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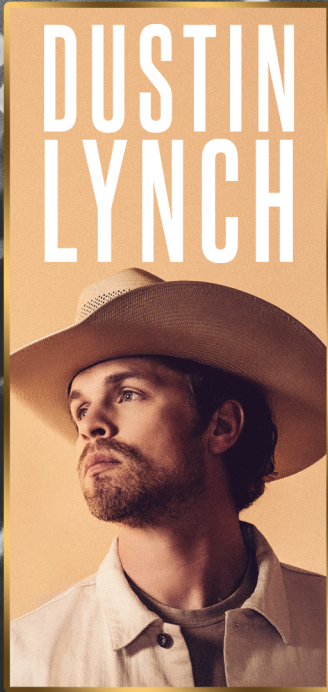
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Kyle Gillet | Freelance Photographer  
 A couple takes a stroll during the first snowfall Nov. 14 near Main Street in downtown Mount Pleasant.

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Photo Illustration  
The brothers of Phi Beta Sigma  
pose for a portrait Nov. 19 by  
the Education and Human  
Services Building.



# BACKING THEIR CAUSE

## Long-standing fraternity continues their mission through four brothers

The only four student members of Phi Beta Sigma, an all-Black fraternity part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) at Central Michigan University, stand outside Kessler Hall on a cold October night just before midnight.

The guys dance to music, tell jokes and hype each other up to keep spirits high in the dark. The event they organized, “Sleep Out for the Homeless,” is one of many the Sigmas have hosted throughout the semester.

That evening, the brothers gathered different items for homeless people that they will eventually donate to the Cass Community Social Services in Southfield, an area that three of them are from.



So far, the brothers have seen help from other organizations, friends and some passersby. Members of the Central Michigan University community drop nonperishable food and lightly used clothing in cardboard boxes. As the holidays approach, the four are ecstatic to make the donation and help a community in need.

Phi Beta Sigma President Travell Weatherby said that’s what being a member is all about.

“Everything we do as far as volunteering goes, (is) to serve that area (in need),” Weatherby a Pontiac senior said.

“Being a member of Phi Beta Sigma has taught me and shown me through it all, even in the roughest of moments, roughest of times, when you just don’t feel like you can do something just remember, just push through,” Montez Allen, Detroit senior and Phi Beta Sigma member said. “Being a member has shown me that I can get through

anything – can’t nothing stop me.”

Weatherby, and Allen, both recall a time when the conference room they meet in had every single seat filled. Now, due to many brothers graduating, there are four men doing the work of an entire fraternity chapter.

However, with the help of their brothers who have graduated, they still get the work done. Phi Beta Sigma extends their events to members who joined all the way back to when the chapter first began in 1979.

Travell said the four members still talk to the founders on a weekly basis.

“We’re spread out a little bit more thinly. But all of the brothers that have graduated, they’re always here to help,” Weatherby said. “If we need that extra hand, guess what, they have it. If we need that extra foot, guess what, they have it. We get things done because the brothers as a collective, we do it together.”

Just like his brothers, treasurer and newest member Detroit junior Bryan Wyatt sees the service that he does in Phi Beta Sigma is something that he will continue even after he has graduated.

“I always carry Sigma with me. Any work that I do from this point on, whether it’s at the school or beyond, will be done in the work of Sigma,” Wyatt said.

Detroit graduate member Sam Rose lives and works in Mount Pleasant. He tries to show up to every event he can.

“When we throw these events it’s not just telling facts and then we stop,” Rose said. “We are actually building a connection with the community.”

Phi Beta Sigma highly encourages those who would like to learn more about their organization to reach out.

“We really work with a lot of discretion, so as far as rush week... we really try to shy away from that,” Weatherby said. “We really work and grow a close bond with people before they even think about joining.”

Weatherby said email [cmusigmas1914@gmail.com](mailto:cmusigmas1914@gmail.com) if you’re interested in joining.



Treasurer and newest member Bryan “Mars” Wyatt talks to a group of prospective brothers about his experience being in a D9 organization at the NPHC convocation, Oct. 20, in the Bovee University Center.



Travell Weatherby, Bryan Mathis, and Bryan “Mars” Wyatt meet Nov. 7, in the Education and Human Services Building. While many years ago the room would be filled with people, due to COVID-19 and graduation, membership has been reduced to four people.

**STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY NATE PAPPAS**



Members of Phi Beta Sigma and Zeta Phi Beta create breast cancer awareness ribbons Oct. 22, Bovee University Center. The event "Bras Out for Breast Cancer," involved Phi Beta Sigma and Sigma Lambda Beta collecting donations for a breast cancer research center in Mount Pleasant by either having cash stuffed in the bras they were wearing or having money sent to them via cash app.



Travell Weatherby dances with friends during the "Sleep Out For The Homeless" event Oct. 26 outside of Kesseler Hall. Despite the late hours, the brothers kept the energy up through dancing and music.



A passerby puts money in the bra of junior Bryan "Mars" Wyatt Oct. 22, in front of the Bovee University Center.



Detroit senior Alonzo McCoy holds up the Michigan MAC trophy, Friday, Nov. 26. Drew Travis | Staff Photographer

# MICHIGAN MAC TITLE IS BACK

*Football earns second rivalry trophy with 31-10 walloping of Eastern Michigan*

By Mitch Vosburg  
Sports Editor

As snow and snot flew in Charlestown, Ind. freshman running back Marion Lukes flew 100 yards for a kick return touchdown to start the second half.

Central Michigan never looked back, knocking off Eastern Michigan 31-10 on Friday at Kelly/Shorts Stadium.

“It was a dominant win, but that’s the expectation,” said head coach Jim McElwain. “That’s what our guys believe they should do. For the most part we went out and did it.”

The win not only finishes the Chippewas at 8-4 overall and 6-2 in Mid-American Conference action, but clinches the Michigan MAC Trophy for the first time since 2017. The win is also CMU’s third-straight win over EMU (7-5, 4-4) and its eighth win in the last 10 meetings.

“We’ve been looking at this game for a year. It was an iffy game last year, so we had this one circled on our schedule,” said Muskegon senior wide receiver JaCorey Sullivan. “It was good to come out with my fellow seniors and teammates to come out here and get a (win).”

## How it happened

After feeling out each other to start the game, CMU struck first behind a 10 play, 65-yard drive featuring multiple pancake blocks from Steinbrunn, Austria junior left

tackle Bernhard Raimann to give the Chippewas a 7-0 lead. The drive was capped by a nine-yard touchdown reception for Sullivan’s ninth receiving score of the season.

After both teams traded turnovers, the Eagles were forced to punt from their own 21-yard line. Punter Jake Julien obliterated a 78-yard boot to pin the Chippewas at their own one-yard line.

A three-and-out gave the Eagles a short field that resulted in a field goal to make the score 7-3 with 7:20 remaining in the first half. The Chippewas would eat the rest of the clock throughout a 15-play drive that ended with a Eaton Rapids freshman kicker Marshall Meeder field goal to give CMU a seven-point advantage at the half.

Lukes started the second half with the longest touchdown run in Kelly/Shorts Stadium, the longest CMU touchdown scored since 1950 and the first CMU kick return for a touchdown since 2013 against EMU the day after Thanksgiving. The Eagles responded with a nine play, 65 yard drive to pull back within seven points with 9:08 left in the third quarter.

After denying the Eagles on third-and-2, the Chippewas widened the gap with an 11 play, 80-yard drive capped by a 26-yard dart from Miami quarterback Daniel Richardson to Sullivan for the latter’s 10th receiving touchdown of the season. The score placed the Muskegon senior tied at second

for the single-season program record with Bryan Anderson.

The ensuing Eagles drive resulted in a pair of CMU sacks and a fourth-and-11 opportunity for the Eagles. Oakpark, Ill. Junior Rolliann Sturkey broke up Ben Bryant’s pass attempt to force a crucial turnover on downs with 9:12 remaining. Detroit redshirt freshman Lew Nichols III called game by scoring from 33 yards out with 2:55 left to put CMU up 31-10.

## Key performers

Sullivan finished with four receptions for 46 yards and a pair of scores.

Nichols finished with 194 yards on 42 carries with a touchdown. Friday’s game marked the seventh-straight game with at least 135 rushing yards and moved to second all-time in single-season rushing yards at 1,710. He trails only Brian Pruitt’s 1,890 in 1994.

## Key Stats

CMU held the Eagles to two-of-12 on third down opportunities and denied EMU on all five fourth-down attempts. The Chippewas also finished with seven sacks and held the Eagles to only five yards rushing.

“We were collapsing the pocket and applying pressure,” said Birmingham senior defensive end Troy Hairston II. “Everybody did their job. They came out and really showed up on senior day.”

## LIFE IN BRIEF

## Lew Nichols III tops Michigan State's Kenneth Walker as NCAA rushing leader

By Christian Booher  
Staff Reporter

College football's leading rusher resides in Mount Pleasant.

Central Michigan University redshirt freshman running back Lew Nichols III holds the crown for NCAA Division I FBS rushing yards following the conclusion of the regular season. His total, 1,710, is second all-time in Chippewa history for rushing yards in a season. Brian Pruitt's 1994 effort of 1,890 yards is first.

Nationally, Michigan State junior running back Kenneth Walker ranks second with 1,614 rushing yards. Missouri's Tyler Badie, who ran for 203 yards against CMU in the season opener, is third with 1,604.

Nichols will likely have one more opportunity, the Chippewas' to-be-decided bowl game, to climb into first place.

The Detroit native and reigning Mid-American Conference Freshman of the Year totaled at least 130 rushing yards in nine of CMU's 12 games, including seven of the team's eight wins.

In November, Nichols totaled 200-plus yards on the ground in back-to-back games.

He ran for 215 yards and four scores in a 54-30 beating of Kent State on Nov. 10. He topped that effort the next week with 219 yards and three touchdowns in a 37-17 victory over Ball State.

Nichols scored 15 rushing touchdowns, a number that ranks tied for sixth all time in CMU single season history. He started all 12 games, shouldering an increased load after presumed starter Kobe Lewis suffered a season-ending injury in fall camp.

In his career, the redshirt freshman has run for 2,307 yards in his three seasons. He played four games as a true freshman in 2019, preserving his redshirt status. Nichols' second season was cut short, playing each of the Chippewas' six games on a schedule shortened by the coronavirus pandemic.

The shortened season afforded each participating athlete an extra-year of eligibility, allowing Nichols to keep redshirt freshman status.

Nichols and the Chippewas finished the regular season 8-4.

## Michigan enrollment report shows CMU has sharpest student decline statewide

By Patrick Bouman  
Staff Reporter

The Michigan Association of State Universities has released its enrollment report for Fall 2021. The numbers show Central Michigan University has, in several areas, seen greater enrollment decline than the other 14 state universities.

The report compares each of the institutions in different categories of fall enrollment from 2012-2021. CMU has the highest percentage decrease in overall headcount (43.13 percent), first-time college students (38.19 percent) and undergraduate student headcount (37.28 percent).

Saginaw Valley State University had the most decline in graduate student headcount at a 43.72 percent decrease. CMU lost 36.94 percent of its graduate students since 2012.

The number of new transfer students saw the most overall decline out of any category (-34.37 percent). Eastern Michigan University lost the most at a 53.3 percent decrease. CMU trails

just behind that at a 50.67 percent decrease.

The University of Michigan was the only institution that did not experience decline in any category from 2012-2021. U of M increased by 55.47 percent in new transfer students.

CMU also experienced the highest fall headcount decline in the last year, with an 11.09 percent decrease.

Director of Communications Aaron Mills said the university is working to get ahead of the continuing enrollment decline.

"The university leadership is well aware of the decade-long decline in enrollment," Mills' statement said. "We are taking steps to reverse the trend. These steps include investment in new technology, efforts to support recruiting across market segments, and new investments to support students as they progress toward degree completion."

"A decline that occurred over a 10-year period will not be reversed in one or two years, and we are committed to improving the enrollment at CMU."

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November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. While some only think about the disease once a year, others have dedicated their lives to studying it.

Yannick Marchalant, interim director of the neuroscience program, is one of those people. Born, raised and educated in France, Marchalant has found his way through several institutions studying the causes and progression of Alzheimer's disease since 1998.

He currently holds a position as associate professor for psychology and neuroscience at Central Michigan University teaching both undergraduate and graduate level courses. Additionally, he runs the neuroinflammation, aging and Alzheimer's disease lab studying this common form of dementia.

A loss of cognitive ability typically characterizes Alzheimer's disease and usually occurs in older individuals. Unfortunately, the disease can cause the loss of memories, living abilities and knowledge of loved ones.

*Central Michigan Life* spoke with Marchalant about his research with Alzheimer's disease and what the future might look like for care.

**CM Life: What initially got you interested in studying Alzheimer's disease?**

Marchalant: I did a couple of rotations in different labs, and the one I ended up working on was one regarding the hypothesis surrounding Alzheimer's disease and the damage it does to the blood flow. (Then) I found a postdoc at the University of Arizona in Tucson. And that's where I changed a little bit. I mean, we're still working on Alzheimer's disease, but looking at another aspect that was newer at the time, which was the neuroinflammation field.

## CMU professor discusses Alzheimer's research

**What are the main topics that you focus on in your research?**

We've been juggling through two different things. I mean, I'm interested in aging in general and the aspects of pathology. The Alzheimer's disease aspect is always what has been driving me initially. So we jump back and forth between normal aging and Alzheimer's disease. And we have projects that just study how the brain copes with normal aging.

So we look at normal aging. One of the aspects that we've done since I joined CMU in 2014, is working with a graduate student looking at diet's effect on cognition. We looked at, if, let's say, if you're an elderly person, and you eat poorly, can you actually even intervene on your poor diet to make it slightly better to keep cognition going. So, we looked at krill oil in this concept, try to get more positive nutrients in the food.

And then the other side, we worked a lot on a lot of preclinical models of Alzheimer's disease in mice. The idea was to look at different aspects of inflammation. The question has been lingering for a lot of years, actually, a couple of decades now. Does inflammation matter to disease progression? Is it a factor that actually precipitates the disease? Or is it something that could be stimulated to save patients from having progression of dementia. So, in the lab, we've been trying to work around the idea of, can we target your inflammation, especially early on before symptoms.

Q&



Zach Kortge

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Q&amp;A

“ I really hope I’m put out of a job very soon. If I don’t have to study Alzheimer’s anymore, I’m cool with it. ”

### What made you want to come to the United States?

That was the best opportunity. I mean as a postdoc, especially in Europe, you get fewer opportunities to move around. Usually, when people get a job after this, you tend to stay in the same place or close to the same region. So, postdocs are a good opportunity to see the world. I signed up for a year (in the United States), I ended up staying for seven, then moved back to France for a few years. Then, I didn’t find my share over there so I came back.

It’s not just where you end up, it is the overall environment. I had a family at the time and (Mount Pleasant) is not a bad choice for raising a family.

### What do you think is going to be the next big breakthrough in Alzheimer’s research?

So, my hope is that we find one of those really dedicated molecules or one protein, that does the trick. Or, do the trick enough that patients do not end up in that very, very difficult stage for their family at the end, where cognition is lost, but their bodies still functioning, and they need 100% attention from everyone, without knowing what they’re doing. I mean, they lose their memory. That’s the most precious thing in your life, that what makes you who you are. And that’s what you use. So if we can maintain that as long as possible in patients that are physically okay, then that’s a win.



Staff Reporter

I mean, I really hope I’m put out of a job very soon. If I don’t have to study Alzheimer’s anymore, I’m cool with it.

### Realistically, how close are we to that point?

We’ve known about this disease since 1906. Are we close to making that breakthrough? We know, way more from the start. We know how the disease evolved in some aspects and we’re able to detect it a little bit earlier. We’re getting there but telling you a deadline. I mean, are we 10 years, 20 years from there? That’s really hard to predict.

### If you had unlimited resources, what would you do with them?

Tomorrow’s issue is not finding a cure, that will take, again, what you need to take care of is that families that are hurting right now financially, morally and psychologically. You need to help them out. And that’s the good investment of money. Because, again, people that are traumatized from this might go into depression. But if you understand the process, you prepare for it. It’s probably a more peaceful transition.

### If there is one thing you want people to understand about Alzheimer’s disease, what would it be?

One thing, start thinking about your health right now. If you do this, you’re probably going to alleviate a lot of the aging process, which means potentially Alzheimer’s. So, be slightly more active, eat less, eat better when you can, you don’t have to be taking out everything from your plates. You can still eat but be mindful of the quantities and what you put on there.

It’s not easy, but that would be my first advice.

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# How I'm dealing with the 'senior-year uncertainty'

I am exhausted.

On top of a semester's worth of work, I've started to apply for jobs. I've written three cover letters, filled out half a dozen applications and reorganized my portfolio. Just six short months until graduation.

God, just typing that made me want to curl up in a ball.

I really have no clue where I'll be at this time next year. I know many of my fellow seniors feel the same way.

I could be living halfway across the country or an hour away from Mount Pleasant. Will I be paying off my student loans or struggling to meet rent like I am now?

Will I still want to be a journalist?

Will I have to move away from my partner of two years?

Will my friends stay in touch with me?

Some people call it a quarter-life crisis, I call it "the senior-year uncertainty." There isn't much we can do until our questions about the future are answered.

For me, it helps to remember the last



**Michael Livingston**  
Editor-in-Chief

time I felt this way.

It was one of the last days of high school. My graduating class met on the football field for a game day, just like we had in elementary school when we moved up a grade. At the end of the day, teachers carried out large banners of all the Michigan universities.

Students lined up to take a picture with their prospective university. Not me. I just stood there, stiff as a brick. I had no idea where I would go to college. I had no idea what I wanted at all.

I was such a different person then. I was a stone-cold hermit who nev-

er spoke to anyone beyond my small group of friends. I walked around like I carried the weight of the world on my shoulders. My passion barely extended beyond the next concert I was going to.

That kid on the football field was wracked with anxiety and indecision.

But I knew, eventually, you have to leave the field. Another game was about to start.

Ultimately, that choice led me to CMU.

Thank God I made that decision. I made new friends and explored my new independence. I joined a newspaper - a job that actually requires me to talk to strangers. All of it challenged me to break out of my shell.

That shy kid went on to host a podcast. That kid with zero social media experience is now running a newspaper with one of the biggest social media followings in the country.

Damn it, I am proud of myself - those are words I would have never said four years ago.

Now, this chapter of my life is over.

Once again, I have to leave the field.

Uncertainty will follow us but change is inevitable.

I'm writing this from the bedroom I grew up in - except, it's not my room anymore. The place where I first discovered my love of writing is now my mom's office. I'm sitting at an Ikea desk instead of my bed. The closet that once stored my clothes now stores old books. (By the way, where did my band posters go?)

The basement where my friends from high school and I used to spend the nights watching movies and playing video games is now my dad's gym.

Many of us seniors will return home for our last Thanksgiving break. Maybe your parents have remodeled your room too. Together we will realize home is wherever we choose to be.

That's one thing we all take away from this place. These new beginnings we are about to embark on is something we all share.

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# What's on deck for CMU's basketball teams

By Mitch Vosburg  
Sports Editor

As snow begins to fall and temperatures begin to drop, basketball season begins to pick up in Michigan.

Central Michigan is no exception, with both the men's and women's squads entering the back-half of their non-conference schedules. Both teams have dealt with grueling opponents so far.

Here's what's left for both teams before Mid-American Conference play begins.

## Men's hoops

CMU opened its non-conference slate with seven-straight games away from Mount Pleasant. After losses to then No. 1 Gonzaga and No. 9 Kentucky, CMU will host its first home regular season game in the Tony Barbee era at 2 p.m. on Dec. 5 when Western Ill. enters McGuirk Arena. The Chippewas will host the Univer-

sity of Illinois-Chicago on Saturday, Dec. 11, the back half of a McGuirk Arena doubleheader, to round off the home non-conference schedule.

CMU will trek to Youngstown State on Dec. 7 and Detroit Mercy on Dec. 19.

The MAC schedule starts with road games on Dec. 29 at Kent State and Jan. 1 at Miami, Ohio.

■ Sunday, Dec. 5: @ Western Illinois (2 p.m.)

■ Wednesday, Dec. 8: @ Youngstown State (7 p.m.)

■ Saturday, Dec. 11: vs UIC (4:30 p.m.)

■ Sunday, Dec. 19: vs UIC (4:30 p.m.)

■ Wednesday, Dec. 29: @ Kent State (4:30 p.m.)

■ Saturday, Jan. 1: @ Miami (Ohio) (3:30 p.m.)

## Women's hoops

After crushing home losses to top-15 foes Georgia Tech and Michigan, the women's hoops squad will enter-

tain Oakland and Loyola-Chicago at home.

The matchup against the Grizzlies is set to tip-off at 11 am on Dec. 7 while the Dec. 11 tilt with the Ramblers is set for a 1 p.m. start to kick-off a double-header in McGuirk Arena.

The Chippewas finish their non-conference schedule on Dec. 20 at Green Bay. CMU starts MAC play on Dec. 29 at Buffalo and return home for clashes against Northern Illinois and Western Michigan on Jan. 1 and 5 respectively.

■ Tuesday, Dec. 7: vs Oakland (11 a.m.)

■ Saturday, Dec. 11: vs Loyola-Chicago (1 p.m.)

■ Monday, Dec. 20: @ Green Bay (8 p.m.)

■ Wednesday, Dec. 29: @ Buffalo (1 p.m.)

■ Saturday, Jan. 1: vs NIU (1 p.m.)

■ Wednesday, Jan. 5: v WMU (7 p.m.)



Nate Pappas | Staff Photographer

Junior guard Brian Taylor shoots a free throw on Nov. 5 in McGuirk Arena.

# CMU voter engagement skyrocketed in 2020

By Collin Periatt  
Staff Reporter

A recent study published by the Institute of Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE) at Tufts University shows Central Michigan University students showed a significant increase in voter engagement during the 2020 election.

While all state universities saw a jump in voter turnout, CMU's nearly 24 percent jump was especially noteworthy. This landed CMU over two percent higher than the national average of all institutions.

The National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement is participated by over 1,100 campuses nationwide with nearly 50 million student records spanning all types of higher education institutions.

"It shows that students care about voting and they're really excited to be engaged," Macomb senior Maddie Thomas, head of voter engagement and event coordinator for Central Civics said. "We should continue to invest in more opportunities for students to get civically and politically involved on campus."

Compared to the 2016 presidential elections, CMU had nearly 5,000 fewer students enrolled. Despite a smaller population on campus, all aspects of student voting involvement rose.

Here are some main takeaways:

The Registration Rate (percent of voting-eligible students who registered to vote) for CMU leaped by roughly 16 percent in just two years – with the registered student voting rate jumping from 46.8 to

76.5 percent.

The voting rates of all races and ethnic groups also rose among all populations, with most now falling between 60-70 percent, up from roughly 30-50 percent in previous years.

Ages were also included in this study, ranging from 18 to 50 and up. All eligible ages showed a leap in voter participation, with the most significant jump being in the 18-21 range with a jump from 38 percent in 2016 to 70 percent in 2020.

There was a clear drop in in-person voting on election day, favoring the "Not-In-Person" option and early voting options due to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

"We are, as a campus, committed to being as engaged in our democracy as we can," Thomas said. "I know that

there are a lot of students that are already dedicated to voting and being as involved as they can."

Student organizations such as Central Votes and other groups like Central Civics and the Central Votes Coalition were hard at work during the election year. They continue to host educational events and register members of the campus community this semester.

Earlier this semester all three organizations collaborated for "Fire up the Vote" where they registered about 55 students and distributed voter information.

"The significance is that students have resources palatable toward them on why they should vote," Ryan Coker, Senior and President of Central Votes said. "A lot of people aren't actually taught these civil things all

of the time; now they can make those decisions for themselves."

Central Votes and Central Civics will be hosting a workshop on writing to local representatives from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Dec. 1 in the Bovee University Center Terrace Rooms C-D.

The week after, Central Civics is partnering with the Institute of Transformative Dialogue for "Dinner Table Politics," an event all about engaging in political conversations with friends and relatives. It's being held from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Dec. 8 in the UC Terrace Room D.

"Continue to vote and stay engaged," Thomas said. "It's one of the best ways to make your voice heard. CMU is here to support and give you all of the resources you need to make the best decision for you."

# Let's keep campus healthy



## *Vaccine rates are promising, but CMU can do better*

When it comes to handling COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, Central Michigan University has seen some success during this semester following a decent 2020-21 academic year.

CMU has seen some success during the fall semester with handling COVID-19 safety guidelines, following a successful 2020-21 academic year.

Last year, CMU proved to students, faculty, staff, parents and community members they could offer a university experience while keeping students safe. We were constantly reminded of the case count and received constant communication in regards to COVID-19 and the importance of mental health was stressed. This semester, however, there has been less dialogue and less emphasis on physical and mental health, so there is room for improvement.

For example, CMU has a 79.48 percent vaccination rate among the overall university community. Although 92.58 percent of staff and 90.14 percent of faculty are vaccinated, only 77.3 percent of students are vaccinated.

It starts with us students. If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated.

It's been a year since the vaccinations became available to the public. Most of the population is vaccinated and are fine. The FDA has approved them.

What more do you need?

In the end, it is your choice whether or not to get vaccinated. However, if you decide against it, make sure you continue to get

## EDITORIAL

tested weekly. If you are vaccinated, you need to stay on top of receiving booster shots as they become available. It's our responsibility to hold ourselves accountable and keep one another safe.

We can raise the vaccination rates here on campus, we can keep ourselves, our professors, our roommates and families safe.

Michigan State University and the University of Michigan have COVID-19 vaccine mandates, with limited religious and health exemptions. MSU has a 90.2 percent student vaccination rate and the U of M has a 98 percent student vaccination rate.

CMU may not have vaccine mandates for the general population but we do for those involved in theatre productions, the marching band and athletes.

They have all seen success.

The university has done a good job with hosting vaccine and testing clinics which have been helpful and meet the constant demand.

Regardless of the good work that has been done, the administration and CMU community can continue to do better.

For instance, throughout the semester, students, faculty and staff have been confused about who is in charge of enforcing masks and how to handle being sick.

The CMU administration can, and needs

to, have better communication with the rest of the campus community and develop safe, clear protocols with strong repercussions.

Although CMU has a high vaccination rate, the rates of those infected with COVID-19 have been on par with those during both semesters last year.

As of Nov. 24, about 3.5 percent – 526 people – of the CMU community contracted COVID-19. Last semester, CMU had fewer cases with 3.28 percent of the community – 436 people.

Even though cases are higher than last spring, CMU has been less accommodating with those who are sick and those who are scared of contracting the illness.

The university no longer requires CMU faculty to offer HyFlex options. We are no longer required to socially distance in classrooms.

CMU administration, instead of pretending this semester is normal, give us the same flexibility options as last year.

Have all classes offer a HyFlex option again, but offer support and resources for faculty to do so. Allow students the opportunity to decide to make courses credit or no credit until a week after grades are in.

The pandemic is not over. There is another variant of COVID-19 making its way around the world. Although education is a priority, mental and physical health is important too. We are not back to normal and won't be for a while. Until then we are trying our best.

We can – and should – do better.

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# Stop underestimating your professors with accents

An unsavory trend I've noticed at Central Michigan University is the mistreatment of professors with, particularly thick and heavy accents.

It needs to stop.

I hate to share that I've overheard many conversations between students complaining about a professor's accent. The complaints are generally issues of misunderstanding the material, solely blamed on the professor's communication skills. However, the conversations can often trickle into poking fun at the professors' accents and origins — or even blatant racism.

The issue, more often than not, isn't dependent on the professor's accent, but rather within these individual students' internalized racism. On a broader scale, this behavior is a reflection of an unacceptable aspect of the culture at CMU.

For how much we promote and advertise our diversity, the same level of respect offered to native English-speaking professors is not reflected in faculty with accents.

Need evidence? Look no further than



**Leona Falconer**

Staff Reporter

RateMyProfessor. Similar to every other college student signing up for classes, I always browse RateMyProfessor reviews to get an insight on the course. Here are some examples of comments I've found regarding CMU professors:

"I don't think (redacted) has ANY idea of what classes in America are normally like. She has a very bizarre & confusing way of teaching. She assigns stuff from books that aren't required but doesn't touch the required ones. She also has a very annoying voice that is difficult to bear for 2hrs."

"She can't speak very good English. In the class I had, she didn't answer questions clearly AT ALL. I learned NOTHING

and found the class very pointless!!!!"

You get the idea.

The anonymity of RateMyProfessor allows students to post reviews like above, and I'm sure there are worse comments made in private conversations between classmates and friends.

Would you say these things directly to the professor? If not, then they don't belong in the back of the class or on a website either.

These students are potentially missing out on a wealth of knowledge by underestimating professors with accents. If you can look past an accent, you may find a professor to be the most knowledgeable teacher in the department or an invaluable mentor. Understand that these professors aren't any lesser for speaking broken English; in fact, they should be respected even more for instructing in a second language.

As a university with an on-campus population made up of over 70 percent white individuals, this isn't the first time CMU has been accused of mistreating and ostracizing people of color on our campus.

In a study completed by CMU faculty Mary Senter, she found that 61 percent of students of color at CMU have heard negative comments about a racial or ethnic group from other students on campus. The study reported that more than half of minority employees do not believe that CMU employees support and promote diversity and do not believe that there are many opportunities for minorities to advance at CMU.

These trends need to change. Each CMU student needs to be aware of the larger impact of their comments and reviews on our university culture. If this behavior is being exhibited against qualified professionals, I can only imagine the lengths of discrimination that POC students endure.

Please, just ask your professor for clarification, whether that be during or after class.

If you can't make the extra effort to work with an accented professor, and your first instinct is to shame them or write a nasty review, then you are the problem, not the professor.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Mayor Will Joseph says goodbye to Mount Pleasant community

To the Mount Pleasant Community:

Effective Nov. 26 I am resigning as Mayor and City Commissioner of Mount Pleasant. I have been honored to serve the Mount Pleasant community as an employee, volunteer, Planning Commissioner, City Commissioner and Mayor. I will forever be grateful to the people and places I have called home. I am resigning to start a new chapter in my life as the Village Manager of Paw Paw, Michigan.

The Mount Pleasant community has been sincere, welcoming, passionate and supportive ever since my initial days of being a transfer student at Central Michigan University. I have been lucky to make many friends and fortunate to have experiences that I will forever treasure. I have been a witness and participant to many great moments and times that shaped our community. As part of CMU's Student Government Association, I witnessed the effort put forth by community members working with the City Commission to pass our Human Rights Ordinance.

In 2017, when Mount Pleasant was hit with a 100-year storm, I worked with other city employees to stack sandbags in front of critical infrastructure and witnessed the damage to

many homes and apartments from flooding. Developing the master plan by engaging community partners, community members and staff to provide guidance for the next thirty years of development was rewarding. Participating in community demonstrations and discussions that continue to improve the relationship between residents and police have broke down barriers of communication and led to shared success.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a tough time for all of us but watching the resiliency of our community, small businesses and anchor institutions has been reassuring. The development of the Broadway Lofts next to City Hall will be a great contribution to our downtown. The community support toward non-profit organizations that serve those in need has been tremendous and I thank those who volunteer their time, money and resources.

Most of all it has been the small interactions with people that have made my time as a resident and Mayor so rewarding. I will miss catching up with staff members when at City Hall, participating in the student exchange with Okaya, Japan and supporting the International Relations Council. I will fondly remember celebrating the Isabella Day Treat-



Mayor Will Joseph | Courtesy Photo

ment student graduations, as well as the City Staff Appreciation and Service Awards. I am grateful for Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe hosted events that gave me the opportu-

nity to learn more about our Native American community and establish valuable relationships. I cherished the ability to run into my former professors around town and witness first-hand how teachers never stop educating. I also enjoyed speaking with students about local government and how we can make an impact on issues of concern. It was also an honor to perform wedding ceremonies to couples in love. These moments, and the people with who I shared them, will live with me forever.

I certainly will not be a stranger. You may catch me around town from time to time working with the Isabella County Restoration House, cheering on our CMU teams and grabbing lunch downtown. This community has given me so much and I hope I was able to do my part. As a great sendoff, I will be a judge for the Christmas Celebration Lighted Parade downtown scheduled for Dec. 4 at 6 p.m. Make sure you stay for the fireworks immediately following the parade. I hope to see you there!

**Mayor Will Joseph**  
Mount Pleasant

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\*Please see our social media pages for details.  
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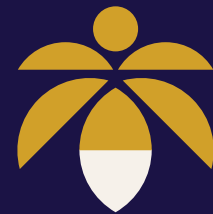
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