver high performing academic programs and quality research. Other programs included in the rankings were **Business Administration, Clinical Psychology, Computer Science, Fine Arts, Physician Assistant, Psychology, Public Administration, Social Work, and Speech-Language Pathology**. The **College of Education** was also ranked among the top 150 Best Education Schools.

- For the fifth consecutive year, Eastern Michigan University has been named **one of the most military and veteran-friendly universities in the country**, according to annual rankings released this month by Military Friendly. EMU is ranked **number one in Michigan** and **number two in the United States**.
- The **College of Business** has been named **one of the nation's best graduate business schools** for the 18th consecutive year by The Princeton Review. The list is based on a combination of institutional and student survey data, including career outcomes, admissions selectivity, and academic rigor, among other factors.
- **Eastern Michigan University's programs** have been ranked as **top programs in the U.S.** by Intelligent.com, a resource for online, on-campus program rankings and higher education planning. The research identifies programs in the nation based on flexibility, faculty, course strength, cost, and reputation.

Of Note

- **Eastern Michigan University** received approximately **\$550,000 in community project funding** as part of the State of Michigan annual appropriations omnibus package. **Congresswoman Debbie Dingell** secured the award for community projects throughout Michigan's 12th Congressional District. The funding will support the expansion of the **Collaborative Child Development Center** and EMU's **prisoner re-entry program**.
- The **Center for Entrepreneurship** offered promising entrepreneurs a chance to make their business goals a reality with an **Executive Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Venture Challenge program**. Recently, Brighton resident and EMU alumna, **Sarah Beatty**, was selected among 16 entrepreneurs in the program and was awarded a \$25K prize after pitching her idea to a panel of business leaders from southeast Michigan.
- Joining together for the greater good is the goal of Eastern's new **Civil Rights & Social Justice Center pilot**, focused on education, improving the justice system, and building equitable and just communities across southeast Michigan. An interdisciplinary team of EMU professors are leading these efforts with plans to launch programming.
- **Engage@EMU** has formed a partnership with non-profit organization, **TimeSlips**, and is offering training to faculty, staff, students, and select community members. TimeSlips aims to change the way we understand and experience aging by bringing young people into positive relationships with elders, enabling family members to have meaningful, emotional connections, and infusing creativity into their care systems to inspire staff to feed their creativity inviting elders to imagine and express themselves.
- **Amazon** employees in the U.S. will benefit from new Career Choice partnerships with more than 140 Universities and Colleges including **Eastern Michigan University**,

Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Valley State University, and Henry Ford College.

- The latest episode of **EMU Today TV** introduces viewers to the University's new Interim Chief Diversity Officer, Doris Fields. In the interview, Dr. Fields describes her ascent to the position as well as her goals and plans. The segment also features an inside look at EMU's annual recognition of alumni who are making a positive impact in our communities.
- The new initiative, **EMU Changing the Cycle**, is on a mission to end period poverty – inadequate access to menstrual hygiene supplies and education – on campus by ensuring that everyone at EMU has access to free organic period products when they need them.

Events

- The **61st Annual Alumni Awards** will be presented on EMU's YouTube channel on May 7. EMU will honor eight alumni in three different categories as well as bestow the John W. Porter Distinguished Service Award to two deserving individuals. **Outstanding Young Alumni Awards** will be presented to **Christopher Economeas** (BS13) and **Wendale Farrow** (BS09, MA13). **Alumni Achievement Awards** will be presented to **Nicolette Bateson** (MPA12) and **Dr. Hrant P. Hratchian** (BS01). The **John W. Porter Distinguished Alumni Awards** will be given to **Dr. Karen Paciorek**, emerita professor, and **Dr. Michael Paciorek**, emeritus professor. Returning to celebrate and serve as this year's master of ceremonies is FOX2 News anchor, reporter, and EMU alumnus, **Josh Landon** (BS06).
- The GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology hosted an **EMU TechTalk** featuring **Quentin Messer**, CEO of the **Michigan Economic Development Corporation**, on April 13. Last month's TechTalk featured **Carla Bailo**, president of the **Center for Automotive Research** in Ann Arbor, on March 30.
- Graduate students in the **Historic Preservation** program opened a new exhibit in the **McKenny Gallery** on April 13. The "Hamburgers for Breakfast: Food and the Student Experience" showcases how access and attitudes about food have changed at EMU since the early 1900s.
- The **Faculty and Guest Artist Dance Concert** was held on April 8 and featured Detroit choreographers who presented a mixed repertoire concert.
- The **41st Semi-Annual Celebration of Student Writing** was held on April 7. The research and writing fair showcased projects from more than 800 students.

- The **Chemistry** department sponsored a lecture on April 4 by **Dr. Ashley LaLonde and Dr. Frank Coms**, chemists with General Motors, who spoke about their research and experience as chemists in industry.
- Students, faculty, staff, and guests convened for the **42nd Undergraduate Symposium** on March 25. This historic event celebrated undergraduate research and creative projects. Novelist **Bethany Ball**, an alumna of EMU, was the Dennis M. Beagen Keynote Speaker.
- The **Mathematics and Statistics** department hosted a lecture by **Lloyd Douglas**, former first vice-president of the Mathematical Association of America, on March 23.
- Eastern Michigan University's **NEXT Scholars Program** hosted its second student-organized event **EdTalks**. This year's event was titled, **Decolonizing the College of Education: Student-Led Conversations for Faculty**. The event was held on March 19.
- EMU's 23rd annual **Graduate Research Conference** was held on March 18. The conference showcases graduate student scholarly and creative activities. 126 students presented oral and poster presentations.
- On March 18 the **EMU ROTC Program** devoted a day to exploring college opportunities and program highlights with former Wayne-Westland JROTC cadets and other students interested in EMU. The overview included important information about the program, scholarship opportunities, training opportunities, and extracurricular activities.
- The **George Liepa Sigma Xi Annual Speaker Series Endowed Fund** sponsored a lecture by **Dr. Stefan M. Pasiakos**, U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, on March 17.
- The **EMU Theatre** presented "**Fresh Squeezed – A Festival of New Plays for the Young**" on March 12.
- To help spark a passion for more students to enter STEM careers, particularly those from traditionally underrepresented minority groups, local students from the Upward Bound program and Ypsilanti community schools participated in **EMU STEM Day** on March 11.
- **The Journal of Narrative Theory's** 2022 speaker series hosted guest speakers **Sue J. Kim** from the University of Massachusetts and **aliyyah i. abdur-rahman** from

Brown University. The March 10 event explored what cognitive narrative theory might teach about the discourse around race and the role narrative can play in this critical historical moment.

- In a March 8 presentation sponsored by the **Women's and Gender Studies** department, **A. Tainna Scozzaro, Hwei Lim, and Manisha Desai** discussed their activism and research addressing gender and climate justice.
- The **GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology** hosted a **trip for 10 students to visit the world-renowned Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation** in Savannah, Ga. on March 3. Students representing majors in aviation flight technology, aviation management technology, mechanical engineering and electrical and computer engineering learned about the aviation industry and the possible future internships and careers with Gulfstream and other aviation companies.
- The **Africology and African Studies** department sponsored an **intergenerational discussion featuring Detroit artists and activists** in conversation about the traditions, histories, and significance of music in social movements on Feb. 24.
- **Dr. Evan Darzi, CEO of ElectraTect Inc.**, spoke on Feb. 21, as a guest of the **Chemistry** department.
- The **Black Honors Student Organization** hosted a winter clothes drive during the month of February. They brought all donated clothes, hygiene and toiletry products, monetary donations, and nonperishable items to the Student Center to make individualized care bags that were donated to Ozone House in Ypsilanti.

Athletics

- Basketball (Women): **RayJon Harris, Courtnie Lewis, Kylee O'Hara, Natalie Pineda, and Ce'Nara Skanes** earned **Academic All-MAC** honors.
- Basketball (Women): **Areanna Combs** earned **Second Team All-MAC** honors.
- Basketball (Women): **Courtnie Lewis** is one of 60 athletes who been selected for the **"So You Want to be a Coach" program**, sponsored by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association.
- Basketball (Men): The Eagles topped CMU to win the **Michigan MAC trophy** for the fourth time since its inception in 2005.

- Basketball (Men): **Mo Njie** was named to the **All-MAC Freshman Team**.
- Basketball (Men): **Monty Scott** and **Darion Spottsville** have been drafted into the **Baloncesto Superior National**, Puerto Rico's professional league.
- Cheer: The EMU Cheer Team placed second at the **2022 NCA & NDA Collegiate National Championships**.
- Football (Men): **Bryson Cannon, Freddie McGee III, Thomas Odukoya, Michael Smith Jr., Carter Stagner,** and **Mike Van Hoveen** were named to the **2022 National Football Foundation Hampshire Honor Society**.
- Gymnastics (Women): **Ella Chemotti** tied for first place in the Bars event at the **MAC Championships** and was named **Freshman of the Year**. She also earned **All-Tournament Team**. **Raisa Boris** finished third in the All-Around competition.
- Gymnastics (Women): **Ella Chemotti** earned **First Team All-MAC** honors and qualified for the **NCAA Regional Championships**.
- Swimming & Diving (Women): Three EMU divers placed in the top five in the 1-Meter event at the **MAC Championships**. **Bethany Berger** placed second, **Camryn Hughes** took third, and **Keira Veltigian** finished fifth. **Bethany Berger** placed second in the 3-Meter Dive. **Riley Hofmann** placed second in the 200 Fly and third in the 400 IM.
- Swimming & Diving (Women): **Riley Hofmann** was named **All-MAC First Team** and **Bethany Berger** was named **All-MAC Second Team**.
- Swimming & Diving (Women): **Bethany Berger, Camryn Hughes, Rebekah Knapp,** and **Keira Veltigian** qualifies for the NCAA Zone C Diving Championships.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Women): The Eagles placed second in the **MAC Championships**. **Kadian Clarke** took home the gold in the Weight Throw, with **Ariel Floyd** placing second. The team of **Tiffany Cernej-Garcia, Chloe Musta, Julia Pleskacyznska,** and **Lexi Seifert** placed second in the Distance Medley Relay. The team of **Tiffany Cernej-Garcia, Mair Edwards, Keypathwa Gibson,** and **Norriyah Johnson** won the 4x400m Relay. **Quintella Johnson** placed second in the High Jump event and **Mair Edwards** placed third in the 400m.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Women): **Kadian Clarke, Tiffany Cernej-Garcia, Mair Edwards, Keypathwa Gibson,** and **Norriyah Johnson** secured their places on the **First Team All-MAC**. **Ariel Floyd** and **Quintella Johnson** earned **Second Team All-MAC** honors.

- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): The Eagles captured its second consecutive **MAC Indoor Championship**. **Sue Parks** was named **Men's Coach of the Year**. **Mark Rinker** was named **Men's Assistant Coach of the Year**. **Baldvin Magnusson** was named **Men's Most Valuable Performer** and **Men's Most Outstanding Track Performer**. **Tajay Roberts** was named **Men's Freshman Co-Track Performers**.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): In the 5,000m event, **Baldvin Magnusson** placed first, **Toby Gualter** placed second, and **Josh Hill** placed fourth. The team of **Solomon Costa, Derek Jones, Marcus Kemp, and Linus Vennemann** placed second in the Distance Medley Relay. In the Weight Throw, **Newlyn Stephenson** placed second and **Taige Bryant** placed third. **Baboucar Sallah-Mohammed** placed second in the Long Jump. **Kaleb Simpson** took second in the 60m event and **Richie Sadler** took third in the 400m. In the 800m event, **Derek Jones** placed second and **Baldvin Magnusson** placed third. **Baldvin Magnusson** and **Toby Gualter** took the top two spots in the 3000m event. The team of **Derek Jones, Dante Lander, Tajay Roberts, and Payne Wylie** placed third in the 4x400m Relay. **Almighty Williamson** won the 60m Hurdles event. **Ousman Kamara** took third in the High Jump and **Baboucar Sallah-Mohammed** placed third in the Tiple Jump. **Chukwusom Enekwechi** took second in the Shot Put event. **Skyler Lester** placed third in the Heptathlon.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): **Baldvin Magnusson** and **Almighty Williamson** earned **First Team All-MAC** honors.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): **Solomon Costa, Chukwusom Enekwechi, Toby Gualter, Derek Jones, Marcus Kemp, Baboucar Sallah-Mohammed, Kaleb Simpson, Newlyn Stephenson, and Linus Vennemann** were named **Second Team All-MAC**.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): **Taige Bryant** and **Newlyn Stephenson** qualified for the **NCAA Indoor Championships** in the Weight Throw event.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): **Taige Bryant** earned **First-Team All-American** honors.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): **Baldvin Magnusson** will represent Iceland in the **2022 World Athletics Indoor Championships**.
- Track & Field (Indoor) (Men): Director/Head Coach **Sue Parks** was named the **Great Lakes Region Men's Coach of the Year** for the 2022 NCAA D1 Indoor Track & Field season.
- Former EMU football player **Terry Myrick** was selected by the Michigan Panthers with the fifth overall pick in the 29th round of the **United States Football League** draft.

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- Former University administrator **Lucy Parker** has been inducted into the **Mid-American Conference Hall of Fame** in recognition of her contribution to the advancement of women's athletics.

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