

# CAMPUS ECU UPDATE

September 2020

## Pierson's Perceptions

*It is so wonderful to have all our students, faculty and staff back on the ECU campus again for the fall 2020 semester!*

*As you are likely already aware, ECU has mandated face coverings (masks) on campus for all students and employees. We believe this is a vital step toward eliminating the Covid-19 threat. I am also pleased that our host community, the City of Ada, has enacted a mask mandate as well. Again, it is our opinion that when students, employees and our neighbors honor these important precautions it will help stop the spread of Covid-19.*

*We are not naïve, however. ECU has been preparing for months to ensure that it takes care of its students, employees and visitors. ECU has allocated 10% of its residence halls to those who may need to be quarantined due to Covid-19 infection. To date, as reported to ECU by employees working and students taking classes on campus, only 0.25% of our campus community have tested positive. All things considered, that is a remarkably low number. Let's work together to keep that figure low, and let's work toward total elimination!*

*Those who are quarantined on campus are being provided full support during their individual situations. ECU is a place where you are a name, not a number and we care about each and every one of you.*

*Welcome all back to campus. Let's do what we can to make this a safe and fruitful semester!*



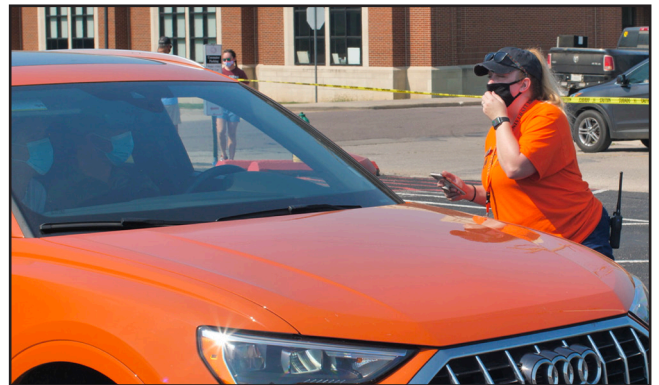
**Dr. Katricia Pierson**  
President  
East Central University

## ECU campus roars back to life, with new challenges

Fall 2020 classes at East Central University began August 17 with flexible instruction options available and comprehensive Covid-19 safety protocols in place for students and employees.

The fall semester kicked off with move-in day and traditional "Tiger Welcome Orientation Week" activities. Most activities were held outside with safety protocols being observed.

While the Covid-19 pandemic has caused enrollment to dip at many universities, ECU has enjoyed steady enrollment numbers – even a slight increase over last fall's figures. The University offered \$1,500 vouchers for transfer students, which helped buoy enrollment. ECU also avoided a tuition increase for this academic year. To read more, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



### Drive through, please!

*ECU conducted a "drive-through" check-in for students as part of its Covid-19 safety protocols. To read exactly what ECU has done to prepare for fall, please turn to Page 5.*



### Back in business

*An ECU student visits a vendor on campus at "Howdy Days" during the first week of school.*

## Economy benefits from return of ECU students

East Central University's ability to safely bring students back to campus for the fall 2020 semester spells relief for ECU's bottom line – which in turn provides a boon to the local economy.

"ECU definitely contributes to our sales tax collections," said Lisa Bratcher, City of Ada public information director. "It is always good to see the students come back to town, and the entire community benefits when they are here."

**Call ECU at 580-332-8000!**

# TIGER TALES

## Honors Program delivers record scholarships numbers for 2020

East Central University's Honors Program is welcoming its incoming 2020 class with a record-breaking



number of scholarship awards. The 2020 Honors class includes 36 scholarship awardees and one high school student, who is taking concurrent

classes. Of the scholarship awardees, 30 are receiving four-year Honors scholarships that are worth \$20,000 each. This is highest number of scholarships the program has awarded since its inception in 1985.

## ECU distributes complimentary face coverings for all students

To make sure students are equipped to keep themselves and others safe from the threat of Covid-19, the University distributed complimentary face coverings, or masks on campus. Each enrolled student received a free, ECU-branded mask upon



request and extras were also made available for purchase. Disposable paper masks are also available throughout campus. For more information about safety protocols, visit [www.ecok.edu/returning-ecu](http://www.ecok.edu/returning-ecu).



## Talking water, virtually

*Oka' The Water Institute at East Central University Director Susan Paddack enjoys a moment with Chickasaw Nation Gov. Bill Anoatubby at the 2019 Water Sustainability Conference. The 2020 conference will be offered online. For more details, visit [www.okainstitute.org/conference2020](http://www.okainstitute.org/conference2020).*

## Grants breathe fresh life into University projects

### Water sustainability

East Central University will play a key role in a recently awarded \$20 million grant to study the intersection of land use, water availability and infrastructure. During the five-year award, a team of 34 researchers will develop and test science-based solutions for complex problems of sustainability.

### Student Support Services

The U.S. Department of Education announced that East Central University is set to receive a federal Student Support Services grant in excess of \$1.3 million over the next five years to help students succeed in - and graduate from - college. The grant will facilitate academic tutoring, financial aid counseling, career and college mentoring, assistance in choosing appropriate academic courses, among other services.

### Library services

ECU received an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant totaling \$428,304 for a three-year project that will focus on developing a research method for evaluating the effectiveness of Open Educational Resources in increasing lifelong learning competencies.

To learn much more about these grants, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



# ECU welcomes new campus leaders

East Central University welcomed two new vice presidents to campus over the summer, replacing two longtime campus leaders who retired from service.

ECU welcomed Dr. Brandon Hill as new Vice President for Student Development, replacing Dr. Jerry Forbes who retired at the end of the spring 2020 semester.

Dr. Hill previously served as Vice President of Life Calling & Integrative Learning and Chief Student Affairs Officer at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana.

As Vice President of



**DR. BRANDON HILL**

Student Development, Hill will oversee several areas of the university including housing and residence life, student organizations, international student programs, career development, counseling and



**DR. JEFFREY GIBSON**

health services.

ECU also welcomed Dr. Jeffrey Gibson as its new Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, replacing Dr. Brenda Sherbourne who also retired at the completion of the

spring 2020 semester.

Dr. Gibson served in the same position at Wesley College in Dover, Delaware, for the previous five years.

Gibson brings significant academic and administrative experience to ECU. A tenured professor in English at Wesley since 2005, he also held the position of Associate Dean of Curriculum & Program Development and directed the college's Honors Program before being named Provost there in 2015.

To learn more about these leaders, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

## New faculty announced for 2020-2021 academic year



East Central University proudly announces its new faculty members for the 2020-2021 academic year, including those who joined during the spring 2020 semester. New faculty members include **Germain Pichop, Ph.D.**,

Assistant Professor of Business Administration; **Anne Yoncha, M.F.A.**, Assistant Professor of Art + Design = Media + Communication; **Jacintha Webster, J.D.**, Assistant Professor of Politics, Law and Society; **Kevin Lynch, M.Ed.**, Instructor of Education; **Jackie Switzer, MSHR**, Assistant Professor of Professional Programs in Human Services; **Andrew Honeycutt, D.B.A.**, Visiting Professor of Business Administration; **Ashley McCallum, MSN, RN**, Instructor of Nursing; **Andraz McDaniel, M.S.**, Instructor of Nursing; and **Rebecca Williams, B.S.**, Instructor of Nursing. To read more information about these new faculty members, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

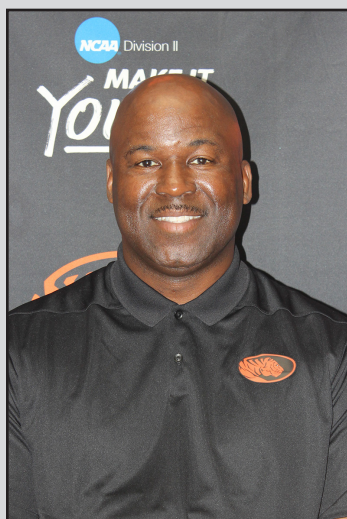


### Get your own ECU mask!

Even the tiger atop the fountain in front of ECU's Science Hall is wearing a face covering! To order your own ECU-branded mask, please visit [www.ecok.edu/ecu-mask](http://www.ecok.edu/ecu-mask).

## Crutchfield named new men's basketball coach

After spending over 20 years in collegiate coaching, mostly at NCAA Division I institutions, Chris Crutchfield has accepted the position of East Central



**CHRIS CRUTCHFIELD**

University Men's Basketball Head Coach, as announced by Director of Athletics Dr. Jeff Williams.

"Coach Crutchfield has built an impressive reputation within the college basketball community as an elite coach, recruiter and leader," Williams said.

Crutchfield has spent the last year at the University of Arkansas as the associate head coach, helping the Razorbacks to a 20-12 record. The prior eight seasons saw Crutchfield at the University of Oklahoma, spending his first five seasons as an assistant coach, before being elevated to the associate head coach in the 2016-17 season.

Read the entire story on Coach Crutchfield's hiring as head basketball coach on the ECU Athletics website at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com).



### T-shirt time!

ECU Football Head Coach Al Johnson sends T-shirts into the crowd of new freshmen during the 2020 Student Convocation. The event was held at Koi Ishto Stadium this year.

## Covid-19 sidelines sports until 2021

Following a meeting of the Great American Conference's Council of Presidents, the league has suspended all fall and winter sports – basketball, cross country, football, soccer and volleyball – and the two-semester sports of golf and tennis through December 31.



The Council made its recommendation in response to a directive from the NCAA Board of Governors regarding additional requirements

as well the cancellation of 2020 NCAA Division II Fall Championships.

All NCAA athletically related activities (in all GAC sports), including in-season practices, out-of-season practices, weight training, team athletically related meetings and voluntary workouts led by staff or in institutional facilities shall be permitted this fall based on each institution's ability to comply with the recent NCAA Board of Governors directive.

The GAC will continue to evaluate NCAA, federal, state, and local developments and will provide updated revisions as further information becomes available. The league will announce revised schedules at a later date.

To stay informed on the progress of ECU Athletics, please visit [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com).

### Tuba time!

What's college without the tunes? ECU Band students hit the ground running, performing for new freshmen at the fall student convocation. Because ECU's athletic programs have been sidelined until the spring 2021 semester, the Pride of Tigerland Marching Band will have ample opportunity to get into game shape!





## Summer 2020 geared toward bringing students back safely

East Central University spent significant time and resources during the summer months to gear up for the fall 2020 semester, taking every precaution to protect students, employees and campus visitors while taking a flexible approach to instruction.

“ECU holds as paramount the health, safety and welfare of every member of its community,” President Katricia Pierson wrote in a letter to students and employees over the summer. “We will continue to do our part to have a meaningful, productive and safe semester.”

Because the Covid-19 pandemic is still a factor, the on-campus experience now looks different from years past. ECU is following local, state and national healthcare guidelines, based primarily on wearing face coverings in public places and maintaining social distancing protocols at all times.

Each student and employee has been provided with one

### New challenges being met

*Returning ECU students and employees were greeted with Covid-19 safety protocols.*

washable cloth mask; disposable masks are also readily available throughout the campus. Classrooms have been rearranged to accommodate safe social distancing. Following protocols established in the spring, large gatherings are prohibited on campus this fall and athletic events are postponed until 2021.

Students and employees have ready access to disinfectant sprays and protective gloves if they choose to wipe down their work areas. More hand-sanitizing stations have been installed on campus and frequent, thorough hand washing – a vital component in preventing the spread of the virus – is constantly promoted. Students are encountering increased signage as well.

Fall classes are now a mixture of in-person and online/virtual instruction. Town hall style meetings with students and employees are also under way. These meetings take place remotely via Zoom teleconferencing software and will likely continue throughout the entire semester to ensure critical needs are being met.

More details about the changes on campus - including videos - are available at [www.ecok.edu/returningtocampus](http://www.ecok.edu/returningtocampus).



### Keeping clean!

*ECU's Covid-19 safety protocols include hand-sanitizing stations throughout campus, both indoors and outdoors.*



### Maintaining safe distance

*ECU Mass Media instructor Mike Maxwell, at right, addresses new students during the annual "Meet the Faculty" event at the beginning of the fall semester.*



### Even the mascot plays it safe!

*Roary Tiger knows the importance of following ECU's Covid-19 safety protocols, sporting his own custom face covering to keep himself and others safe.*

See all campus events at [www.ecok.edu/calendar](http://www.ecok.edu/calendar)!





## Surfin' ECU

A Tiger football coach enjoys a ride on the surfing machine during post-convocation activities north of Koi Ishto Stadium.



(Welcome Orientation Week)

## FALL 2020 SEMESTER



## Welcoming freshmen

ECU President Katricia Pierson speaks to the freshmen class during the 2020 Student Convocation.



## Can I get seconds? Thirds?

An ECU student digs in at the "pie" eating contest, part of the fun and games that follow the traditional Student Convocation ceremony that officially welcomes new students to campus.



## Now this is what you call 'Hump Day'

In what has become sort of a new tradition on campus, students ride camels on the Wednesday of Welcome and Orientation Week. The camels didn't wear masks, but students did!



## Campus fun!

In the photo at left, three ECU students pick up the latest Founders Day T-shirt, always a hit on "Freebie Friday." At right, a student tries his steady hand at "Blindfold Painting" on the Bill S. Cole University Center lawn. During this activity, the painter is guided only by the verbal cues of an observer ... with often hilarious results!



See **MANY MORE** photos at [www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries!](http://www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries!)



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## IN MEMORIAM

Tom Beebe, 1985  
 Bryant Calip, 1985  
 Louise Cape  
 William 'Bill' A. Carter, 1957  
 Ray Conway, 1982  
 Benita Erwin, 1986  
 Elmer Gerth, 1956 & 59  
 Billy Johnson, 1975  
 Brenda Henry Johnson, 1971 & 77  
 Norma Whitaker Millsap, 1961  
 Bernice Hallum Meek Ogg  
 John Plumlee, 1958 & 63  
 Victor Richardson, 1973 & 79  
 Harold Kent "Rudy" Rudisill  
 Margaret Lanoy Sandmann, 1951 & 68  
 Luena Sawyer  
 James Steed, 1966  
 Janice Carol Sutterfield  
 Nancy Van Dusen, 1981  
 Roger Vice, 1991

The ECU family offers our deepest sympathy to the families of the alumni and friends we have lost.

## TIGER TRACKS



**Vicki Wilson**

was named Principal of the Year by the Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals and won the National Association of Elementary Principals Distinguished Principal of the Year award.



**Faith Miller**

was named District Teacher of the Year in the La Porte Independent School District in Texas.



**Cara Bland**

was appointed to serve a seven-year term as a new member of the Eastern Oklahoma State College Board of Regents.



## VIRTUAL EDITION

## UPDATE ON HOMECOMING

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have made the tough decision to not host Homecoming on campus this fall. We know this may come as a disappointment, but we hope this plan will allow our students to continue with in-person classes as long as possible.

Just because we will be distanced this Homecoming doesn't mean we won't be celebrating! We are using this as an opportunity to reconnect with our alums throughout this year. Please continue to check your email and [ecok.edu/Homecoming2020](http://ecok.edu/Homecoming2020) for updates!