

Campus Update

NASNTI REACHE continues transformative support for ECU

ADA, Okla. – East Central University is distinguished as a Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution (NASNTI).

The U.S. Department of Education awards grant funding to NASNTI-designated institutions to expand services and resources that support Native American or Pell-eligible students in completing a higher education degree.

The NASNTI REACHE Program at ECU continues to provide crucial support to the university and its students.

SEE NASNTI, PAGE 2



ECU students, staff and faculty participate in a game of stickball, sponsored by the NASNTI REACHE Program.

TSET visits Dan Hays STEM Center

In Nov. 2025, the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) announced a \$13M Legacy Grant to ECU to support completion of the Dan Hays STEM Center and School of Nursing. Construction began in summer 2025, with the facility projected for completion in July 2026.

A TSET representative recently visited the Dan Hays STEM Center to tour the construction site and view progress firsthand. The visit underscored the partnership between TSET and ECU and their shared commitment to expanding nursing education and strengthening Oklahoma’s healthcare workforce.

SEE STEM, PAGE 4

Tiger Tangles sells out Ataloo Theatre for third consecutive year



SEE TANGLES, PAGE 5

BAA Black History Month Program

Mike Glover, a multimedia journalist with News 9 and Oklahoma City native, appeared as the keynote speaker for the 2026 Black Alumni Association's Black History Month event, "Celebrating a Century of Black History."

ECU President Wendell Godwin, ECU-BAA President LaShawn Gallimore, and other members of ECU-BAA, as well as students, also spoke at the event.

In addition, the Multicultural Committee of Ada presented the Spirit of MLK Award to Cortez Coleman and Xerxes Griffin, honoring their significant contributions to the community.



Dr. Michael Scott has been appointed to serve as a member of the Incentive Evaluation Commission by the Oklahoma State Senate President Pro Tempore, Lonnie Paxton.

NASNTI

From Page 1

Since 2017, the program has supported campus through hundreds of thousands of dollars in resources and improvements to ECU's Linscheid Library, including group and individual study rooms, a Digital Humanities Lab, an Active Learning Center, updated technology, furnishings, learning supplies and expanded collections.

While NASNTI REACHE funding is designed to support Native American or Pell-eligible students, the resources and improvements made possible through the program are intentionally available to all ECU students, faculty and staff.

Notable contributions include the creation of three group study rooms in 2017, the establishment of the Digital Humanities Lab and four individual study rooms in 2018, and the conversion of the library's

instruction room into an Active Learning Center in 2021. Continued investments through 2026 include upgraded technology such as new iMac computers, a large-format printer, streaming video resources, virtual reality headsets, a recording studio, furniture upgrades and additional learning materials.

Beyond the library, NASNTI REACHE has assisted other areas of campus, including support to the Chickasaw Business and Conference Center and additional university buildings, further expanding access to modern, student-centered learning spaces.

In addition to providing funding for building and equipment upgrades, NASNTI REACHE also offers other services including professional development for staff and faculty, 24/7 online tutoring and mentoring for students, access to student

support software, a laptop and hotspot loaner program, referrals to various departments based on student needs and more.

The program continues to work hand-in-hand with departments and services across campus, such as the Academic Success Center, Student Employment, Student Support Services, Housing and Residential Life, Health and Counseling Services and Athletics, only to name a few.

Opportunities for students to participate in trips to tribal lands and reservations across the nation are also provided. As well as an Indigenous Alternative Spring Break (IASB) to Hawaii, organized in partnership with the Pacific Island Institute, to discover the rich history and vibrant culture of Native Hawaiians, serving as an exciting but educational experience for students who may have limited access to experiential learning opportunities.

Pontotoc County Drug Free Coalition in Concert Gala



Representatives from ECU joined the Brandon Whitten Institute, Oklahoma Representative Ronny Johns and many community members to honor and celebrate the coalitions volunteers and their efforts to prevent substance abuse and promote recover.



ECU President Wendell Godwin and university leadership met with former Oklahoma Superintendent of Public Instruction, Joy Hofmeister, and U.S. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Kirsten Baesler.



Dr. Joshua Grasso book launch

Dr. Joshua Grasso from ECU’s Department of English and Languages debuted his first book of stories, “Vanishing Acts,” to a packed crowd inside ECU’s Linscheid Library.

Grasso discussed balancing his teaching career with writing, how aspiring writers should prepare for acceptance and rejection and answered questions from the crowd.



ECU’s Chief of Staff, Preston Draper (right), recently attended the Henry Family Lecture at the University of Oklahoma where he met with several familiar faces, including recent ECU alumna, Lynsey Martin (left), along with other ECU alumni and Ada residents.

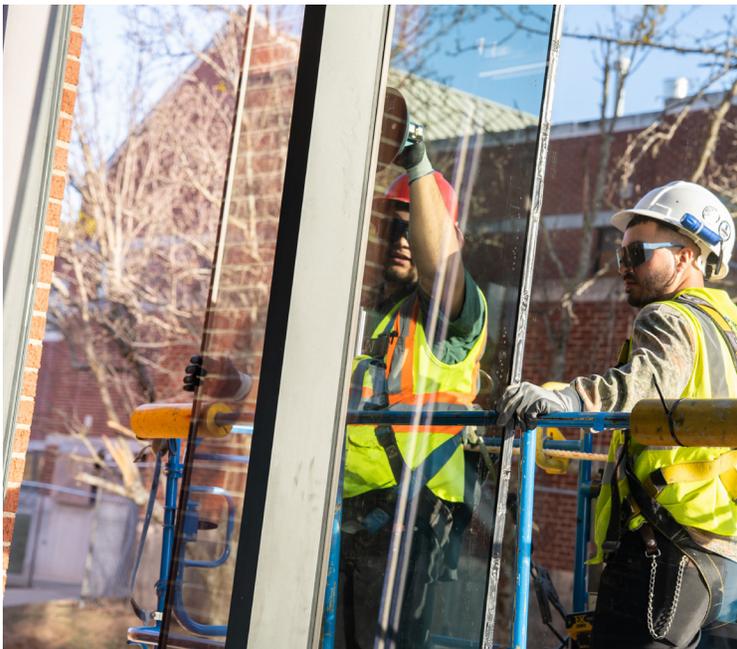
Former ECU professor and Dean Emeritus, Dr. Bill Osborne, returned to campus in February to deliver a Book Talk at the Linscheid Library.

Dr. Osborne discussed the three book series that he has been writing since his retirement from the university.



STEM

From Page 1





ECU Royalty visit Vanoss School



ECU Homecoming King Izzy Stephens



ECU Homecoming Queen Scottlyn Hatton

Global Education Program ft. Spotlight on France and Brazil

International student and France native, Lucas Bauduin, spoke about his experience as a student at ECU and the differences between ECU and his home university in Limoges, France. In addition, ECU student Camden Wilmes also spoke on his experience studying at ECU's sister university in Brazil, Pontificia Universidade Católica do Paraná (PUCPR).



Students attend the Fancy and Fancy Free Prom on campus



Students participate in Valentine's Day bouquet building between classes

Upcoming Events

- March 2
 - ECU Solo Contest, 7:30 p.m.
- March 3
 - Midterm Study Bag, 10 a.m.
- March 4
 - The Parker Center for Ethics Luncheon/Lecture, 11:50 a.m.
 - Paws & Relax, 4 p.m.
- March 5
 - OSSAA 4A Area Basketball Tournament
 - Brave Spaces: Mental Health Fair, 10:30 a.m.
 - Super Smash Bros. Open Tournament, 5 p.m.
 - ECU Showtime Presents: Steel Magnolias, 7:30 p.m.
- March 6
 - OSSAA 4A Area Basketball Tournament
 - Baseball vs. OBU, 2 p.m.
 - ECU Showtime Presents: Steel Magnolias, 7:30 p.m.
- March 7
 - OSSAA 4A Area Basketball Tournament
 - STEMPact Ada: Machine Learning, 10 a.m.
 - ECU Showtime Presents: Steel Magnolias, 7:30 p.m.
- March 8
 - ECU Band Concert, 2:30 p.m.
- March 9
 - Chintaloowali, 7 p.m.
- March 10
 - Baseball vs. SWOSU, 3 p.m.
- March 11
 - The ECU Interscholastic Meet, 8 a.m.
 - Kinesiology Health Fair, 11 a.m.
 - Stickball on the Lawn, 12:30 p.m.
 - Campus Wide Town Hall, 3 p.m.

During the 2025-26 Winter Intersession, East Central University offered the Legal Studies seminar Conflict Resolution to students interested in being trained in Early Settlement Mediation. Jorjia Cash, who is the Director of Early Settlement Mediation, and Christine Pappas, Chair of Politics, Law, and Society, led the class. Students learned many aspects of conflict resolution in the legal setting. They visited with lawyers, judges, peacemakers, and Oklahoma Supreme Court Chief Justice Dustin Rowe. Taylor Masquas, a Legal Studies senior and a Court Clerk with the Seminole Nation, wrote about the experience from her point of view.

Don't Forget Your Bloodline

By Taylor Masquas, ECU

Conflict resolution.
Mediation. Peace making.

I was fortunate enough to take a class learning what all these big words meant in the legal world, and the role I can play when I go put my new fancy training to use.

But really what I want to express is:

For a little bit now, I've felt like I lost sight of my purpose and what motivates me at my job as a court clerk. I know I love most everything about law, and I still feel very fortunate and grateful to be able to do what I do, but the daily routines of work, school, and mom life was taking its toll.

In hindsight, I really feel like this class was meant for me to take. Not simply to be trained as a mediator, but to show me the bigger picture of how I fit into this world, who I'm doing it for, why it matters, and how to resolve conflict within myself and those relationships that particularly weigh heavy on me.

The most powerful day was when our class visited the

Peacemakers for the Chickasaw Nation court. I felt like we (my class) grew insanely close to each other after we all had a peacemaking AKA trauma dump session with Miss T. and Mr. Edgar. They are Chickasaw tribal elders who guide the Peacemaking process.

But in actuality, there was something profound about the way they explained their purpose: while most mediations focus on resolving conflict and making peace involving material items, they focus on healing the relationships between those who are conflicted and who want to resolve those issues for all involved in a court matter. I loved that so, so much and it made perfect sense.

In reality, we all deal with conflict whether we ever have to go through the court system or not. For those who do have to go through it, it's most always involving some sort of crisis affecting them or a loved one.

Although I'm not a big attorney or judge, my job (either as a clerk or volunteer mediator) still



plays a vital role in their experiences with us. I am, though, a human being who isn't perfect and lives among other flawed human beings, and I have been either the cause of conflict or a player in it, so the conversations held with Miss T. and Mr. Edgar called me out good.

I hope my writing doesn't come across as bragging about what I do or the class I took, but to just share a story about how if a message is meant to find you, it will find a way, and it's up to you to listen and put it to good use. Also, ECU and law is cool.

I hope someone can at least read this and resonate with something, but

ESPECIALLY to those who are native like me - don't forget your bloodline and what it took for you to be here, doing the things you do and being **** good at it... it took levels of sacrifices from your ancestors so take great pride in where and who you are. I learned that from Miss T!

Take time and space for yourself to look at the bigger picture, or (this was mainly what I learned) love yourself enough to confront your shortcomings and properly address how they've negatively impacted your relations to others... then stop carrying it silently.



DPS
Dramatic Productions Service, Inc.

East Central University
Presents

STEEL
Magnolias
BY ROBERT HARLING

DIRECTED BY VICKIE REIFSNIDER

MARCH 5-7, 2026 7:30 PM

HALLIE BROWN FORD FINE ARTS CENTER
CHALMERS-HERMAN BLACKBOX THEATRE

FREE FOR STUDENTS WITH ECU ID
\$10 FOR ADULTS
\$5 FOR CHILDREN AGE 5 AND UNDER



welcome!
LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

FRIDAY, MARCH 13
8:00AM-9:30AM
ECU TAFF CAFETERIA/SOUTH DINING

\$20/MEMBER
\$35/NONMEMBER

★★★★★
INVITED SPEAKERS:

SENATOR JONATHAN WINGARD
REPRESENTATIVE RONNY JOHNS
CONGRESSMAN COLE FIELD REP - AMBER SAVAGE
SENATOR LANKFORD FIELD REP - CEDON HARAZDA
SENATOR MULLINS FIELD REP - MADISON GRIFFIN

PRESENTED BY:
the Chickasaw Nation
The Chamber

BREAKFAST SPONSORS:
VISION BANK
OG/E We Energize Life
Simmons Bank

ORIGINALS 2026
DEBUT!

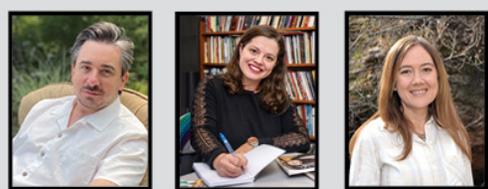
Tuesday, March 24th
@ 3:30 in the Linscheid Library

Hear the new works & see the new art from our 2026 issue!
And buy a copy--only \$5!

Scissortail 21st Annual
Creative Writing Festival

At East Central University - Ada, Oklahoma
Event is free and open to the public.

Featured Authors



Joseph Fasano Traci Brimhall Chera Hammons

Presenting 60+ authors from Oklahoma and beyond

APRIL 2nd-4th 2026

The Darryl Fisher High School Creative Writing Contest
- & -
Regional Undergraduate Creative Writing Contest
**see website for details*

www.ecuscissortail.blogspot.com

