

# CAMPUS ECU UPDATE

November 2021

## Pierson's Perceptions

*Just like the leaves of autumn, success is multi-hued and visible all around us at ECU.*

*We have many alumni and current students who, rightfully, are being recognized for their professional accomplishments. We have students completing a tremendous fall semester, full of activities. We have faculty and staff working together to provide us with a successful HLC comprehensive review.*

*ECU's quality of programs and services are to be praised for providing the foundation of success for all our students and alumni. As numerous as the leaves on our beautiful campus, we have many blessings for which to be thankful.*

*As we quickly approach the Thanksgiving holiday, many of us will consider the blessings that we have received this year – a year that has stood as a triumphant return from chaos and hardship caused by the pandemic.*

*Throughout this year of recovery and returning to normal, we will give praise to those things that made our lives better and to the people who enriched us.*

*This Thanksgiving, please consider the gifts that you have received while at ECU and consider how you might pay those gifts forward to be a blessing for others. Giving Tuesday is November 30. Together we can strengthen our foundation for even more success in the future.*



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

## Finch-Walker selected as Entrepreneur of the Year

Michelle Finch-Walker, one of three owners of “Girls Gone Wine,” has been named East Central University’s 2021 Entrepreneur of the Year. As per tradition, she will deliver the annual Limes Lecture to college and visiting high school students in November.

Finch-Walker, along with friends and business partners Chandra Rickey and Rhonda Reed, founded “Girls Gone Wine” in 2006, a boutique winery and gift shop located in Hochatown near Broken Bow Lake in far southeastern Oklahoma.

“Every business that we love and



**FINCH-WALKER**

visit in this country today was someone’s great idea – someone who was not afraid to take the risk and just go for it,” Finch-Walker said.

Finch-Walker, who earned a bachelor’s degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from ECU in 1986, will address young entrepreneurs during a luncheon on Wednesday, November 10, at ECU’s

Chickasaw Business and Conference Center. An entrepreneurial competition for area high school students, called “Tiger Tank,” also takes place that day.

Please visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news) to read much more about the event!



## Tigers prove handful for Razorbacks

*In their first exhibition game of the season, ECU gave Arkansas all they could handle and more, forcing the hosts to come from behind for a 77-74 win. The first ECU home games are coming up! The women host Arkansas-Fort Smith on November 20 and the men host Arkansas Baptist on November 22. Go Tigers!*



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# TIGER TALES

## ECU online Sports Administration degree ranked as among most affordable in U.S.

ECU's Master of Education in Sports Administration online degree has been recognized as one of the most affordable in the country. "Our graduates are well-prepared to start, or continue, a career in Sports Administration," said Dr. Nick Stowers, ECU assistant professor of Kinesiology and Sports Administration. "We pride ourselves in providing a quality online master's program that is both flexible and affordable for those interested in the various jobs fields within Sports Administration." According to the research group "Sports Management Degree Guide," which obtains its data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), ECU ranks second nationally on the most affordable online master's program list. The NCES collects its data from official accrediting agency websites, as the research group explains in its methodology.



## Complimentary Russian lessons for children return to Ada Public Library

For the second consecutive year, area school children will have an opportunity to learn the Russian language and about the Russian culture thanks to an East Central University professor and her students. Dr. Mara Sukholutskaya, a longtime Languages professor and director of Global Education at ECU, and her advanced level students will teach Russian language and culture to children ages 9-12 in an exciting program at the Ada Public Library. Despite the pandemic last fall, the program's inaugural year proved to be a success. "The children will learn about a fascinating new culture, as well as the basics of the language," Sukholutskaya said. Classes started October 21 at the Ada Public Library. The free program continues each Thursday for the remainder of the semester. The library is located at 124 S. Rennie in downtown Ada.

Check out the entire stories at [www.ecok.edu/news/](http://www.ecok.edu/news/)



## Intermission

Brady McComas emotes as "Harry" while Makayla Faulkner looks on as the glib yet wise bartender in David Hanson's play "Intermission" during an October performance in the Chalmers Herman Theatre. ECU students performed the first-ever U.S. collegiate production of Hanson's play.

## OSDH tabs ECU alum as regional director

East Central University alumnus Chris Munn has been named as the interim regional administrative director for the Oklahoma State Department of Health's District 8, which includes Carter, Garvin, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray, Pontotoc and Stephens counties.



MUNN

Munn replaces the district's former interim director, Mendy Spohn, who was named assistant deputy commissioner for the OSDH's Community Health division.

Originally from Pauls Valley, Munn has served Stephens County residents as a public health specialist for 27 years. He has been the Covid-19 vaccine project manager for District 8 since fall 2020, working closely with staff and community partners throughout the nine-county region. He also serves on the board for the Stephens County Local Emergency Planning Committee and the "Pathways to a Healthier You" County Health Improvement Organization.

To read the entire story on Munn's appointment, please visit [www.ecok.edu/news/](http://www.ecok.edu/news/).





# Pumpkins!

Sometimes it is best to put down the books and pick up the pumpkins. Many ECU students seeking a break from mid-term work found this fun, relaxing and seasonal activity as a happy diversion. With agreeable October weather, there has been no shortage of campus fun for those so inclined!



## The pumpkin for par

*Pumpkins are not just for painting! Two students take their best shots on the putt-putt course during the annual Fall Carnival on the ECU campus.*



## Ticket, please!

*ECU students line up for presentations during the "Go Global" event on campus in October. ECU maintains a strong Global Education program.*





### A cold, tasty thank you!

Rhonda Kinder, left, and Haley Vickers enjoy some delicious ice cream provided by President Pierson's office as a thank you to employees for participating in an accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission in October. Employees met with visiting reviewers over two days. ECU received a very positive review from the HLC!



### Fall Formal a big success

ECU students enjoyed the opportunity to dress up for a Fall Formal event held in the Chickasaw Business and Conference Center on campus. The dance was well-attended by students and even some faculty!

### CHECK OUT THESE ECU TIKTOKS!



### Visiting artist

Courtney Starrett, associate professor in the Department of Visualization at Texas A&M University, delivers a talk about her exhibit at ECU's Pogue Gallery in October.

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Dr. Stacey Bolin, left, and Srijita Dia Gosh in 2017.

## ECU alum named as i2E venture advisor

**Note:** This article is edited for space from the original, which appeared in *The Oklahoman*. [Click here](#) to read the full story!

**By Scott Meacham, CEO of i2E Inc.**

Srijita Dia Ghosh, i2E’s newest venture advisor, was born and brought up in West Bengal, India. Her home city of Kolkata, along the eastern bank of the Hooghly River, is a packed city of millions. She came to ECU to play tennis.

Like everyone who is engaged in the entrepreneurial community, Dia is no stranger to pivots, or to serendipity. In college, she experienced both when, about a year-and-a-half in, due to budget cuts, the tennis and golf programs at ECU were eliminated.

Dia stayed, and Dr. Stacey Bolin, associate professor and director of the Wilburn L. Smith Center for Entrepreneurship, came into her life. Dr. Bolin has long been an advisor to teams that competed in the Love’s Entrepreneur’s Cup teams. She is a champion of entrepreneurship as a career and cornerstone of the competition’s history.

Through Love’s Cup, she interned with and then joined the Ada Jobs Foundation as an entrepreneurship specialist. In between, Dia graduated Summa Cum Laude and as Honors valedictorian.

“In a rural community, the exciting challenge is that you have to come out and build it yourself,” Dia said. “It is important to help entrepreneurs here believe that you don’t have to be in a certain place to create a technology business. You can do it from Ada, Oklahoma. All you need is the internet and a supportive ecosystem.”



### Nice wheels!

A young man checks out a vintage Super Sport Chevrolet Camaro during the annual Cody Johnson Memorial Car Show held on the ECU campus in October.



### Sweet sounds

Members of the ECU Jazz Ensemble, under direction of Dr. Nathaniel Berman, perform an outdoor concert in front of the Hallie Brown Ford Fine Arts Center in October.



See more at [www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries!](http://www.ecok.edu/photo-galleries!)



**A ROARING GOOD FALL!**

*Whether it be Football, Soccer, Cross Country or Volleyball, the ECU Tigers experienced a lot of success this fall semester. To catch up on all the latest, please visit the official ECU Athletics website at [www.ecutigers.com/](http://www.ecutigers.com/)*

