

CAMPUS ECU UPDATE

April 2020

Pierson's Perceptions

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Winston Churchill's quote is apt for what we have seen this past month.

There are many stories of giving found in this month's Campus Update: students who have sewn masks for area hospitals and clinics, faculty and coaches who have worked with students to help them succeed, and alumni and community partners who have stepped up to help.

The success of our students is realized through the scholarships given to them. Those scholarships are the fruits of generosity, and we are very thankful for donors including current students, alumni, agencies, and corporations. They have all given to help others.

We are grateful for the students who entrust in us their time and talent and for those individuals who believe students are worth the financial investment. Thank you for the life we make at ECU.



*Dr. Katricia Pierson
President
East Central University*

ECU scores big at Love's Cup

With another dominant performance at the Love's Entrepreneur's Cup competition, East Central University continues to build a strong case as Oklahoma's best business school.

All four of ECU's Love's Cup teams claimed prize money at the 2020 competition. In fact, ECU brought home seven separate awards, more than any other university in the state, with total combined winnings of \$27,000.



"I'm proud of how hard our students worked," said Dr. Stacey Bolin, ECU team mentor.

See "Love's" on Page 6

ECU alum steps into high-profile interpreter role

If you've watched a televised COVID-19 press conference



recently by the Oklahoma governor or Oklahoma City mayor, you've probably noticed the energetic, expressive American Sign Language interpreter nearby.

That's East Central University graduate **Jimmy Mitchell**.

See "Signs" on Page 3

Edens named 2020 Nigh Award winner

As student body president holding a 4.0 grade point average, **Cullen Edens** is a well-known

personality on the campus of East Central University. Now the senior Accounting major has permanently etched his name in ECU history.

Edens, of Ada, is the 2020 recipient of ECU's prestigious George Nigh Award.



See "Nigh" on Page 3

Call ECU at 580-332-8000!

TIGER TALES

Byers earns Teaching Excellence award

The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, a worldwide organization, has awarded ECU Business instructor **Kristen Byers** with its 2020 Teaching Excellence Award for Region 6. Byers is one of only 15 instructors to receive this prestigious award this year.



The ACBSP's Region 6 includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. This is the fifth consecutive Region 6 teaching excellence award recipient for ECU instructors.

Ulrich Scholars set to graduate

The 2019 and 2020 Ulrich Fellows, who each spent a semester in the nation's capital as part of the Fellowship, are set to graduate from East Central University this May with degrees in Political Science.

Jack Langley, 2019 Ulrich Fellow, will commission as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. **Alexis Benitez**, 2020 Ulrich Fellow, will attend the Oklahoma City University School of Law. The purpose of ECU's Ulrich Fellowship is to fund students to live and work in Washington, D.C., for a semester. It honors the life and legacy of Dr. John J. Ulrich, a former ECU Political Science professor.

ECU turns to S.H.A.R.E. Fund for 'Help a Tiger'

The ECU Student Help and Resources in Emergencies (S.H.A.R.E.) Fund is being utilized to assist students during the coronavirus pandemic. The University has launched a "Help a Tiger" campaign in direct response to the adverse impact the pandemic has made on the economic lives of ECU students and their families.



Those who contribute to the S.H.A.R.E. Fund are helping provide relief in many different ways. Administered by the ECU Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization, donations to the fund are tax-deductible as allowable by law.

When referred by ECU faculty or staff, a student may be eligible to receive support through the S.H.A.R.E. Fund. Students who receive assistance are not expected to repay funds; however, they are encouraged to "pay it forward" when possible. Other eligibility requirements apply.

To donate to the ECU S.H.A.R.E. Fund, submit a recommendation, or learn more about its guidelines, please visit www.ecok.edu/covid-19studentrelief.

HELP A TIGER
Help ECU students during this difficult time by donating to the SHARE Fund.

Donate Online: ecok.edu/Covid-19StudentRelief

#ECUTigerStrong

Nigh

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The George Nigh Award goes to the top graduating senior from ECU and is named in honor of the former governor of Oklahoma and ECU alumnus. Nigh served in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, as the state’s lieutenant governor, and later as its governor. Nigh also served as president of the University of Central Oklahoma.

Each year top ECU seniors are invited to apply and undergo a rigorous application and interview process. Edens was selected from a field of five very strong candidates including **Hannah Anderson**, of Noble; **Carly Heitland**, of Sulphur; **Allison Maurer**, of Goldsby; and **Abbie Winchester**, of Marietta.

To read much more about all the candidates, visit www.ecok.edu/news.

Signs

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He has made quite a name for himself around the state because of his unique, eye-catching interpreting style, which utilizes facial expressions as much as hand signs.

Mitchell, who earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling from ECU, practically stumbled into the high-profile role as ASL interpreter for two of Oklahoma’s highest-ranking civic leaders.

“I love ECU,” Mitchell said. “I was able to graduate with my BS at ECU in 2006, then support my wife getting her BS there as well. We did the whole dance again with our master’s programs, with me getting mine in 2013, then hers. ECU is not a ‘my way or the highway’ kind of university. They seem to be more flexible and accommodating with your needs.”

To read much more about Mitchell’s exciting adventure, visit www.ecok.edu/news.

Scholarship Spotlight

McCane earns Diversity Scholarship

East Central University’s Human Diversity Committee has selected **Trevor McCane**



to receive the 2020-2021 GLBT Centennial Diversity Scholarship. McCane, a senior from Valliant, is majoring in Human Services Counseling with a minor in Psychology. The GLBT scholarship is for \$1,000 per semester.

As part of the award, he’ll serve on the Human Diversity Committee.

Karki Scholarship goes to Ghale

East Central University Nursing student **Rita Ghale**, of Nepal, is the first-ever recipient of the Nisha Karki Endowed Scholarship.



The \$1,000 scholarship is named for Karki, another ECU Nursing student from Nepal, who passed away in 2016. The award was made possible through the tireless efforts, persistence and generosity of ECU’s Asian

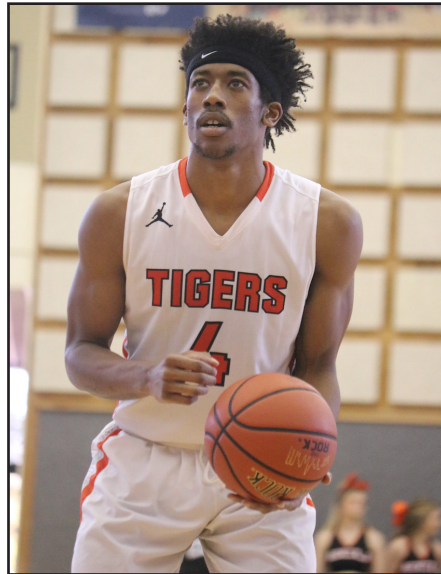
Student Association, ASA alums and others. Ghale, a senior, will receive \$500 each semester for the 2020-21 academic year.

ECU helps student reach goals during pandemic

As the coronavirus continues to scramble lives, one student-athlete is going to great lengths to achieve his personal goals – and East Central University is ensuring that he succeeds.

Jalan Brown, a senior from Saint Paul, Minnesota, is definitely putting in his share of the work. He's on track to graduate with a degree in Kinesiology next month. He was also a key player on the ECU Tiger basketball team, whose season ended at the conference tournament just days before the pandemic started to make its presence felt.

Brown was able to finish out his college basketball career, but like all ECU students his daily academic routine has been upended by the coronavirus. For Brown and other seniors, it couldn't have arrived at a more inconvenient time – just months before earning a



prized degree.

As the pandemic started to spread in early March, ECU extended Spring Break an extra week for students. Brown returned home to Saint Paul during the break, celebrating his 22nd birthday with his family. He had planned on staying there to finish his final semester online, but again the coronavirus reared its ugly

head. While he was home, the state of Minnesota – acting days before Oklahoma would – issued a stay-at-home order, which basically closed down the entire city.

Suddenly feeling stuck in Saint Paul without the tools he needed and determined to overcome it, he drove the 800-plus miles back to Ada. He knew that ECU's Linscheid Library would allow him to check out a laptop computer so he could finish the semester and earn his degree on time.

Brown is back in Ada, in a rental house off campus, practicing social distancing and focusing on finishing his last semester of studies at ECU. His future plans include playing professional basketball overseas and becoming a personal trainer to help others reach their fitness goals.

To read the entire story, visit www.ecok.edu/news.

Incoming freshman earns annual Trailblazer Scholarship

East Central University's Human Diversity Committee has awarded the Dr. Shirley Mixon Trailblazer Scholarship to Byng senior **Delanie Seals**.

Seals will start at ECU in the fall and plans to major in Political Science. Byng High School is located north of Ada, Oklahoma.

The Trailblazer Scholarship was created by ECU's Black Alumni Association to recruit more Black students to ECU. The award is named for Dr. Shirley Mixon, senior faculty member. Seals

is the third recipient of the scholarship.

Seals has experience as a trailblazer. She successfully led a challenge of Byng High School's dress code policy of not allowing students to wear culturally appropriate headwear. Through the advocacy of Seals and other students, the school changed its policy.

Seals is now working on writing culturally sensitive legislation for the Oklahoma Legislature to protect the rights of students throughout the state.

ECU student gets the job done in difficult situation

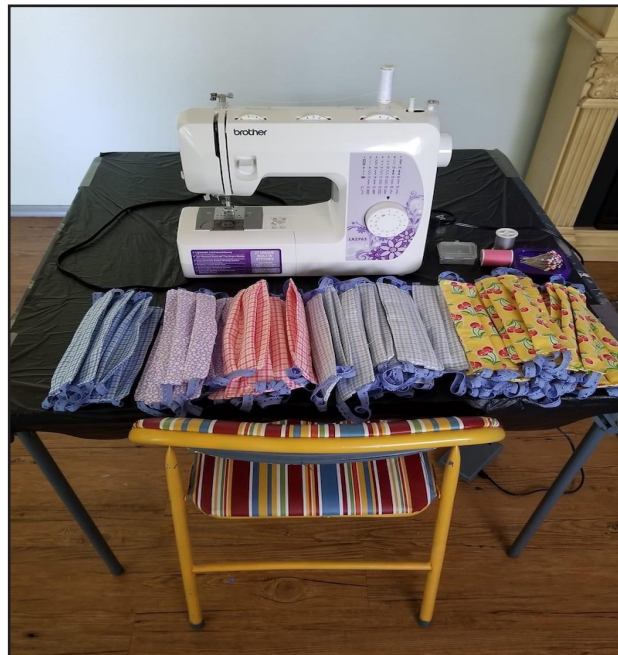
Even though COVID-19 has done its best to slow the entire world, one East Central University student is determined to offer her services to those in need.

ECU Legal Studies student **Melanie Andrews**, a junior from Seminole, recently represented Oklahoma Indian Legal Services by meeting with a client in a parking lot to execute a will while OILS Senior Attorney Niki Lindsey supervised remotely via live video.

Andrews serves as a paralegal in the OILS Native American Legal Clinic at ECU. The clinic is a collaboration between OILS and ECU's Legal Studies program. Andrews, of Seminole and Creek ancestry, is a citizen of the Seminole Nation and part of the "Nukose" Bear Clan. In her role as paralegal for the clinic, she performs research and helps draft estate planning documents.

Lindsey commended Andrews for her outstanding work and desire to go above and beyond for clients. Because of the spread of the coronavirus, Andrews had to do the job while adhering to current social distancing guidelines.

For more information about OILS, please call 405-943-6457. For more information about the Native American Legal Clinic at ECU, please call 580-559-5846 and leave a message. To learn more about majoring in Legal Studies at ECU, please call Jenna Owens at 580-559-5603.



ECU students make masks for hospital

East Central University students in the Human Development, Hospitality and Food Services department delivered the first batch of 100 hand-sewn face masks to the Chickasaw Nation Medical Center on Wednesday, April 15, to help protect hospital personnel and patients. The masks in this photo were made by **Amy Baker**, a senior from Ada.

Band students attend virtual masterclasses

ECU's "low brass" students attended three virtual masterclasses via the Zoom online video conferencing platform, observing social distancing protocols during the coronavirus pandemic.

Low brass instruments taught at ECU include trombone, tuba and euphonium.

Participating students were **Garrett Workman**, of Bridge Creek; **Seth Stevens**, of Lindsey; **Tony Thoma**, of Tecumseh; **Kelin Parrish**, of Comanche; **Preston Phillips**, of Eufaula; **Ian Kulakowski**, of Oklahoma City; **Trevor Aycox**, of Ardmore; and **Dalaan Bassett**, of Sulphur.

Love's

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The traditionally exciting and opulent Love's Cup awards ceremony was sidelined this year by the coronavirus pandemic, but the celebration moved online with an energetic Facebook Live event that broadcast the joyful, surprised reactions of winners from their respective homes.

The actual Love's Entrepreneur's Cup competition a week earlier also occurred online with students utilizing Zoom

video software to make their competitive pitches.

Winning ECU students included **Casey Black**, of Chickasha; **Cullen Edens**, of Ada; **Chris McMahan**, of Ardmore; and **Tanner Jack** and **Halen Ogles**, also of Ada.

The Love's Cup is a collegiate business plan competition open to students on any Oklahoma campus. Students take what they have learned in a classroom setting and apply it to real-world opportunities as they assemble teams, identify

products, research markets, formulate financial projections and write business plans.

The competition comes when teams pitch their concepts to a panel of potential investors, much like the popular television series "Shark Tank."

"This is one of the best nights of the year for the Stoenipher School of Business," said Dean Wendell Godwin.

To read the complete story, including details of cash awards, please visit www.ecok.edu/news.

Save The Date
WOW WEEK

AUGUST 15-21, 2020

All incoming freshman are invited to participate in ECU Tiger Welcome Orientation Week (WOW), which starts the Saturday of move-in weekend and continues through the first week of classes. More details will be made available as the date grows closer.




Check out ECU photos at [www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries!](http://www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries)