



## Pierson's Perceptions

Happy 112th birthday, East Central University. Having a birthday in the spring seems appropriate as it is a time of transition, renewal and growth. When Dan Hays donated the land that would eventually become ECU, he probably never dreamed of all the tremendous talent that would sprout here. As we enter into the final half of this spring semester, we are thoughtful of what we have accomplished and what we have left to complete. Interestingly, our students will be enrolling for summer classes in our old registration system of Jenzabar and enrolling for fall classes in our new system, Colleague. Transitions are always a challenge. As we all know, however, the Tiger community always rises to a challenge. There are lots of activities still to participate in this spring, both virtually and in-person. Please join us at these events and share the spirit of challenge and success. With all the question marks the past year has given us, one thing is certain: it was anything but normal. Here's hoping ECU's latest spring birthday represents a renewal of hope that life on campus can finally return to normal.



Dr. Katricia Pierson  
President  
East Central University

## Campus planning a return to normalcy

### Priority enrollment begins April 5

Thanks to a strong adherence to Covid-19 safety protocols across campus and a sharp rise in vaccine availability, East Central University plans to return to full, in-person instruction for the upcoming Fall 2021 semester.

Some safety protocols may remain in place for a while longer, but as always ECU will follow recommended guidelines as set forth by local, state and national health care agencies.

ECU is also making plans to host an in-person commencement

ceremony at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 8, at Koi Ishto Stadium.

The ceremony is for Spring and Summer 2021 graduate candidates, as well as the two 2020 graduating classes who were unable to experience an in-person commencement.

Meanwhile, priority enrollment begins for the Summer and Fall 2021 semesters on April 5 and continues to April 13.

To read many more details on these exciting developments, please visit the ECU website at [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



### Almost time to graduate!

Natalie Jack, of Ada, is just one of many ECU seniors very excited to learn about the return of an in-person commencement ceremony.



### Are you ready for Tiger football???

In the photo at left, ECU wide receiver Chris Shaw, a junior from Richmond, Texas, makes a nice grab in a scrimmage at Harding University on March 4. The lone home football game this season is at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 10, at Koi Ishto Stadium. Come support the team! For more information, please visit [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com). (Photo by Jay Hinton Photography.)

## TIGER TALES

### ECU librarian honored with Online Excellence Award

East Central University Public Services Librarian Marla Lobley has been honored with a 2021



LOBLEY

Oklahoma Online Excellence Award. The award, presented by the Oklahoma Council for Online Learning Excellence (COLE), recognizes talent and expertise within distance learning throughout the state. Dr. Jessica Koch, an Education instructor at ECU, nominated Lobley for the award, in particular for her work with Open Educational Resources (OER). These are free learning materials that have an open license to allow for increased student engagement and the promotion of equity in education. "I am so honored to receive this award and I am very grateful for my colleagues at ECU and in COLE who have empowered me to lead OER efforts on our campus," Lobley said. [Read more at www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

### Popular ECU creative writing festival returns, virtually

After an unexpected interruption by last year's sudden Covid-19 outbreak, ECU's popular Scissortail Creative Writing Festival is making its full, triumphant return – virtually. The 16th annual Scissortail Creative Writing Festival takes place April 1-3, and the 2021 edition will take advantage of live-stream technology to connect authors with audiences. All authors will be live streaming presentations of their works during the first three days of April at [www.youtube.com/tigermmedia](http://www.youtube.com/tigermmedia).



### Giving it their best shot(s)

ECU Nursing students pose for a group photo outside the Ada Community Center, where they assisted with vaccinations.

### ECU Nursing students gaining from vaccination experiences

As community-wide Covid-19 vaccination efforts continue, East Central University's Nursing students are finally gaining some valuable field experience that the pandemic has denied them for the past year.

"The vaccination events have turned out to be a great learning opportunity for our students," said Dr. Darcy Duncan, director of ECU's Nursing program. "It truly is an excellent experience for them to participate alongside fellow students and the local health care community."

ECU Nursing students have assisted with local vaccinations since January.

"I have had an amazing experience," said Ajita Khattry, an international Nursing student and junior from Nepal. "It helped us to build our confidence levels in providing care during the pandemic."

To read more, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



### Holi colors

Holi is a Hindu festival, also known as the Festival of Colors, that signifies the arrival of spring and the triumph of good over evil. Celebrating it on March 29 are ECU students Jasmine Shrestha, Dikshya Mishra, Sagun Aryal and Reshma Ghimire.



# Oklahoma 2021 Teacher of Year is ECU student

Oklahoma's 2021 Teacher of the Year is still in school – at East Central University. Jessica Eschbach, who currently teaches in the Norman school system, received the prestigious honor from the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The award has been presented annually since 1955.



ESCHBACH

Eschbach is currently enrolled in ECU's master-level Educational Leadership program, which is designed for the graduate student specializing in administration for grades K-12. ECU's online program is accredited on both national and state levels and all its instructors have administrative experience or are current practicing administrators. She is set to graduate this spring.

"I have enjoyed my time as a student at ECU so much," Eschbach said. "The Educational Leadership program has helped me develop the necessary skills to be successful in an administrative role, while also being flexible and supportive of students like me who are managing work and school."

Eschbach currently works as the Innovative Learning Coach at Norman North High School. To read the full story, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

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## Gone ... again!

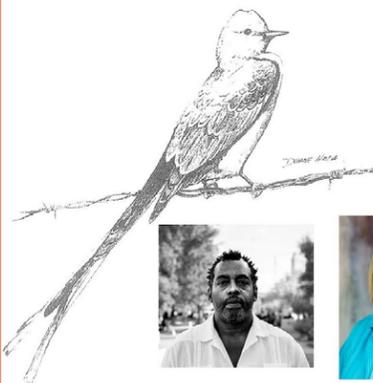
Garrett Lemons, a red-shirt sophomore from Lone Grove, celebrates another of his team-leading home runs March 26 against Arkansas-Monticello. It has been a wacky year, so keep track of all games at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com)!



## Founders Day!

Despite intermittent rainfall, the annual Founders Day event brought vendors and students out to Centennial Plaza on March 25 to help celebrate the 112th anniversary of ECU's establishment. A movie was also shown later in the evening inside Ataloo Theatre.

**16th Annual Scissortail Creative Writing Festival**  
Streaming Live April 1-3, 2021



  
Tiffany Midge

  
Quraysh Ali Lansana

  
Barbara Crooker

  
Kai Coggin

  
Andrew Geyer

  
Octavio Quintanilla

**And: ECU Student Readers**

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# Johnson to deliver 2021 Lou Watkins Lecture



JOHNSON

Award-winning author, attorney and educator Hannibal B. Johnson will deliver ECU's 2021 Lou Watkins Lecture this spring, discussing Tulsa's historic "Black Wall Street" and the terrible race massacre that plagued that community 100 years ago.

Due to continued Covid-19

safety precautions, Johnson will deliver the lecture via Zoom on April 1. His lecture, based on his book *Black Wall Street 100: An American City Grapples With Its Historical Racial Trauma*, will be preceded with a question-and-answer session with ECU students.

Johnson is a graduate of

Harvard Law School and a consultant specializing in diversity, equity and inclusion issues, human relations, leadership, and non-profit leadership and management. He has taught at the University of Tulsa College of Law, the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University.



## Spring brings everything!

With the Covid-19 pandemic wreaking havoc on competitive schedules everywhere, Tiger Athletics has had an unusual spring season, to say the very least, with all eight sports competing whenever possible in 2021. Clockwise, from top left: Lisa Gonzalez, a junior from Jarrell, Texas, serves against Southwestern on March 10; Allie Verner, a senior from Broken Arrow, shows off her fancy footwork against an opponent from Harding on March 29 (senior day); pitcher Lauren HerrNeckar, a freshman from Austin, Texas, meets with catcher and battery mate Rachele Mengwasser, a red-shirt sophomore from Edmond, during a game against OBU on March 12; Denzel Vilsaint, a junior from Jarrell, Texas, looks to break out of the pack at Tyler, Texas, on March 13. Keep up with your favorite teams at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com)!



Follow all sports at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com)!