

CAMPUS ECU UPDATE

November 2020

Pierson's Perceptions

As we approach the Thanksgiving Holiday, many of us will consider the blessings we have received throughout the year. We will give praise to those things that made our lives better and to the people who enriched it. As you look through this month's Campus Update, I ask you to consider the blessings we have at ECU.

Current students are to be praised for their adherence to safety protocols. Because of their exemplary behavior, we have been able to be on campus for more than 12 weeks and to have a variety of social events.

Even during these difficult times, students continue to excel, earning high GPAs, participating in international competitions, and interacting with the community of Ada.

Faculty and staff are to be praised for their loyalty and service to the University. Not only is their dedication seen in the years they have provided service, but also in their collective work ethic. They consistently bring in prestigious grants and are recognized by their professional disciplines. We are grateful for their unique gifts. As noted before, none of us are able to do this work without all of us doing the work.

This Thanksgiving, please consider the gifts that you have received while at ECU and consider how you might pay those gifts forward to be a blessing for others.



Dr. Katricia Pierson
President
East Central University

ECU gets creative in face of pandemic challenges

With the Covid-19 pandemic showing no signs of slowing yet, ECU has found creative ways to keep things moving along safely on campus.

ECU has plans to replace its traditional, in-person December commencement exercise with a safer, virtual event.

"The Covid-19 pandemic continues to make it difficult for ECU to safely host large gatherings, which means we will not be able to hold a traditional commencement ceremony in December," said Dr. Katricia Pierson, ECU president. "As important as that event is, nothing is more important



Unstoppable Tiger!

A graduation candidate for the fall 2020 semester displays her gown, tassel and diploma cover at a recent Graduation Fair event in the north lounge of Memorial Student Union.

than the health and well-being of our students, their loved ones, and the campus community."

The fall 2020 virtual commencement event

is set for **December 12**, which will honor May 2020 graduates as well.

Stay tuned to the ECU [website](http://www.ecok.edu/) for more details as it draws near.

ECU to waive ACT requirement for 2021-22

Because the pandemic has interfered with testing, ECU will waive the ACT and SAT admission requirement for first-year undergraduate applicants for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Enrollment for the spring 2021 semester begins November 2 and

applications for the fall 2021 semester are begin accepted now, with an early scholarship deadline of December 15.

Applications and additional Covid-19 exemptions are available online. For full details, please visit www.ecok.edu/admissions or call 580-559-5236.

Call ECU at 580-332-8000!

TIGER TALES

ECU Education department lands valuable STEM grant through 2023

ECU's Education department has received a summer research grant to help better prepare area teachers in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math – better known by its acronym of STEM. The Sustainable Energy for Empowering Rural Communities grant program, administered by the National Science Foundation, is for \$130,000 across the next three years.

ECU 2020 Nursing graduates post incredibly strong results on NCLEX

ECU's 2020 Nursing graduates posted a whopping 94.29% composite first-time pass rate on the National Council Licensure Exam, which is the mandatory test that determines if the candidate is safe to begin practice as an entry-level nurse. The NCLEX is available only to students who have already completed an accredited nursing program. There are two variations, one for registered nurses and one for practical nurses. The 94.29% rate equates to 66 of 70 graduates passing the NCLEX on the first attempt.

Professor, students teaching Russian to area children in free outreach program

Area school children have an opportunity to learn about the Russian language and culture free of charge. Dr. Mara Sukholutskaya, a longtime Languages professor and director of Global Education at ECU, and her advanced students are teaching Russian to children ages 9-12 in an exciting, new outreach program at the Ada Public Library.

Read these stories *in full* at www.ecok.edu/news/



ECU professor honored by Oklahoma Bar Association

Dr. Christine Pappas, chair of ECU's department of Politics, Law and Society, has been honored by the Oklahoma Bar Association with its prestigious Outstanding Service to the Public award.

Pappas has taught American politics at ECU since 2001. She teaches courses in Tribal Politics, Constitutional Law, and Women in Politics. She has been an OBA member herself since 2010 and is a board member of Oklahoma Indian Legal Services.

Pappas also serves as director of the Native American Legal Clinic, as well as director of the Water Resource Policy and Management master's degree program. She also directs three Early Settlement Mediation offices that serve 27 counties.

Read much more about it at www.ecok.edu/news.

Give \$20 in 2020!

Make a gift of \$20 or more to East Central University today & we will send you an ECU mask!*



*Now through December 31, 2020, while supplies last.

ECU alumnus named assistant diversity dean at SMU school

ECU alumnus Steven Denson has been named Assistant Dean of Diversity at the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. His new leadership duties began October 1.



DENSON

A native of Wapanucka and a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, he graduated from ECU in 1991. He followed that

with a master's degree from Carnegie Mellon University.

Read much more at www.ecok.edu/news.



Art in action

Fine Arts students add to a mural just west of the Chickasaw Business and Conference Center. The goal is to finish by the end of the semester.

Entrepreneur students ready for global pitch competition

Seven of the 110 international competitors selected for the 2020 Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) Virtual Pitch Competition are ECU students. They were chosen from more than 300 applicants representing 151 global campuses. No other school had more competitors than ECU.

ECU Entrepreneur students competing include **Stephanie Black**, of Wewoka; **Logan Carter**, of Shawnee; **Gineka Ferguson**, of Nassau, Bahamas; **Fredeshia Neely**, also of Nassau; **Jordan**

Odell, of Asher; **David Tahchawwickah**, of Sasakwa; and **Zoe Tanner**, of Hugo.

ECU's Entrepreneur students will go toe-to-toe with competitors from distinguished schools such as Duke, Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Some competitors hail from as far away as Africa, India and Israel. Students will compete for a share of \$15,000 in seed money offered as prizes for the top finishers.

For the full story, please visit www.ecok.edu/news.

Faculty art exhibit open

ECU's Art+Design:Media+Communication department presents its 66th annual faculty art exhibit from now through November 13. The 2020 exhibit takes place at the Pogue Gallery in the Hallie Brown Ford Fine Arts Center.

To comply with Covid-19 safety protocols, masks and social distancing are required for the event. The Pogue Gallery is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m. and admission to the faculty art exhibit is free.

**#GIVING
2ECUDAY**

Save The Date
December 1, 2020

**SPRING 2021
enroll today!**

Current ECU Students

- Honors/Support Services: Nov. 2
- Graduates/Seniors: Nov. 3
- Juniors: Nov. 4
- Sophomores: Nov. 5
- Continuing Freshmen: Nov. 6

Concurrent: Nov. 9

New Freshmen: Nov. 9

Transfer: Nov. 9

ecok.edu/admissions



Fierce on the field, fierce in the classroom!

The 2019 ECU Soccer team claimed its final award, earning the United Soccer Coaches Team Academic Award for the 17th straight season, with a 3.54 team GPA. The Tigers were one of 569 women's teams across the country in all NCAA divisions to make the list.



Lazer-focused fun

ECU students, seeking a fun escape during the pandemic, play "Black Light Lazer Tag" in McBride Gymnasium.



Getting a kick out of it!

Dr. Steve Benton, director of ECU's Honors Program, delivers scrolls for the annual "Sorting Hat Ceremony" on October 8.



A vote of confidence

Dr. Pappas's students of work their annual voter registration drive on campus, with a significant election imminent.



Open for Education

A masked Roary Tiger stops by an open house event hosted by the ECU Education department on October 20.

Employees recognized in virtual meeting in lieu of annual banquet

Because of Covid-19 safety protocols, ECU conducted its annual Employee Recognition Banquet virtually during a Employee Town Hall meeting via Zoom on October 2. Congratulations to all these exemplary employees who make ECU such a top-notch place to work and the best University in the country!

PHYSICAL PLANT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR - Randy McDaniel

2020 CHARLEE LANIS MEMORIAL STAFF AWARD - Rob Thompson

TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

- Dr. Jessica Koch, *College of Education & Psychology*
- Melonie Johnson, *Education*
- Debra Ollila, *Nursing*
- Dr. Alisha Howard, *Biological & Environmental Sciences*

TENURE & PROMOTIONS

Instructor to Assistant Professor - Dr. Amy Ward, Dr. Destany Schafer-Morgan
Assistant Professor to Associate Professor (plus Tenure) - Dr. Stacey Bolin, Dr. Errol King, Dr. Matthew Lynam, Dr. Robin Roberson, Dr. Michael Scott
Associate Professor to Professor - Dr. Houston Mount II

QUALITY MATTERS

Passed Review - Dr. Usha Fountain, Dr. Jessica Koch, Matt McGaha, Dr. Michael Scott, Dr. Nick Stowers, Darcy Tessman
Designing Your Online Course - J.P. Rhea, Christyn Overstake, Sara Engel, Dr. Errol King, Dr. Scott Ketchum, Kelby Pletcher, Jan Long, Michael Maxwell, Donna Graves, Dr. Nicholas Jakob, Nancy McClain
Improving Your Online Course - Eric Howard, Dr. Mark Felts, Dr. Jacquelyn Dalton
Peer Reviewer Course - Shelly Bailey



Car show helps fund scholarship

The annual Cody Johnson Memorial Car Show on September 19 raised enough funds to elevate its namesake scholarship to \$15,000 and Centennial Endowment Level. The popular car show is hosted each year by local motorcycle club the Five80 Riders. Proceeds from the shows go to the scholarship fund that honors Johnson, a young man who died tragically in a motorcycle accident in November 2012.



ECU hosts principals, counselors

Buffy Lovelis, COO of the ECU Foundation, speaks to area high school officials during the Principal and Counselor Preview Day in late September on campus. The annual event was broken into two sessions to accommodate attending counselors and principals who come to the event to prepare themselves to share important information about the University with their students. Attendees learn about ECU housing, scholarship opportunities and much more.



ECU honors eight employees with a combined 275 years of service!

If you ever need evidence that ECU is a fantastic place to enjoy a long career, look no further than these eight employees who have dedicated their working lives in service of the University. **Dr. Shirley Mixon**, left, was honored for 41 years of service and **Becky Isaacs** was honored for 35 years of service. Mixon is a professor and director of ECU's Interdisciplinary Studies Program and Isaacs is director of the Financial Aid office. Also celebrated for 30-plus years of service were **Dr. Steven Walker**, Music professor, 36 years; **Dr. Charlie Jones**, Business professor, 33 years; **Dr. Eril Hughes**, English professor, 33 years; **Barry Hardwick**, Library Technical Services, 33 years; **Dr. Karen Williams**, Physics professor, 32 years; and **Dr. Mark Walling**, English professor, 32 years. ECU is fortunate and grateful to have such consistent, devoted faculty and staff guiding its students!

ECU FALL 2020 CARNIVAL FUN!



ECU hosted its annual Fall Carnival for students on the Bill S. Cole University Center lawn October 6. The event was well-attended by students, who have been exemplary about wearing protective masks on campus. Above, the masked men of Pi Kappa Alpha pose for a quick photo at the carnival.

