



Fall activities, farms
near Ypsilanti

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Shawarmix Grill offers
campus bites

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The Eastern Echo

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HOMECOMING WEEK 2026

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- + TAKE A PEEK AT EMU HOMECOMINGS OF THE PAST, SEE PAGE 11
- + HOMECOMING COMIC ART, SEE PAGE 8



Students attend Eastern Michigan University's homecoming football game in 2024. File Photo / The Eastern Echo

EMU invites new traditions

Bilal Ahmed and Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporters

Eastern Michigan University is shedding its usual mid-semester study routine to wrap itself in green and white. The historic campus is gearing up for EMU Homecoming 2026, a weeklong celebration running from Oct. 12-17, 2026, that bridges decades of alumni history with the pulse of current student life.

This year's festivities may appear particularly historic as construction crews actively transform areas of campus. Alumni visiting for the festivities will find half of Pierce Hall and all of Roosevelt cordoned off as renovation work continues or gets underway. Students have been walking past the projects since returning to campus in August. Both projects add a forward-looking energy to the university's autumn tradition.

The work at Pierce Hall has been

designed as the new home for the College of Business, and Homecoming Week festivities include a special groundbreaking ceremony for the project. The work on Roosevelt is just beginning, but the state of Michigan recently announced it would provide \$30 million for the \$42.5 million plan to turn the former high school building into the new home for the university's GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology.

"The College of Business' new home ... represents Eastern Michigan University's continued commitment to preparing students for the demands of a rapidly evolving workforce in our region," Amy Hietapelto, the college's dean, said in a written announcement on the project. "The new home for the College of Business will provide contemporary educational spaces, collaborative meeting spaces and a gateway for faculty, student, community and industry engagement, designed

to foster career readiness, innovation, collaboration and hands-on learning."

Other Homecoming Week activities offer students opportunities to step away from their midterm workload to make memories, laugh with friends and cheer on the Eagles football team.

SEE HOMECOMING EVENTS, PAGE 3

Ypsi police chief reports crime uptick, staffing challenges

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

At the Ypsilanti City Council meeting that took place Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2026, Ypsilanti Police Chief Timothy Anderson presented a slideshow concerning police department updates within the city.

Anderson shared that currently, the Ypsilanti Police have 27 officers with six vacancies. There are five officers currently in training and one recruit

that is being sent to the academy by the end of this month.

"I do think we have a difficulty retaining officers," Anderson said. He said that there is currently a very competitive market. "To be quite frank, this community at times, sometimes from this board, provides a very anti-police narrative. So when officers can leave and go somewhere and make more money and actually be applauded for the efforts that they make ... it's gonna put us at a disadvantage to retain talent."

In the past, citizens and City Council members alike have raised initiatives that could limit or redirect the power of policing in the city. Notably, Ypsilanti voters will see a proposal on the Nov. 3 ballot that, if passed, would require voter approval to increase the year-to-year policing budget in Ypsilanti. Proponents of the proposal say it places democratic decision-making into the hands of residents. Opponents of the proposal, including City Council member Patrick McLean, Ward 2, contend that it would effectively

defund the police and delay the city budgeting process.

Offering unarmed community response options for mental health situations and other crises has been a top priority for the City Council this year. In January, the Ypsilanti Police Department and other law enforcement agencies received backlash from some residents on the tactics used in a 30-hour barricade incident, in which a man with a sword barricaded himself in a West Cross Street house. Washtenaw

County Commissioner Annie Somerville, D-Ypsilanti, previously told The Eastern Echo that the man was suffering from a mental health crisis. This incident helped renew calls from community members to increase accountability measures on policing and invest in community-based response programs.

SEE CRIME REPORT, PAGE 3



SCAN TO REGISTER

IN 2024, THE MI SENATE RACE WAS DECIDED BY 19,006 VOTES. THERE ARE 491,399 COLLEGE STUDENTS IN MICHIGAN.

As a college student, you're eligible to vote here — regardless of what state you grew up in. Register before the deadline:

Michigan

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October 19

Early Voting
October 24 – November 1

Election Day
November 3

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The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as *The Normal News*, *The Eastern Echo* distributes weekly print editions on campus and throughout the surrounding Ypsilanti community during the fall and winter academic semesters. *The Eastern Echo* also publishes online year-round. Published content is subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of the newspaper.

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The Eastern Echo informs the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti communities by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.

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Fall 2026
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CORRECTIONS

At *The Eastern Echo*, we correct our mistakes. If we got it wrong, we want to make it right. Errors should be brought to the attention of the editor-in-chief by email: editor@easternecho.com.

Where to purchase
Cellar Roots Vol.
52, EMU's Fine
Arts and Literary
Magazine:



Homecoming
Week at a
glance

OCT
12

Kickoff Day

3-6 p.m.
Student Center Patio

OCT
13

Spirit Tables

Student Center

OCT
14

Home At Eastern

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
First Floor of Student Center

OCT
15

COB Groundbreaking

4 p.m.
Pierce Hall

OCT
16

Ignite the Night Bonfire

6:15 p.m.
Ainsley to Intramural Fields

OCT
17

Alumni and Friends
Tailgate

12:30 - 3 p.m.
Rynearson Stadium Lawn

Homecoming Game

3:30 p.m.
Rynearson Stadium

Where to find
The Echo:

On-Campus:

Alexander Music Building
Boone Hall
Downing Hall
Counseling and Psychological Services
EMU Department of Public Safety
EMU Rec/IM
Ford Hall
Halle Library
Judy Sturgis Hill Building
King Hall
Lakeview Apartments
Mark Jefferson Science Complex
Marshall Building
McKenny Hall
Phelps and Sellers Halls
Pierce Hall
Porter Building
Pray-Harrold Building
Rackham Hall
Roosevelt Hall
Sherzer Observatory
Sill Hall
Strong Physical Sciences Building
Student Center
The Commons
The Eastern Eateries
The Honors College
The Village
Trinity Health IHA Urgent Care
Walton and Putnam Halls
Welch Hall
Westview Apartments
Wise Hall

Off-Campus:

Aubree’s Pizzeria & Grill
Bank of Ann Arbor
Barber-Me-Locz
Basil Babe
Benito’s Pizza
BIGGBY Coffee
Black Stone Bookstore & Cultural Center
Book Love Bar
Bridge Community Café
Café Liv
Candy Coated Creamery
Chef Restaurant Mediterranean Grill
Cottage Inn Pizza
David’s Books
Domino’s Pizza
Eagle Crest Golf Club
EMU Credit Union
Insomnia Cookies
Jet’s Pizza
Jimmy John’s
Laundry Pro
Luca’s Coney Island
Lucky Garden
Ma Lou’s Fried Chicken
MAÍZ Mexican Cantina
Miny’s Mexican Restaurant
Northern Grind
Peninsular Place
Plant Based Coneys
Sidetrack Bar and Grill
SPARK East Innovation Center
Speedys Big Burger
Standard Printing+Design Co.
Subway (Eastern Plaza)
Sweetwaters Coffee & Tea
The Golden Egg
Thompson & Co.
Trinity Health Ann Arbor Hospital
U-M Health Ypsilanti Health Center
Washtenaw Auto Care Center
Wild Side Smoke Shop
Ypsi Real
Ypsilanti City Hall
Ypsilanti District Library
Ypsilanti Food Co-op



Shawarmix Grill offers new menu, fresh start to former Got Burger location

Daniel Obiagbaoso
News Reporter

Shawarmix Grill has replaced Got Burger on Cross Street, bringing a new menu, staff and look to the restaurant near Eastern Michigan University’s campus, while remaining under the same ownership.

The restaurant, located at 301 W. Cross St., opened as Shawarmix Grill on Aug. 24 after owner Khaled Al-Soliman decided to renovate and rebrand the former Got Burger. Al-Soliman purchased Got Burger near the end of 2022.

Khaled Naser, manager of Shawarmix Grill, translated for Al-Soliman during an interview with The Eastern Echo.

Al-Soliman said he had considered remodeling Got Burger since purchasing the restaurant because the building and equipment were outdated, but financial considerations and other responsibilities delayed those plans.

Eventually, Al-Soliman decided that remodeling the restaurant would also provide an opportunity to give the

business a fresh identity.

“The only thing that’s the same is the owner, essentially,” Al-Soliman said, with Naser translating.

Shawarmix has new employees, equipment and a different menu concept from Got Burger. While burgers remain available, the restaurant now focuses primarily on Middle Eastern food, particularly shawarma.

Al-Soliman said Middle Eastern cooking, including shawarma, is an area in which he has more experience than traditional burgers. The team had considered bringing the concept to Dearborn, but ultimately decided to keep the restaurant in Ypsilanti.

“Ypsilanti deserves a restaurant like this,” Al-Soliman said through Naser’s translation.

The restaurant’s menu includes chicken and wagyu beef shawarma, wraps and other Middle Eastern dishes, along with burgers.

According to Naser, the meat used for the shawarma is stacked and prepared each morning. The restaurant uses a Syrian marinade recipe that is also incorporated into the preparation

of its sandwiches.

Al-Soliman created the menu based largely on dishes he was familiar with cooking and wanted to offer customers, Naser said.

The restaurant also plans to continue expanding its menu. Al-Soliman said that he hopes to introduce more wagyu-based items, including steaks and ribs, in the coming months.

For customers visiting Shawarmix for the first time, Al-Soliman recommended trying either the chicken or wagyu beef shawarma.

The restaurant’s name also comes from its menu. Naser said the idea for “Shawarmix” came from the Shawarmix plate, which has chicken and beef shawarma with garlic sauce and tahini. The combination stood out to Al-Soliman while he was developing the menu, and he eventually used the name for the restaurant itself.

Beyond the food, the restaurant is also trying to establish itself as a place where EMU students can spend time.

Naser said Shawarmix offers an EMU student discount and has joined a university-affiliated discount program.

The restaurant also plans to improve its Wi-Fi so students can sit inside and study or complete homework.

“We welcome all the EMU students,” Naser said. “We’re trying to cater to the students here with a nice vibe; a nice welcoming area.”

Al-Soliman said he wants the restaurant to develop an atmosphere where customers from different backgrounds feel comfortable and welcome.

The goal, Naser said, is to create one big, happy family.

Shawarmix’s opening also represents an effort by Al-Soliman to separate the restaurant from the reputation Got Burger developed before the rebrand.

Al-Soliman said through Naser that problems with the previous operation contributed to his decision to make significant changes rather than simply renovate the existing restaurant.

With a new staff, new equipment, and a different menu, Shawarmix is intended to function as a new restaurant rather than simply Got Burger under another name.

Shawarmix Grill is open Monday



Khaled Al-Soliman stands in front of the reinvented Shawarmix Grill sign. *Daniel Obiagbaoso / The Eastern Echo*

through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 1:30 a.m., Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 a.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Cultural Expo! brings food, music and community to EMU



T'Mae Puckree hands out a stamped raffle passport at the Cultural Expo on Oct. 3, 2026, at the EMU Student Center. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*

Courtney Prielipp
News Reporter

The Student Center Ballroom bustled with activity when students

attended Eastern Michigan University’s second annual Cultural Expo! on Oct. 3, 2026.

Attendees could be found chatting, trying cultural foods, dancing or

playing traditional games, all set to a soundtrack of diverse cultural music.

2026 marks the second year that the International Student Association and the Southeast Asian Student Alliance

have teamed up to create and host the Cultural Expo.

Sultan Al Sousi, president of ISA, and Matthew Lorenz Medina, president of SEASA, were the ones who put the idea of the Cultural Expo into motion. Al Sousi said that he got this idea when he was at his previous school.

“I used to participate in a very similar event at Schoolcraft Community College called the Multicultural Fair,” Al Sousi said. He explained that the fair was similar to the Cultural Expo and he liked the idea of students having a space to share their cultures on campus.

This year, the Cultural Expo had 14 different student-presented cultures represented. South African culture was represented by T'mae Puckree. Puckree said that the Cultural Expo is a great way to share knowledge, foster understanding and to correct misconceptions.

Another student participating was Trinity Wright from You Beautiful Black Woman, a student organization. Wright and other club members shared African American culture at the Cultural Expo.

Wright said events like Cultural Expo are important.

“It gives everyone a glance and an

understanding and a little education on every end. I feel like with a lot of things that happen nowadays, it’s just very important to just be aware and learn from other people,” Wright said. “And it’s just fun.”

When asking the opinions of guests, many had positive experiences at the Cultural Expo. Ibrahim said that the best part about events like the Cultural Expo is seeing people get to know each other and getting to know about each other’s cultures.

Both Al Sousi and Lorenz Medina are hoping to expand Cultural Expo next year. They said there are about 81 different nationalities represented by students that currently attend EMU.

“There is so much more room for improvement, more outreach, more inclusion,” Medina said. “We definitely have the space for it.”

A key takeaway from Cultural Expo is how students of all backgrounds can learn to embrace each others’ differences, Al Sousi said.

“It generally shows you the beauty and our differences,” he said. “We are all different, but that’s not something that’s negative. This just shows that we’re all unique.”

EMU Mental Health and Wellness Fair highlights campus, local resources

Lelaina MacDonald and Katelyn Hollis
News Reporters

Eastern Michigan University had its Mental Health and Wellness Fair Wednesday, Oct. 7 from 12-2 p.m. in the Student Center, featuring a variety of booths and tables on the Student Center patio and the first floor of the Student Center.

Different groups and organizations attended the event, providing attendees with info packets, games, candy and other items.

Some organizations at the Mental Health and Wellness Fair included EMU’s Disability Resource Center, EMU’s Women Resource Center and Tinker, EMU’s facility dog. Students were able to listen to live music, learn about different wellness resources on and around campus, make arts and crafts, grab giveaways and win prizes.

Two other organizations in attendance were Michigan Minds, a group for people experiencing psychosis, and Heigra Health, a behavioral health group that offers

services for people of all ages. Alexandra Schmaeman, member of Michigan Minds and Heigra Health, and Lindsey Michael, member of Heigra Health, spoke with *The Echo* about these programs.

“We work with people and their families who have just had an experience with psychosis and maybe been diagnosed with something like schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and [who are] just kind of trying to figure things out,” Michael said. “We help them and anyone who’s a support in their life, get things back on track, stay healthy, stay out of the hospital.”

She said that the tagline for Michigan Minds is “thriving with psychosis.” Michigan Minds wants people who have experience with psychosis to be able to live their best lives and not have psychosis hold them back.

“We want people to be able to live the lives they want to live,” Michael said.

Swoop’s Pantry was also at the Mental Health and Wellness Fair. Swoop’s Pantry is located in the basement of Pierce Hall and is open

four days a week, Monday through Thursday, from 12-5 p.m.

Swoop’s also has a free thrift area that is available to all students. Students must fill out an annual intake form to access Swoop’s services, and alumni can shop for up to a year after their graduation date, according to information provided by the pantry staff.

EMU’s Counseling and Psychological Services, CAPS, was at the Mental Health and Wellness Fair, as well. Erin Shaffer, a clinical social worker at EMU, was at the CAPS booth with stress balls and flyers.

“We offer 12 free counseling sessions to students who are enrolled, and it’s for each year,” Shaffer said. “It resets at the beginning of each school year.”

CAPS offers group sessions, too. Two of the groups that Shaffer mentioned on were the Students of Color Support group, which focuses on the experiences of students of color, and the Lavender Link Up group, which focuses on the experiences of LGBTQ+ and questioning individuals.



Attendees walk around the different booths at the Eastern Michigan University Wellness Fair at the Student Center, Oct. 7. *Lelaina MacDonald / The Eastern Echo*

The Students of Color Support group meets Wednesdays from 3:30-5 p.m. and the Lavender Link Up group meets Fridays from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

These group sessions do not count towards a student’s 12 sessions.

“We also have crisis resources available,” Shaffer added. Some of these resources include the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, the Crisis Text Line, the Trans Life Line and more, which can be found on the CAPS

EMU Intermedia Gallery Group to showcase student summer art projects



Students and faculty browse an Intermedia Gallery Group art show, Sept. 18, 2025. Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo

Hannah Borders
Arts Reporter

For those who had a summer spark of creativity and want a place to showcase their art, EMU’s Intermediate Gallery Group is hosting an exhibit just for that

purpose. “In The Meantime” is a gallery exhibition to showcase all of the work that EMU students have made or worked on during their summer break. The exhibition is meant to show that humans are constantly creating, even

when they are not required to for class. The show will open Oct. 26 and remain open through part of November. The IGG executive board is working with artists to determine a date and time for a reception, but people looking to attend should expect it to be on a Tuesday or Thursday, IGG President Kristen Holsworth said. The show will be in IGG’s gallery space in Room 236 on the second floor of the Student Center. IGG is a student-run organization that hosts art exhibitions in the many gallery spaces on campus. IGG is dedicated to providing real world, hands-on experience to help students develop their skills in the arts, according to the organization’s website. Holsworth said anyone planning to see the displayed work should expect to be impressed. Everyone is creative in their own way, and it is impressive to see all of different works that have been thoughtfully crafted, she said. IGG shows are open for any EMU student to submit work of every medium, regardless of the student’s major. Holsworth said IGG will exhibit any work that anyone is excited about. Students are welcome to submit to as

many or as few shows as they prefer. “There are tons of people who make art that are not art majors, and I want to showcase all of that. Art is such an important thing to our society, and to building community and just to people in general. It is a form of expression, and it’s really important to encourage people to make work,” Holsworth said. People who want to submit work to IGG shows do not need to make any sort of commitment to the group, unless they choose to. “When you apply to IGG shows, expect to just be welcomed into the community. Even if you just apply for one show and show up for one thing. We’re such a welcoming and open group that we don’t care if it’s a one-off time you’re showing up, we’re excited you’re here,” Holsworth said. IGG will open a call for art for its next show, “It’s The Little Things” in the near future. In addition to hosting galleries, the IGG executive board is working on putting together workshops. Workshops will be open to all students to do art-related activities, hangout and relax, Holsworth said.

What's the Move? Oct. 13 - 19

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

Looking to get into the fall spirit or get out of your comfort zone? Take a look at the events that are happening this week!

Honors College Chips and Chat! - Oct. 13

The EMU Honors College is hosting an informal event called Chips and Chat! for students to come together, enjoy some chips and salsa and hang out with one another. Students are welcome to discuss ideas about their Honors contract, their classes and more. The event will take place in the Honors College in the Commuter Lounge from 12 -1 p.m.

JoyFest — Oct. 14

For students who need a break and a time to relax, JoyFest is the place to go. EMU’s College of Education is holding a celebration to honor the spirit if connection, compassion and collective joy, EMU Today says. From 4:30-6:30 p.m., students can go to Room 100 in Porter to celebrate the people and moments that make the EMU community stronger.

Yoga at the Roush Aeronautics Center — Oct. 15

Interested in winding down with some yoga? Join Zion Well instructors at the Michigan Flight Museum Roush Aeronautics Center for an all-levels guided flow, breathwork and relaxation activity. Participants will be surrounded by aircraft and golden-hour light during the event. No previous experience required. Tickets for the event are \$35 per person and can be purchased on the Michigan Flight Museum website. The event will begin at 5:30 p.m. and go until 7:10 p.m.

Line Dancing with Laney — Oct. 16

Have you ever wanted to learn any line dances? The Mix Fitness Studios is having a one-hour line dancing class. Laney, who has been teaching dance and group fitness for over eight years, will lead the class with country, disco, cha-cha and other line dances. No dance background is needed to attend, and all dances will be taught step by step. The class is located at 306 N. River St. in Depot Town. Participants are encouraged to arrive a few minutes early and to bring water. Those who are members of The Mix Fitness Studios can pay to attend the event online and non-members can pay \$28 in-person at the event.

Keeper and Kicks Gala — Oct. 18

Lace up your favorite sneakers throw on your finest formal wear and get ready to blend elegance with impact, the Eventbrite website states. Washtenaw My Brother’s Keepers, WMBK, is hosting its 4th annual gala. It is an elevated suits-and-sneakers attire event featuring speaker, author and activist Dr. Yusef Salaam, a live performance from The Formula 734 DJ Force + Talent Hub and presentation of the Ronald C. Woods Equity Justice Warrior Award and Deshawn Leeth Youth Leadership Award. General admission tickets are \$55 per person and can be purchased through Eventbrite’s site. The gala will take place in the EMU Student Center Ballroom, with the VIP Reception taking place from 3:45 to 4:45 p.m., and the gala at 5-8 p.m.

Fall Break Hike — Oct. 19

Students will be able to explore the Pickney Nature Area, have snacks and earn an LBC credit at this free Rec/IM event. The hike starts at 11 a.m. and goes until 2 p.m. Students should meet at the Rec/IM at 11 a.m.

From apple orchards to pumpkin patches: Nearby fall fun spots beckon students to venture off campus



Wiard’s Orchards and Cider Mill, on Merritt Road in Ypsilanti Township, offers fall and Halloween activities seven days a week. Founded in 1837, the farm and fall activity venue hosts country fairs, u-pick orchards, and pumpkin patches that bring area residents and Eastern Michigan University students together. Now operating for nearly two centuries, Wiard’s is older than university, which was founded in 1849. Jan Hernandez / The Eastern Echo

Olivia Angel
News Reporter

Whether it’s a corn maze, pumpkin picking or cider and donuts, fall fun spots have opened for the season near campus. Eastern Michigan University students can venture off campus no more than 20 miles from the school to find everything from apple orchards to hay rides. These featured farms and fall venues are open to the public for the seasonal activities and more.

Wiard’s Orchards and Country Fair

Wiard’s Orchards and Country Fair, a 6-mile drive from EMU’s campus, offers weekend and weekday fun on a working farm. The venue has been operating for 187 years: as long as Michigan has been a state. Every fall weekend, patrons can visit Wiard’s to pick their own apples and pumpkins (in season); participate in wagon rides and corn mazes; or take advantage of numerous playground attractions for children of all ages. On site, Wiard’s Country Store features a wide variety of fresh baked goods and cider. Activities and attractions follow fall holidays and events, as well as a variety of rotating opportunities for fire engine rides, paintball shooting and tractor races. **Address:** 5565 Merritt Road, Ypsilanti. **Admission:** Weekday tickets are

\$18; weekend tickets are \$27 **Operating hours:** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday; and 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday

The Pumpkin Factory

The Pumpkin Factory in Belleville, Michigan, is another place to find a spooky attraction. As October rolls in, the factory revs up its scary sights with Nightmare Fields, featuring a haunted hayride and haunted house. The venue also features activities such as Riddle in the Rows, a haunted cornfield and the Witches Kitchen. The Pumpkin Factory has filled its October calendar with weekends for all visitors, featuring Military Weekend on Oct. 16-17 and Student Weekend on Oct. 23-24. **Address:** 48651 Harris Road, Belleville. **Admission:** The Pumpkin Factory is pay by event **Operating hours:** 3-7 p.m. Monday to Thursday; noon-11 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday

DeBuck’s Family Farm

Another Belleville classic fall destination is DeBuck’s Family Farm and Pumpkin Town. A family-operated business, DeBuck’s is off of Martz Road and features new activities every season. Autumn activities include corn mazes,

food trucks and the local favorite, a mega slide. Summertime finds DeBuck’s transformed, including a vast tulip field, as the operators host their annual Sunflower Festival. Run by two generations of the DeBuck family, the farm has been open to the public since 2009 and includes a 15-acre corn maze and 20 acres of pumpkins. **Address:** 50240 Martz Road, Belleville. **Admission:** \$22.95 for general admission **Operating hours:** October Fall Festival hours: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Oct. 1-4, 8-11, and 15-31

Donahee Family Farms

One of the more recent additions to fall farm fun venues – with a classic pumpkin patch – is Donahee Family Farms in South Lyon. With a large selection of pumpkins, squash and gourds, visitors are sure to find something worth taking home. Beyond the u-pick pumpkin experience, Donahee offers a corn maze for friends and family to enjoy. Visitors can spend an afternoon picking out the best pumpkin and exploring the endless farmland it has to offer. The Donahee family farm is in its fourth generation of serving southeast Michigan, making it a longtime local favorite to celebrate the cool weather. **Address:** 56780 Locust St., South Lyon.

Admission: Donahee Farms is pay by event. **Operating hours:** 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

Three Cedars Farms

In Northville, about 14 miles from Eastern, fall fun seekers will find Three Cedars Farm has attractions for all ages. The farms are known for the on-site Donut Hut, which features caramel apples, cider slushes and the signature cinnamon sugar donuts. After a fresh donut, visitors can explore a 7-acre corn maze full of hidden tokens redeemable for a chance to win an end-of-season prize. Hayrides and train rides are always running at Three Cedars, but the fun doesn’t stop there. A Country Christmas follows the fall season, featuring Christmas trees, hot cocoa, pictures with Mr. And Mrs. Claus and a vast Christmas store. **Address:** 7897 Six Mile Road, Northville. **Admission:** Three Cedars Farm is pay by event **Operating hours:** 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday to Thursday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday to Saturday

For those looking to include more farm fun on their bucket list, Michigan’s travel bureau site, Pure Michigan, has several pages of farm fun, u-pick and cider mill venues across the lower mitten.



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho

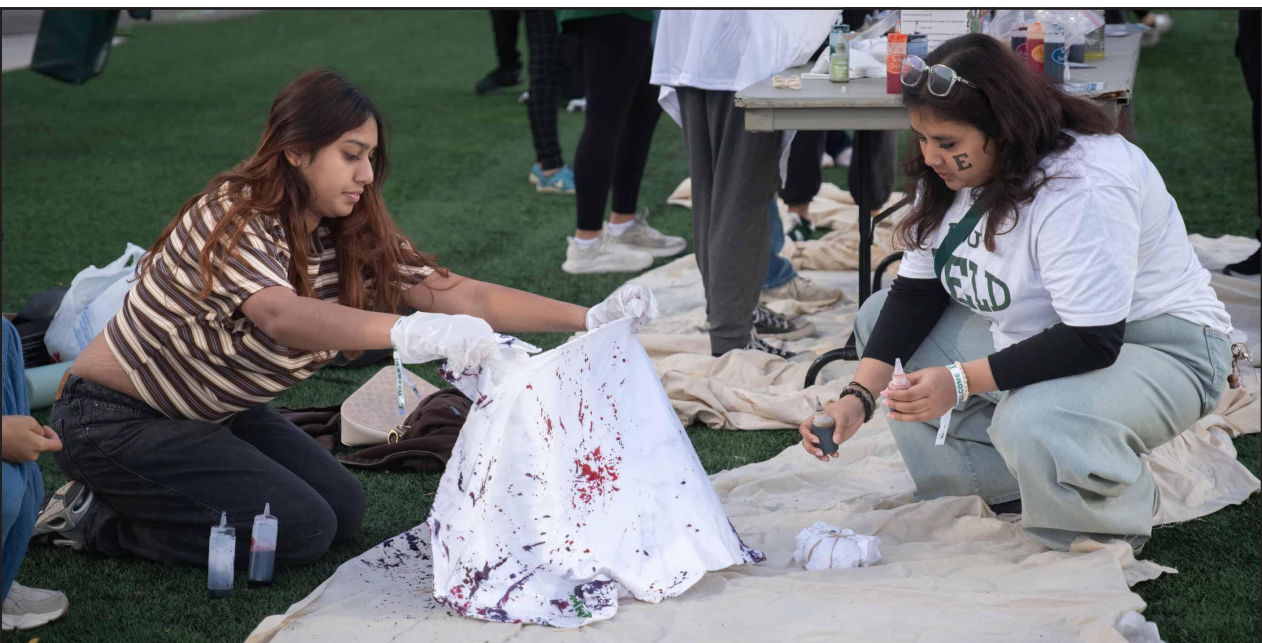


Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

On campus and around town, Oct. 4-8



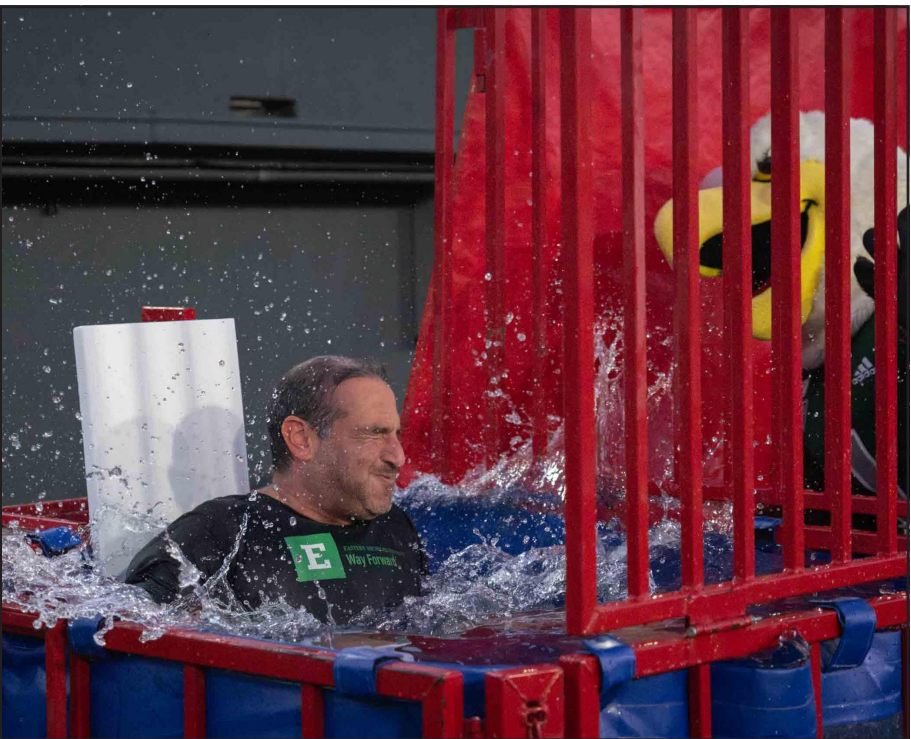
Attendees explore the different booths at the Eastern Michigan University Wellness Fair at the Student Center on Oct. 7. *Lelaina MacDonald / The Eastern Echo*



From left, Kazi Tanisha Tammannum and Lameesa Hossain, both students at EMU, tie-dye T-shirts at Field Day, Oct. 8, at Rynearson Stadium. *Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo*



EMU student Allysa Sta Iglesia performs a Filipino-inspired dance at the Cultural Expo in the Student Center on Oct. 3. Sta Iglesia said that the dance was a fusion of silk tandem and the cup of gapir, which is performed in the Mindanao region of the Philippines and is performed by royalty to welcome others. *Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo*



Maher Salah, vice president for advancement and executive director of the EMU Foundation, volunteered to be part of the dunk tank at the EMU Field Day at Rynearson Stadium on Oct. 8. Swoop was able to run up and dunk Salah. *Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo*



The owner of Finchcraft, Sarah Craft, secures a glass art piece to her Holy Bones booth's display in the Ypsilanti Firehouse Museum on Oct. 4. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*



Nathan and Brenton, the co-owners of Black Anchor coffee, clean their Holy Bones booth Oct. 4 in the Firehouse Museum. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*



Richard Mack, one of the two Wayne State University Democratic Board of Governors candidates, speaks to the audience at the Washtenaw County Michigan Democratic Women's Caucus GOTV Rally at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center about his campaign on Oct. 8. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*



EMU Football edges Akron 25-23 in MAC thriller



Eastern Michigan University football player No. 15 Amareon Blue runs with the ball during the game against Lindenwood on Sept. 26 at Rynearson Stadium. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

In a nail-biting Mid-American Conference clash on Saturday, Oct. 10, Eastern Michigan University secured a dramatic 25-23 victory over the University of Akron at InfoCision Stadium in Akron, Ohio.

Eagles escape Akron to stay unbeaten in MAC play

Guided by kicker Rudy Kessinger's four field goals, including a game-winning 48-yarder with 1:50 remaining, the Eagles overcame a late fourth-quarter deficit to improve to 4-3 overall and 3-0 in MAC play. The win marked EMU's first 3-0 start to conference play since 1995 and pushed the Zips to 1-5 overall and 0-2 in league play.

Opening strikes and lead changes

Eastern Michigan received the opening kickoff and marched 70 yards in 11 plays, finishing with a 23-yard field goal by Rudy Kessinger to take an early 3-0 lead. Akron answered on its first drive, traveling 83 yards in 11 plays to take a 7-3 lead. Early in the second quarter, EMU quarterback Noah Kim capped a 12-play, 75-yard drive with a 1-yard touchdown plunge on fourth-and-goal to put the Eagles back ahead 10-7. However, Akron quickly responded as quarterback Brayden Roggow connected with Marcel Williams on a 40-yard touchdown pass to retake a 14-10 lead.

Halftime scoreboard and defense holds

Eastern Michigan narrowed the

deficit on its next possession when Kessinger drilled a 22-yard field goal to finish an 11-play, 88-yard drive. Shortly before halftime, an EMU pass was tipped and intercepted at the EMU 41-yard line. Nevertheless, the Eagles' defense stiffened and forced an Akron punt, preserving the 14-13 halftime lead for the hosting Zips.

Lovett's blocked punt flips momentum

Akron opened the third quarter with a 9-play, 53-yard drive that yielded a 40-yard field goal, widening its advantage to 17-13. After an EMU fumble on the following drive, the momentum shifted dramatically when Eli Lovett burst through the line to block an Akron punt. Marvell Eggleston recovered the ball at the Akron 22-yard line, setting up Kessinger for a 33-yard field goal that cut the deficit to 17-16. Head coach Chris Creighton noted postgame that the entire punt-blocking team was made up of team captains who focused on executing the block all week.

Late-game heroics: Touchdowns and Kessinger's game-winner

EMU regained the lead at 22-17 early in the fourth quarter when Kim found Harold Mack Jr. for an 8-yard touchdown pass, though the two-point conversion attempt failed. Akron answered with a 9-play, 92-yard drive as Roggow connected with Marquese Williams for a 27-yard touchdown pass with 6:27 remaining. Akron's two-point pass sailed high, leaving the Zips ahead 23-22. EMU then constructed an 11-play, 42-yard drive capped by Kessinger's clutch 48-yard field goal with 1:50 on the clock. Akron pushed

46 yards to set up a potential game-winning 47-yard field goal with 19 seconds left, but the kick sailed wide left to seal the EMU win.

Record-breaking individual outings

Noah Kim finished 26 of 46 passing for 277 yards, one touchdown, and one interception, while eclipsing 4,000 career passing yards (4,254) and 400 completions (412) at EMU. Tight end Joshua Long delivered a career day with nine receptions for 114 yards, becoming the first EMU tight end to achieve a 100-yard receiving game since 2014 and tying the school's single-game reception record for a tight end. Running back Joey Mattord provided ground support with 73 rushing yards on 18 carries while adding 24 receiving yards. For Akron, Jordan Gant rushed for 117 yards, while Brayden Roggow threw three touchdown passes.

Program milestones for coach Chris Creighton

Defensively, linebacker Bryce Eliuk posted a career-high nine tackles for Eastern Michigan, while Quincy Byas added seven tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss, and 2.0 sacks. Kessinger's four field goals tied the second-highest single-game total in school history. The victory marked EMU head coach Chris Creighton's 65th win at the helm, moving him into sole possession of 10th place on the MAC all-time coaching wins list. EMU won despite losing the turnover battle 2-0, improving to 32-33 in one-score games since 2016. Next up, Eastern Michigan next hosts Toledo for the Eagles' homecoming game Oct. 17, while Akron visits Miami, Ohio.

Echo Q&A Series: Jesse Siordia flags Eastern as a great place for a women's football program

Olivia Angel
News Reporter

Just months after the NCAA's January 2026 decision to designate women's flag football as an emerging sport, Jesse Siordia was named the first head coach for the new program at Eastern Michigan University. In the May 14 announcement tapping Siordia, university Vice President Scott Wetherbee said: "Jesse ... understands how to grow the game, develop student-athletes, and build a culture that competes for championships."

Siordia recently stepped away from Siena Heights University in Adrian, where he founded Michigan's first women's collegiate varsity flag football team, playing as part of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. Known as the NAIA, the association represents about 250 smaller colleges across the U.S. and Canada. Sienna, a private, nonprofit university, closed at the end of the 2025-26 academic year, but Siorda led the Saints that year to the NAIA's 2026 National Collegiate Flag Football League National Championship. Sienna was in its second year of competition.

Siordia grew up in San Antonio, Texas, and served in the U.S. Navy for 23 years before finding his love for coaching. He coached at a number of levels as director of operations for the UnderArmor Under the Light youth flag football program, taking its travel team to multiple championships, before starting the college-level program at Adrian.

Q: Why did you and Eastern think now was the right time to introduce women's flag football?

A: EMU was rumored to be bringing it on board and be the first (large conference school with a team). A couple things were delayed, and Nebraska got the jump on us to say they were the first. (Nebraska announced in January, coinciding with the NCAA's

decision.) The team at Eastern was something that was in the works for a while between a number of big players and it was something that seemed right and the university was ready to do it.

Q: What have been some of your biggest challenges of starting a brand-new program?

A: Everything has moved at lightning speed. Usually, kids start signing in the November and February timeframe, so getting hired in May made it a little difficult, especially transitioning from NAIA to the NCAA, with all of the rules and regulations you have to learn. (The NCAA represents about 1,100 schools in three divisions and has stricter rules regarding recruiting and competition.)

Q: What are some of the skills or qualities you want to ensure this team is developing before the season starts?

A: Most of our girls are seasoned players. I brought eight girls from my previous team at Sienna Heights and then everybody else has been girls that we have either played against when we were in the NAIA or that I had coached in the past. The biggest thing is chemistry because half the team hasn't played with each other. Learning how to work together and understanding their new teammates and how they function.

Q: What kind of culture do you want to bring from past schools or newly establish within this program?

A: The respect for yourself and your teammates and others. Everybody has a bad day and some do a good job of not showing it or wearing their emotions on their sleeve. Having that compassion for everyone and speaking to people the way you want to be spoken to. You never know when someone is having a bad day, so just understanding and respecting each other.

Q: What is the most important thing this team needs to accomplish during the offseason?

A: Our season was recently bumped up by two months because we are playing at the College Football Playoffs in Las Vegas alongside the College National Championship. So we went from starting first week of March to mid-January. There is no time to waste. From the players to the coaches to the equipment staff, everyone is feeling the pressure of getting everything in and doing their part to make all of this work. It is basically just fast-tracking everything and being flexible. We are relying a lot on our senior leadership to be able to lead the team if coaches need to hang back for meetings or other things.

Q: What would make you and the other coaches look back on this season and say it was successful?

A: We have two big events: We have the College Football Championship in January and the Fiesta Bowl Flag Football Classic at the end of the year (April 2027). Winning one or both would be great. That would mean bringing a championship to the school in year one and that would be huge.

Right now, we are looking what we have and making sure we are ready for next year because if the NCAA does vote it in as a national championship sport we want to take every advantage of this year to get ready for next year. Staying competitive, playing together, and learning from every mistake and moving forward is what we are trying to accomplish in year one.

Q: What do you hope the university community learns about women's flag football through the installment of this program?

A: The sport has actually been going on for a very long time. I am originally from San Antonio, Texas and I was in the military, mainly stationed down south. When I was stationed

here in Michigan, I was retired and working for NFL Flag. I witnessed the girl's game growing like wildfire in Florida, Arizona, New York, and other states. So, I tried myself. I said, let's see if we can get the girls game going here and it never took and never took. Soccer and Lacrosse were always king and now here we are and everyone is like, "Wow this is great," but we are six years behind. It is one of those things where I am glad the ball is rolling, but we are really behind the 8 ball right now, but they are starting to show up and organizations are starting to embrace the sport and know that it is the real deal. The exposure just has not been there, and hopefully — I am praying — the state sanctions the sport in high school because 38 states have already done it. I will keep pushing and busting down every door I can to continue to grow the sport. The more the community can get behind it will really help us grow.

EMU is among 17 NCAA Division 1 schools with varsity status women's flag football programs. Dozens of others are considered club teams.

Eastern's team is one of four varsity-status programs invited to play in a flag football showcase tournament Jan. 22-24, 2027, in Las Vegas, just before the Jan. 25 National College Football Championship game. In addition to the four varsity teams, eight club teams have been invited to the showcase, which will be held in the West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The other teams playing in the varsity division are the University of Nebraska, California Polytechnic State University and Manhattan University. The club division programs invited to the showcase are: the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, California, Clemson University, University of Michigan, University of Oklahoma, University of Southern California and the University of California, Los Angeles.

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales:

Oct. 12 - 18

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

Women's Soccer vs. Western Michigan

The Tale: On Oct. 15 at 4:30 p.m., Eastern Michigan returns tto Scicluna Field to host in-state rival Western Michigan. The Eagles enter the week sitting in first place in the Mid-American Conference with an unbeaten 4-0-1 conference record. Then, EMU closes the week in Athens against Ohio University, Oct. 18 at 1 p.m.

The Tip: Midfield control will dictate the rivalry clash against Western. The Eagles need to maintain possession, limit unforced turnovers, and prevent counterattacks. Utilizing home-field advantage to apply early pressure will keep the Broncos defending deep. In Ohio, focus on recovery and communicating on defense and preventing transition chances will help secure a key road result.

Volleyball vs. Miami (OH)

The Tale: On Oct. 15-16, Eastern Michigan hosts Miami for a two-match MAC series in Ypsilanti, both at 6 p.m. at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. After sweeping Central Michigan, the Eagles aim to establish consistent form in conference play. Playing back-to-back matches against the same opponent allows Eastern to adjust tactics between nights and build momentum.

The Tip: Establish net dominance and pass cleanly. EMU ranks among the MAC leaders in blocks and service aces, providing the tools to disrupt Miami's offense. Disciplined defensive positioning and aggressive serving will win long rallies.

Cross Country at Pre-National Invitational

The Tale: The men's and women's cross country teams travel to Indiana for the Pre-National Invitational, Oct. 16 at 10 a.m. Coming off 5th-place (women) and 10th-place (men) finishes at the Joe Piane Invitational, this meet offers a national test before the MAC Championships at the end of October.

The Tip: Focus on disciplined pacing rather than sprinting in the opening mile. Staying attached to the lead pack early and finishing strong will yield optimal results against top national runners.

Swimming & Diving at the Eastern Classic

The Tale: Jones Natatorium hosts the two-day Eastern Classic, Oct. 16 at 12 p.m. and Oct. 17 at 9:30 a.m. This home event lets the Eagles build competitive rhythm before dual meets begin, providing a platform to evaluate returning athletes and newcomers.

The Tip: Maintain execution across all events. Swimmers need clean starts, efficient turns, and strong finishes, while divers must execute techniques precisely to build confidence ahead of conference competition.

Women's Rowing at Head of the Charles

The Tale: EMU travels to Boston for the world-renowned Head of the Charles Regatta, Oct. 17. Following a home race against Wisconsin, the Eagles compete on a challenging river course against top national crews.

The Tip: Course awareness and communication are critical. Steering through congested turns on the Charles River requires composure and steady rhythm.

Football vs. Toledo

The Tale: On Oct. 17 at 3:30 p.m., EMU homecoming features a MAC rivalry game at Rynearson Stadium. EMU is 3-0 in MAC play on a three-game win streak after beating Akron 25-23. Toledo won last year's meeting 29-28, setting up a competitive matchup.

The Tip: Protect the ball and score touchdowns in the red zone. Generating quarterback pressure and limiting mistakes will preserve EMU's unbeaten MAC record.



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ELECTION 2026

Find more election coverage on easternecho.com

Statewide proposal for constitutional convention to appear on the ballot this November



The Michigan State Capitol building is located in Lansing. Lilly Kujawski \ The Eastern Echo

Hannah Borders
News Reporter

This November, there will be a statewide proposal on the ballot for voters to decide whether or not Michigan should hold a constitutional convention. In Michigan, this proposal appears on the ballot every 16 years. According to Ballotpedia.org, a constitutional convention is the gathering of delegates to propose amendments and changes to a constitution. The question whether or not to convene a constitutional convention regularly appears on the ballot in 14 of the 50 states. In five states, the

question appears on the ballot every ten years. In eight states, the question appears every 20 years. 27 states allow the state’s legislature to vote to put a constitutional convention question on the ballot, some requiring a supermajority vote. Five states allow for a supermajority legislative vote to convene a constitutional convention without voter approval, and four states have a petition process for citizens to file an initiative to petition for a constitutional convention question on the ballot. The Michigan Constitution was revised during the most recent constitutional convention that adjourned Aug. 1, 1962. Part of the

revision included requiring the question be put on the ballot beginning in 1978. Since the question has regularly appeared, voters have never passed the proposal. "[The proposal] is something that’s there to ensure the constitution stays relevant to the current times. When we think of the ... U.S. Constitution we tend to think of it — in some ways, it’s treated as so sacrosanct that you can’t do anything about it, or it’s out of touch depending on who you ask. This is a way to make sure at the state level, you’re able to maintain some flexibility," Eastern Michigan University political science professor Joshua Koss said.

According to Ballotpedia, the proposal on the ballot will be titled: “A proposal to convene a constitutional convention for the purpose of drafting a general revision of the state constitution.” The question will read: “Shall a convention of elected delegates be convened in 2027 to draft a general revision of the State Constitution for presentation to the state’s voters for their approval or rejection?” Koss explained that if the proposal is passed, the process of the constitutional convention would be very involved. Delegates would be elected from every Michigan House of Representatives and Senate district. Those delegates would be elected by constituents, likely through a primary party contest. Once elected, delegates will hold a

constitutional convention where they will look through the constitution and decide on general revisions. Revisions could be broad or narrow. Once revised, constituents will vote to either ratify or reject the new Michigan Constitution. “It would invite scrutiny on the constitution, as a whole, that it hasn’t had in a long time. The Michigan Constitution is comparatively flexible when we think of it compared to the national level. Ballot initiatives have frequently amended the constitution,” Koss said. “Doing a constitutional convention revisits all of that.” In 2010, when Michigan voters were last asked about a constitutional convention, they rejected the proposal by 66.60%. Ypsilanti community member Semra Koknar shared that she felt passing the proposal may cause harm, given the strong partisan nature of Michigan’s politics. Koknar is a volunteer for Washtenaw County Democrats. “Particularly in this hyperpartisan environment, it’s really dangerous to rethink our entire constitution. With the vitriol coming from the right and the strength of the special interest groups financially, there is a lot more to be lost than to be gained,” Koknar said. Kimberly Waldroop is an environmental science major at Eastern Michigan University. They shared over email that they are worried that passing the proposal might impact the environment. "... As a student in STEM, and more importantly, a student in the environmental science and society field, things are shaken as it is. Our Endangered Species Act is already being dismantled at a federal level, the EPA continues to face many cuts to its funding, and we continuously lose funding with time," Waldroop wrote. “In our current political climate, I think opening for a Con-Con is something we should definitely avoid. I believe it’ll risk the progress we have made in Michigan in terms of environmental issues. We have some of the best governmental environmental state positions compared to other states because of our Great Lakes.”

Meet the candidates running for Michigan Senate District 15

Hannah Borders
News Reporter

Michigan’s 15th Senate district represents parts of Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor Township, Lodi Township, Milan Township, as well as, all of Augusta Township, Bridgewater Township, Clinton Township, Macon Township, Manchester, Manchester Township, Milan, Pittsfield Township, Saline, Saline Township, Superior Township, Tecumseh, Tecumseh Township, York Township, Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township. Democrat Felicia Brabec and Republican Jason Rogers are both running to take over term-limited Democrat Jeff Irwin’s seat.



Felicia Brabec (Democrat)
Felicia Brabec is a former member of the Michigan House of Representatives, and is running as a Democrat for Michigan Senate District 15. Brabec

is a practicing clinical psychologist with a doctorate in clinical psychology and a master’s degree in clinical social work. Brabec served two terms in the Michigan House of Representatives after serving on the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners for nine years. Brabec states on her website, “My life’s work has always been about service — to my family, to community and to what’s right. I’d be honored to devote my passion to serve you as State Senator, collaborating with our wonderful residents to make our lives better.” **Campaign Issues:** Brabec’s campaign focuses on eight key issues: mental health care, gun violence prevention, equity, criminal justice reform, LGBTQ+ rights, environment, education and cost of living. Brabec explains on her website that she wants to use her experience as a mental health professional to advocate for affordable and accessible mental health care for all. Her equity policies include eliminating disparities in maternal health and child mortality rate, uplifting Black and brown entrepreneurs to create local small business and reforming the criminal justice system so that minorities are not disproportionately targeted. Additionally, Brabec hopes to work

toward ensuring that minors cannot be tried as adults and eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline. To prevent gun violence, Brabec wants to enforce mandatory background checks and enforce safe storage and red flag laws. Her vision includes age-appropriate comprehensive sexual education, diminishing disparate eviction rates for LGBTQ+ community members and increasing overall support for the queer community to combat suicide rates. Her environmental policies include replacing lead pipes across the state, and ensuring clean drinking water for everyone, banning tar sealants and promoting clean energy and job training to prepare our workforce for a greener economy. She hopes to support a variety of post-secondary pathways, make college education more affordable and support teacher retention. Her economic policies include helping small business owners in achieving minimum wage increases and ensuring fair pay to direct care workers.



Jason Rogers (Republican)
Jason Rogers is a former software engineer running for Michigan’s 15th Senate District as a Republican. Rogers served as a precinct delegate for four years and was an alternate delegate to the 2024 Republican National Convention. Rogers is the current Chairman of the Washtenaw County’s GOP. “I believe that professional politicians were never the aim of our founding fathers — it is time to return to a part-time citizen legislature,” Rogers states on his website. “Above all else, I am a man of faith. Everything I do flows from my devotion to Jesus Christ, and from that devotion I derive the honesty, integrity and grace I bring to public life”. **Campaign Issues:** Rogers’ campaign promotes six key issues: preserving the United States’ constitutional republic, ensuring election integrity, upholding what he described as traditional family

values, defending First and Second Amendment rights, economic policy and education. Rogers envisions stronger separations of power and checks and balances by creating a stronger legislative oversight, returning to part-time citizen legislature and protecting states’ rights and opposing federal overreach. In regards to elections, Rogers strives for stronger voter ID requirements, regular audits of voter rolls, paper ballots that are hand-counted, single day voting with said day being a holiday and removing Michigan from its Electronic Registration Information Center membership. His campaign refers to upholding traditional family values as promoting policies that encourage traditional families, supporting parental rights in education and health care and advocating for faith-based community initiatives. Rogers’ economic policies include eliminating property tax, reducing income tax, encouraging growth and innovations and promoting American energy independence. His education policy includes focusing on core academic skills over civic education, opposing critical race theory and teaching curriculum that promotes unity and equal opportunity.

Editor's note: Candidate photos and information are gathered from publicly available online campaign materials. Candidates are listed in alphabetical order by last name.

HOMEcoming 2026

The Roaring Parade! | The Echo's Comic Team



Isaiah Sanders

Katelyn Hollis

Julia Bartlett

Jamie Owens

Yiri Thompson

AJ Grams

Scan to read more comics!





The Hack the Nest team is organizing a 24-hour hackathon for 500 college and high school students. *Courtesy of Hack the Nest*

Students recruit for EMU's first-ever hackathon

Shane Kowalski
News Reporter

Got an idea? Hack the Nest could be the place to bring it to life.

A group of Eastern Michigan University students created the weekend hackathon, set for Nov. 14-15 on campus. The goal is to bring together college and high school students for a student-led coding and creating sprint. Participants will form teams and turn their ideas into working projects in 24 hours.

Registration for the hackathon opened Aug. 15, as the organizational team created a number of social media posts on the event, on YouTube, X, Instagram, TikTok and other platforms. Chanuth Jayatissa and Karthikeya Thota, the two key EMU students who created the event, star in a number of those posts, encouraging anyone who is interested, no matter their skill level, to get involved.

Interested parties can register right up until Nov. 14 but the organizers warn that the spots are limited to 500.

“Think of a hackathon as an innovation marathon,” Jayatissa said. “You get 24 hours and a room full of people from totally different majors, and you just build.”

Jayatissa, an international student from Sri Lanka, is president of Hack the Nest. He said he connected with Thota through the computer science program at Eastern, and the pair soon found themselves participating in these 24-hour tech development competitions. Together, they decided they should bring one to Eastern, and with the help of university President Brendan Kelly, they created Hack the Nest, they said.

Chanuth is one of more than 20 leaders organizing the hackathon.

“Honestly, it still feels a little surreal,” Chanuth said. “This is EMU’s first student-led flagship hackathon,

so there’s no existing playbook we’re just following; we’re writing it as we go. Our 20-person organizing team is doing something they’ve never done before, whether that’s securing funding, filming faculty interviews, building the platform, or lining up sponsors. There’s real pressure that comes with being first, but it’s the good kind. We get to set the standard for what this becomes at EMU.”

This event is designed to bring as many as 500 students together to solve real world problems and help people get sets of connections along the way, with new people, possible mentors and many others.

The hackathon will be an overnight experience held on campus in Halle Library and the Student Center. There is no cost to participate; meals, workspace and even swag will be covered for those who register.

Registrants don’t need to identify their own team, although they can, with a maximum of four people. For solo registrants, the event will start with a team-matching session.

The leaders of the event are part of a Google developer group on campus. Google developer groups are community-operated organizations that share their interests and skills using Google technologies.

Jayatissa said the goal of Hack the Nest is to provide an opportunity to create something that matters to others and put in the teamwork to make something new.

Those who want to register should visit the Hack the Nest website to save a space.

“Hack The Nest is the best opportunity for beginners,” Chanuth said. “No experience required means exactly that. We’ve got mentors, workshops, and team formation built into the day, so nobody’s ever stuck on their own.”

CRIME REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The officers Anderson has on staff work in an inordinate amount of overtime, he said. The average years of service is roughly three and the average age of the officers is about 24 or 25 years old, Anderson said.

“Calls for service, currently, when I had to submit this PowerPoint to the City Manager, we were at 17,723 calls for the year,” Anderson said. “As of about an hour ago, the last call I went on, we were at 18,091. This time last year we were at 13,575, roughly. The math there is about a 30% increase.”

There has been an increase in crime this year, he said. There have been seven shootings in Ypsilanti this year, with six of them undergoing the criminal justice process now. There has been one homicide and an arson incident.

“When we talk about assaults just all over the city, we’ve seen a 54.33% increase from last year at this same time,” Anderson stated. “Criminal sexual conduct ... 26% increase. The homicide, robberies ... we’ve seen an increase of about 15%. Arsons is 67%, burglaries 18%. Larcenies, which can be, you know, packages stolen off porches ... 16% there. Militant destruction of properties, those are 42% at the same time last year. We did see a ... 6.15% decrease in vehicle theft.”

Anderson discussed that vehicle crashes in the city have increased this year, with the most prevalent traffic crash intersection being Hamilton Street and Washtenaw Avenue. He added that the second most common area in the city for crashes currently is at Huron Street and Michigan Avenue.

HOMECOMING EVENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Logan Thornton, who is studying psychology, expressed their excitement for attending the homecoming game as part of the EMU marching band, while other students mentioned time with friends and family as highlights.

“I’m excited to hang out with my friends,” Faris Weiss, a student majoring in English, said. “I think that will be delightful.”

Ivan Ruffin, a SAG major, told *The Echo* that he is going to homecoming for the first time since he has attended EMU and that he is looking forward to the food.

“I don’t know what events I’m gonna go to, but I just know that my dad is coming back to Eastern. He was at Eastern for two years and met my mother here. I would not have been here if not for them,” one student, Olivia Rexroth, wrote in a message to *The Echo*.

To navigate the jam-packed calendar this week, consider these five Homecoming-specific events:

- Belt your heart out at Trap Karaoke**
- **When:** 8-10 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13
 - **Where:** Student Center Ballroom
 - **What to know:** Kick off the evening entertainment with one this high-energy, student-centric, modern tradition on the EMU calendar. This isn’t the average, awkward karaoke night in a half-empty bar. The Student Center Ballroom transforms into a concert-level space where the crowd serves as the back choir. Students are encouraged to hit the stage early, sing along to hip-hop and R&B hits, and shake off early-semester academic stress.
 - **Admission:** Student entry is free with a university E-ID.

- Grab free swag at the Homecoming Picnic & T-Shirt Swap**
- **When:** 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14
 - **Where:** Student Center, First Floor and Patio
 - **What to know:** For anyone who

loves free food and exclusive university merchandise, this is a primary destination. The annual picnic serves up classic tailgate fare while a live DJ keeps the outdoor patio jumping. The highlight for most students might be the T-shirt swap: bring an old shirt from another university or high school and swap it for a limited-edition 2026 EMU Homecoming shirt.

- **Admission:** Free

- Watch the night ignite at the Homecoming Parade & Bonfire**
- **When:** 6:15 p.m. parade; 7-9 is the bonfire, Friday, Oct. 16
 - **Where:** From Ainsley Street to the Intramural Fields
 - **What to know:** Friday evening shifts the Homecoming celebration into high gear. The annual parade features custom-decorated community golf carts, student organizations, and the EMU Marching Band lighting up the campus streets. As the parade winds down, follow the crowd toward the Intramural Fields for the “Ignite the Night” pep rally. Organizers will be handing out free custom EMU winter beanies to the first 300 students in attendance. Gather close to the massive community bonfire to hear from the football team and coaching staff before they head into Saturday’s game.
 - **Admission:** Free

- Explore the expanded EMU Alumni & Friends Tailgate**
- **When:** 12:30-3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17
 - **Where:** Rynearson Stadium Front Lawn & Old Bus Stop Area
 - **What to know:** Tailgating is a staple of football Saturdays, but 2026 brings a major structural upgrade. To accommodate growing crowds, the university has expanded the party footprint across the street into the repurposed old EMU bus stop area, creating a dedicated

- zone for student organizations and recent graduates. Because parking lots around the stadium fill up rapidly by noon, students are highly encouraged to use the campus shuttle buses running continuously from the Student Center.
- **Admission:** \$10 for adults and \$5 for children, which covers lunch, live entertainment and lawn game tournaments; tickets are available through the Alumni & Friends web page.
- Pack the factory: EMU Football vs. Toledo Rockets**
- **When:** 3:30 p.m. kickoff Saturday, Oct. 17
 - **Where:** Rynearson Stadium
 - **What to know:** The grand finale of Homecoming week takes place on the iconic gray turf. The Eagles are hosting Mid-American Conference rivals, the Toledo Rockets, for what promises to be a physical, high-stakes afternoon matchup. This marks the sixth time in university history that Toledo has served as the Homecoming opponent. Pack the student section early to catch the special halftime performance by the alumni band.
 - **Admission:** Students can secure completely free admission by scanning their student credentials digitally ahead of time via the EMU Athletics portal. General admission tickets are available at the box office or through the university’s athletic department website.

Whether singing along Tuesday, collecting free gear Wednesday, or cheering from the stands Saturday, students, staff, faculty, alumni and other Eagle fans have a number of options for making memories at Homecoming 2026. For real-time scheduling adjustments, inclement weather updates, or to register for specific alumni events, make sure to bookmark the official EMU Homecoming hub.



Balloons set up in the Student Center to celebrate the “Paint it Green” week of Homecoming for 2025. *Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo*

Mind the sign: reserved spots require premium pass

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

Since Eastern Michigan University repurchased parking on campus, visitors may have noticed parking spots newly labeled as “reserved.”

EMU Police Chief Matthew Lige explained the new parking option.

“Parking in the reserved spot is only for the staff or student that purchased that spot,” Lige wrote in a statement to *The Echo*. “Any unauthorized vehicle in a reserved spot could be ticketed.”

These parking spots were developed based off student input, he wrote. The reserved spots are for staff and students. All reserved spots are closer to academic buildings than other parking locations on campus, making trips to and from classes quicker and allowing drivers to have a spot guaranteed.

Reserved spots cost \$400 a semester.

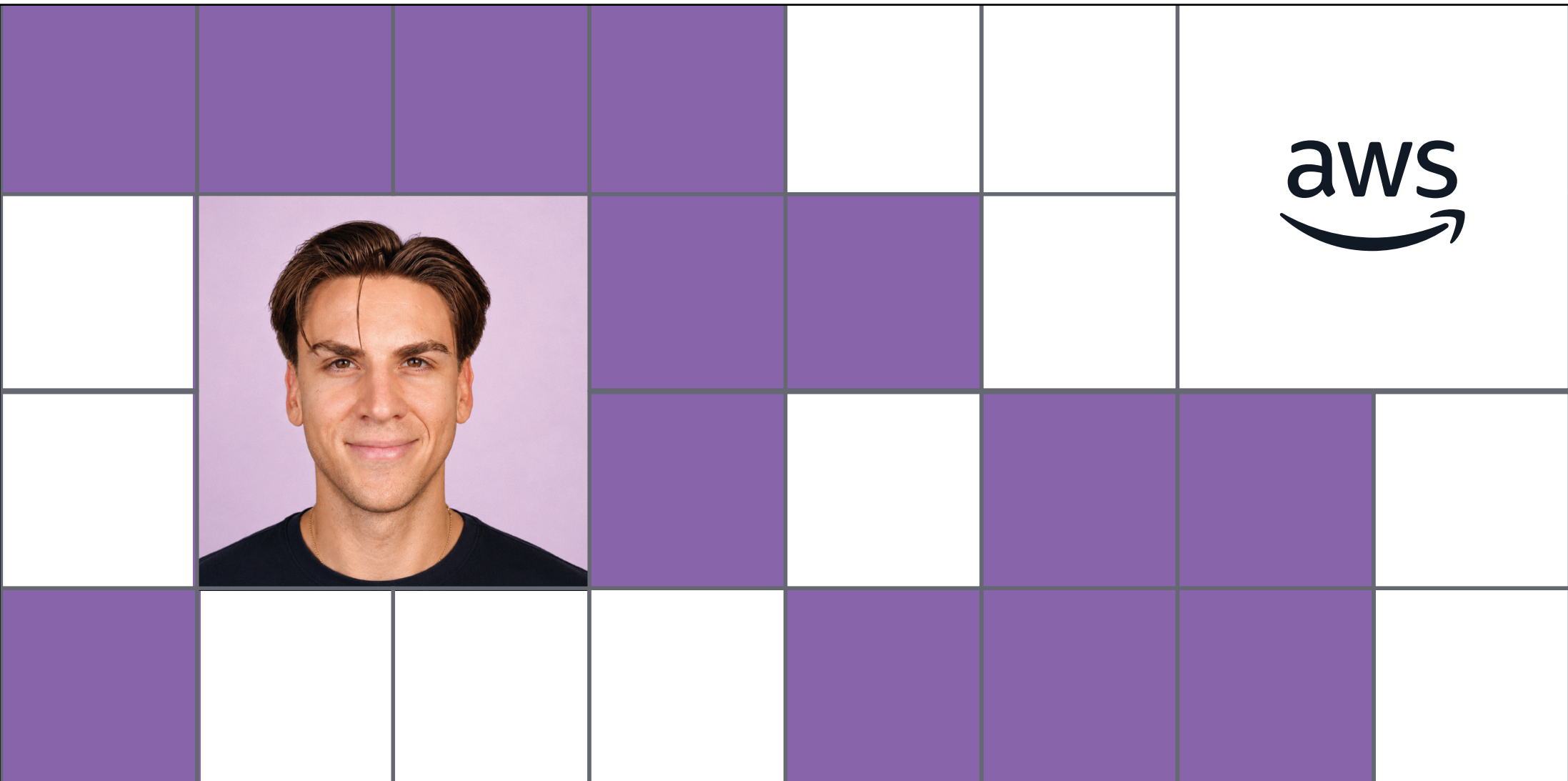


Reserved parking spots close to academic buildings are available to students and staff for a premium per-semester price. *AnnaBelle Favre / The Eastern Echo*

This is a premium rate compared to student parking passes, which range from \$151 to \$225.

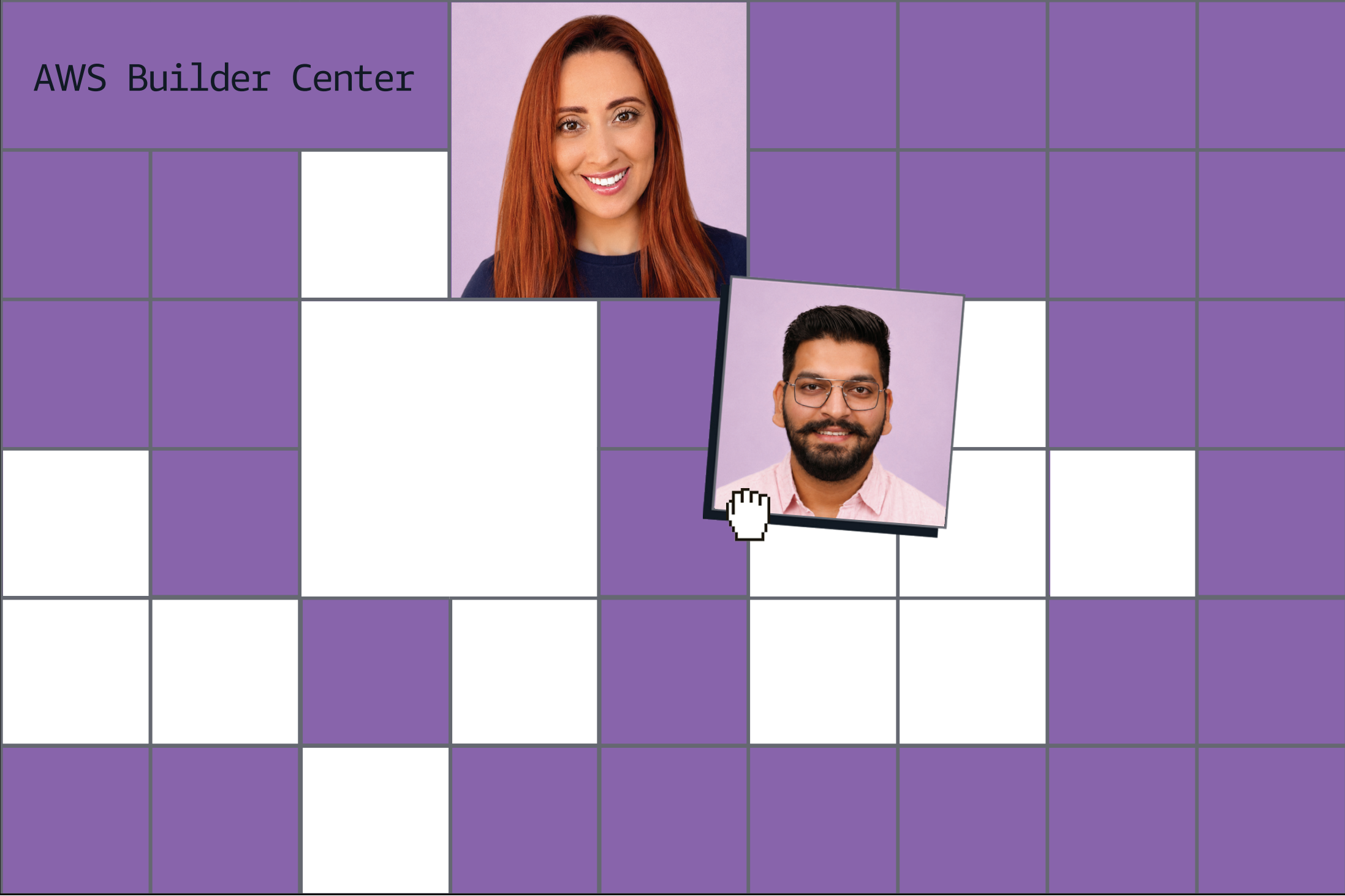
The Eagle Parking website has the reserved parking permits listed as

being available for in-person purchase only. Students and staff can visit the EMU Department of Public Safety to purchase a reserved parking spot and to learn more information.



Debug your gameplan.

Verify you're a student;
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EMU Homecoming through the years



Students celebrate homecoming, 2010. *Eastern Echo archives*



EMU Homecoming, 1967. *Courtesy of EMU Archives*



Homecoming Court, 2016. *Eastern Echo archives*



EMU Homecoming, 1959. *Courtesy of EMU Archives*



Students cheer on the Eagles, 2021. *Eastern Echo archives*



The Eagles win the homecoming game, 2025. *Bradán Copeland / The Eastern Echo*



EMU Homecoming, 1979. *Eastern Echo archives*

Band members perform at homecoming, 2014. *Eastern Echo archives*

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Early voting	October 24 – November 1
Election Day	November 3



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