

# CAMPUS UPDATE



February 2021

## Pierson's Perceptions

The first month of the new semester has quickly come and gone and I am pleased to report our University is continuing to make positive strides, in spite of this nagging pandemic.

We are hopeful, as is the rest of the world, that 2021 will see a return to normalcy in this regard. For us, that means full classrooms, full campus events, and a sea of happy, unmasked faces.

Until it is truly safe, however, we will remain cautious and vigilant in order to best serve our students, their families, and our community as a whole. ECU will continue to lead by example.

On that note, February brings Black History Month and on our campus it will be celebrated with grace, respect, and dignity.

On February 18, the ECU Black Alumni Association will host a panel discussion and public forum inside the Ataloa Theatre. The theme of this important event is "It Takes All of Us – Speak Your Truth."

I strongly encourage all of you to make time to attend. Details are available on Page 4 of this Campus Update. Because of Covid-19, seating is limited. You may reserve your seat now at [www.ecok.edu/BHM2021](http://www.ecok.edu/BHM2021).

No matter the challenges facing us, ECU must remain a beacon of tolerance, patience, and understanding for the rest of the community to see. Let us not only survive these challenges, but overcome them – together.



Dr. Katricia Pierson  
President  
East Central University

## ECU Nursing students on vaccination front lines

Undeterred by the risk involved, students in East Central University's Nursing program are answering the bell early and often in an effort to help administer the Covid-19 vaccination to as many people as possible.

Approximately three dozen ECU senior Nursing students are currently assisting the Pontotoc County Health Department administer the vaccine to Oklahomans with a minimum age of 65 and first responders such as healthcare workers and public safety officials.

"Our students have absolutely loved helping



### Ready to serve

ECU Nursing students reporting for duty at Ada's Pontotoc County Agri-Plex to help administer the Covid-19 vaccine.

out," said Dr. Darcy Duncan, director of ECU's Nursing program. "They are excited to be a part of this, to be a part of history – even though it's a dark chapter of history. This is

what they work for, what they prepare for. They want to serve and they've been able to experience a lot of patient interaction."

For much more on this, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



### Game time!

Athletics Director Dr. Jeff Williams sits next to a fan cut-out in the Kerr Activities Center. All Tiger teams plan to play this semester.

## Tigers ease back into action, add fun fan cut-outs for now

As the Spring 2021 semester unfolds, ECU Tiger Athletics – along with the Great American Conference as a whole – is easing back into competition.

Tiger Basketball, Volleyball and Cross Country are now under way, with Soccer, Football, Baseball and Softball soon to launch competitive campaigns.

Protecting the health of all involved is of paramount importance, especially fans. To support the student-athletes until fans are allowed back, consider purchasing a cut-out.

Follow this [link](#) for more information.

# TIGER TALES

## ECU Criminal Justice graduate named next Stillwater fire chief

Following a national search, Stillwater announced Monday the selection of Terry Essary as its next fire chief. As a



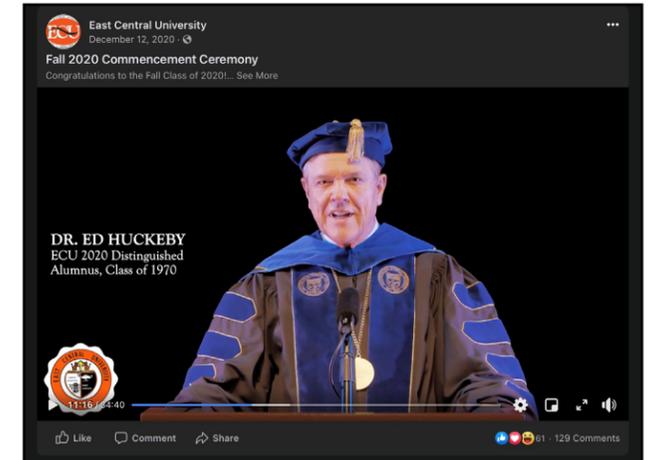
TERRY ESSARY

member of the Stillwater Fire Department since 1997, Essary promoted through the ranks beginning as a firefighter, lieutenant, captain and battalion chief. In addition to numerous licenses and certifications, he earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from East Central University. He is responsible for more than 70 employees and a \$7 million annual budget. The department's fire service area includes Oklahoma State University, Payne

County and parts of Noble, Pawnee and Lincoln counties, with a combined population of approximately 82,000.

## ECU Accounting graduate promoted to CEO of Quarter Horse association

The American Quarter Horse Association has announced that Paula Newman of Grapevine, Texas, will serve as its new chief operating officer. Newman begins her role with AQHA on February 1. As CEO, she will be responsible for day-to-day operational functions and the success of AQHA. She will be in charge of directing, planning and managing both internal and external AQHA operations. She will also be responsible for overseeing organizational performance and how it relates to measurable goals. Newman received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from East Central University and a Master of Business Administration from Texas Christian University.



## The show must go on!

In this screenshot taken from ECU's official Facebook page, Dr. Ed Huckeby addresses Fall 2020 graduates as part of the virtual commencement ceremony.

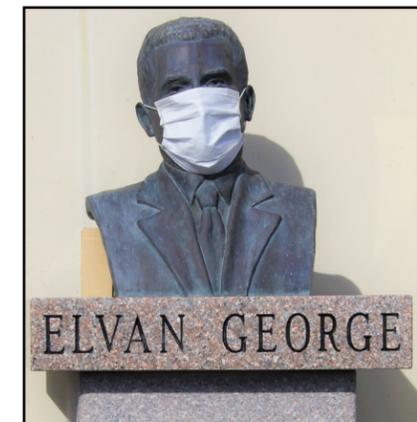
## Cornered by Covid-19, ECU confers degrees virtually

A virtual commencement ceremony isn't exactly anybody's first choice. In order to protect the health and safety of all involved, however, ECU took the cherished, time-honored tradition online for the first time in its history.

Despite the technological hurdles faced, the ceremonies – one for Spring 2020 graduates and the other for the Fall 2020 graduating class – were streamed on ECU's official Facebook page with plenty of support and interaction.

Both 2020 graduating classes will be invited to participate in the next available traditional, in-person commencement exercise. If circumstances allow, that will be the Spring 2021 commencement ceremony in May.

The virtual commencement ceremonies are available for viewing at [www.facebook.com/ECUTigerUpdate](http://www.facebook.com/ECUTigerUpdate).



## Still leading by example

Even ECU football coaching legend Elvan George is following Covid-19 protocols. Students have followed the strict protocols and that has helped keep the campus open. Obviously a good sense of humor helps too!



Call ECU at 580-332-8000!



Stay up-to-date at [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news)!



**Studying Social Work**

East Central University Social Work student J'Vian Jackson talks with Ms. Carrol Maxwell in this pre-Covid photo.

**Grant funds classroom renovations for ECU Social Work department**

East Central University's Social Work program has received a grant from the Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program (CWPEP) for the second time in the past three years and will use the funds to develop an inspiring learning space.

The ECU Social Work program will use the \$40,000 grant to transform an out-of-date classroom in the Horace Mann building into an inviting, interactive classroom.

The renovations are set to begin in a couple of months and will include replacing the flooring, painting the room, installing a dry-erase or chalk wall, installing LED televisions, and bringing in ECU-appropriate orange and black furniture.

To read the entire story, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



**Honoring a beloved friend, campus leader**

ECU alumnus Michael Brooks (1969) has been honored by his friends with a memorial bench on campus. Brooks served as ECU's Student Activities Director from 1970-1972 and went on to be a very successful cattle rancher. Pictured, from left, are Debbie Merlyn, Joe Harris, Dona Brooks, Mark Stringfield, Steve Merlyn, Judy Harris and Susie Stringfield.



**The joy of the dig**

Dr. Holly Jones teaches East Central University students archaeological flotation techniques in this pre-Covid photo provided by Dr. Christine Pappas.

**ECU professor, students to study at ancient site**

Her first name may not be Indiana, but – just like the beloved Hollywood character – East Central University's own Dr. Jones always has her sights on new discoveries.

Dr. Holly Jones, a professional archaeologist for 25 years, will lead ECU's first-ever field school early this summer at an undisclosed dig site in Oklahoma. The archeology field school will last three weeks and participants will earn three credit hours. The course will be limited to 12 students.

Jones, who teaches in ECU's Native American Studies program, said the site could be home to a Native American earthlodge village as much as 3,000 years old. She hypothesizes the site may be pre-contact Caddoan, meaning it existed in the Caddoan culture before European contact.

Jones said the course isn't just about digging for new discoveries. Students will gain valuable flotation practice on site, as well as have the opportunity to practice archaeological lab work such as the cleaning and cataloging of discovered artifacts.

There are no pre-requisites for the course, Jones said. ECU's Native American Studies program does offer a specialized bachelor's degree in Cultural Resource Management. Read more at [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



Give back at [www.ecok.edu/donate/](http://www.ecok.edu/donate/)

**Meyers earns ASCAP Award**

East Central University music professor Dr. Nicholaus Meyers has been awarded the prestigious ASCAP Plus Award to honor his compositional works.

Meyers was honored by the American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers for his entire body of published compositions, which numbers near 60.

ASCAP members who received less than \$25,000 in domestic performance royalties in the previous calendar year are eligible for the award, which focuses on members who compose children's music, concert music, jazz

and musical theatre with a value far beyond the scope of performance surveys.

For the past 20 years, Meyers has composed music primarily for high school, college and church performances – intricate compositions intended for smaller venues. All of his works are 100 percent original, and not arrangements of other artists' works.

Meyers directs ECU's Pride of Tigerland marching band, wind ensemble, concert band and percussion ensemble.

To read much more about Dr. Meyers and this award, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



DR. NICHOLAUS MEYERS

**Visiting artists bring exhibit to Pogue gallery**

The East Central University Fine Arts department is hosting "Lawn Games and Other Domestic Hazards" now through March 12 in the Pogue Art Gallery inside the Hallie Brown Ford Fine Arts Center.

The visiting artists behind "Lawn Games and Other Domestic Hazards" are Leticia Bajuyo and Steven Lemke.

They consider the desire for domestic security as a foundational reference point for their investigations of traditional house forms and yardscapes to include questions of indoor and outdoor living, home ownership and land use.

ECU's Pogue Art Gallery is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Admission to the exhibit is free. In keeping with Covid-19 safety protocols, only four patrons will be allowed in the gallery at a time.

To read much more about the artists and the exhibit, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



*East Central University Black-Alumni-Association Presents*

**IT TAKES ALL OF US - SPEAK YOUR TRUTH**



Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021 • 7 p.m.

East Central University  
Ataloa Theatre, Hallie Brown Ford Fine Arts Center  
Free & Open to the public\*

\*Due to COVID-19 space is limited. Reserve your seat at:  
[www.ecok.edu/BHM2021](http://www.ecok.edu/BHM2021)



Hallie Brown Ford Fine Arts Center • 920 E Main Street, Ada, OK 74820  
580-559-5651 • [alumni@ecok.edu](mailto:alumni@ecok.edu) • [www.ecok.edu](http://www.ecok.edu)



Follow events at [www.ecok.edu/calendar/](http://www.ecok.edu/calendar/)



## Can 'UC' the future?

East Central University's Bill S. Cole University Center is currently undergoing major renovations throughout and will have a different, updated look when it reopens either late in the Spring 2021 semester or in the summer.

A major feature of the "UC" renovation is the addition of ECU's Tiger Esports Lab on the second floor. The Esports program will include an official Tiger team that will compete with other university programs, as well as a non-competitive club for other interested students.

At left are architect's renderings of the proposed Tiger Esports Lab (subject to change). The photo above, taken in January, shows current progress on the exciting new project.

## Charles Hobbs gifted bench

Dr. Charles Eugene Hobbs was honored with a bench by friends and family as a gift for his 80th birthday. Hobbs is an alumnus of ECU and served as a faculty member in the Math Department from 1985 to 1996, when he retired. Prior to teaching at ECU, he taught at Byng High School for 19 years. Since his retirement in 1996, he has continued teaching classes at Oklahoma Baptist University, the University of Phoenix and part-time at ECU.





## Seeking Nominations!

2021 Awards

- Distinguished Alumni
- Distinguished Former Faculty
- Distinguished Family
- Distinguished Service

Make a nomination online:  
[www.ecok.edu/2021Nominations](http://www.ecok.edu/2021Nominations)  
 Submission Deadline February 15



# Tiger teams to share Spring spotlight



The Spring 2021 semester is going to be one for the history books for Tiger Athletics! Fall sports – Cross Country, Football, Soccer and Volleyball – will join the regular slate of Spring sports including Baseball, Basketball, Softball and Track & Field. The Great American Conference and its member universities are working toward bringing fans back to events, which would give Tiger fans many options! Follow [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com) for new information.



Photo courtesy Taaj Adamson.

