



The Eastern Echo

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Serving EMU and Ypsilanti since 1881

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easternecho.com

EMU's 2026 Student Government presidential tickets share their visions for governing

Laura Meriweather
News Reporter

Farook-Shehab ticket



Yasrib Yasir Farook

- Presidential candidate
- Incumbent senator (elected) and speaker of the senate
- Major: Computer science applied (mathematics minor)

Mirna Shehab

- Vice presidential candidate
- Incumbent senator (appointed)
- Major: Interior design

Freeman-Orlich ticket



Nina Freeman

- Presidential candidate
- Incumbent vice president
- Major: Secondary education math

Eva Orlich Rojas

- Vice presidential candidate
- Current director of student services
- Major: Chemistry (concentration in fermentation science)

Raj Rahman, an incumbent senator running for reelection, is also running for Student Government president as a write-in candidate. Rahman's answers to the following questions can be found in this article's senatorial counterpart, titled "Candidates for EMU's 113th Student Senate share their visions for governing," on easternecho.com.

Both tickets were asked identical versions of the following questions. Orlich gave answers on behalf of the ticket, which Freeman confirmed. Farook and Shehab submitted their answers individually.

What issues do you think are most important to students on campus today?

Orlich: "Food insecurity is one of the most urgent concerns we hear about. Many students are financially independent and often limit or skip meals, which directly affects their well-being and academic performance. Increasing the accessibility, both financially and in distance, of resources is essential.

Safety and campus infrastructure are also major priorities. Students, especially those with disabilities, have expressed the need for clearer, well-maintained pathways during the winter and throughout the year. While I understand that maintaining a large campus is challenging, I do consider that there can always be room for improvement, and this can truly make a difference in students' daily lives, especially in Michigan, where winter can sometimes feel eternal."

Farook: "Accessibility and affordability are major concerns. Students are balancing academics, work, and personal responsibilities, so extended library and facility hours would better support their schedules. Financial stress is also real, as late fees, textbook costs, and unexpected

expenses impact many students. Additionally, students want clearer communication about policies, campus changes, and available resources. There is also a strong desire for more inclusive engagement, ensuring international students, commuters, and underrepresented groups feel heard. Students want practical solutions, not just promises."

Shehab: "I think one of the biggest issues is feeling disconnected — whether that's from campus life, administration, or career opportunities. A lot of students, especially commuters, struggle to feel included. Students also want clearer paths to internships, networking, and real-world experience. On top of that, mental health, affordability, and academic support are always major concerns. Students want to feel like their time here is worth it and prepare them for what comes next."

What qualities and experiences make you a good candidate for these roles?

Orlich: "Both Nina and I have great experience in student government and strong connections across campus. Nina has served for two years in student government, including as Co-Chair of Business and Finance, Director of Community and Diversity Outreach, and now Vice President. I currently serve as Director of Student Services, where our team has passed multiple resolutions and created opportunities where students can engage and learn, such as the Democracy Dinner where civic engagement was promoted. These roles have allowed us to collaborate with faculty, staff, and students while gaining a deep understanding of how to turn student needs into action. Beyond student government, I work closely with the International Student Association, Campus Life, Orientation, and the Faculty Development Center, which

has given me great teamwork skills and an understanding of the importance of engagement for a student's college experience. As well, Nina works with the Alumni Office, where she has created many events for students to grow professionally while building connections with faculty and alumni. Beyond our experience, I believe that we have proven to have great organization, passion, and a genuine commitment to this community that make us strong candidates."

Farook: "I have served in Student Government for two years as a Senator and currently as Speaker of the Senate, where I've helped pass over 50 resolutions and worked closely with administrators and campus departments. I've learned how to navigate university systems, collaborate across perspectives, and turn ideas into actionable outcomes. Beyond government, I've founded and supported student organizations, which gives me insight into the needs of diverse student communities. My leadership style is collaborative but decisive. I prioritize listening first and acting strategically."

Shehab: "I'm hardworking, organized, and genuinely care about advocating for others. I'm not someone who just talks about ideas — I follow through. I've been involved in leadership and collaborative spaces before, and I know how to communicate with different types of people. I'm also approachable, which I think is important. Students should feel comfortable coming to their representatives with concerns or ideas."

A candidate forum for presidential and vice presidential candidates will be held March 18, 2026, at 5 p.m. in Room 352 of the Student Center. Voting in the 2026 Student Government election will begin March 25 at 8 a.m.

Read the full article on easternecho.com

3 new inductees chosen for The Eastern Echo Hall of Fame

The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo Hall of Fame committee announced March 5 that three new inductees will be honored April 2 during the 2026 student gala hosted by The Eastern Echo staff.

The 2026 Hall of Fame inductees are Axios business reporter Nathan Bomey; former Echo advisor and art gallery owner Sally Day Wright; and Larry O'Connor, a longtime Michigan sports and news reporter.

"Working for The Eastern Echo has long been a springboard toward a wide range of professional careers, and The Eastern Echo 2026 Hall of Fame class proves that once again," said Kevin Allen, selection committee chairperson. "This year's group includes people who serve the public today as a national reporter, a schoolteacher and an artist."

Launched in 2023, The Eastern Echo Hall of Fame honors former Echo staff members who have made significant contributions to the field

of journalism, exhibiting excellence in their work and unwavering commitment to truth and integrity. Allen, a longtime sportswriter for USA Today, was the first inductee. This year's class brings the membership to eight.

"The Eastern Echo is excited to present the 2026 Student Media Gala, celebrating the achievements of our student journalists and honoring three exceptional Hall of Fame inductees," Echo Editor-in-Chief Natalie Kyle said. "Each inductee has excelled in their career and their lasting impact on the media industry sets the standard for us all."

The 2026 Eastern Echo Hall of Fame inductees:

Nathan Bomey
Author of "Detroit Resurrected: To Bankruptcy and Back," Bomey worked his way from reporter to managing editor for The Eastern Echo before graduating from Eastern Michigan University in 2006.
Now a business reporter for Axios,

Bomey previously reported for the Ann Arbor Business Review, Ann Arbor.com, the Detroit Free Press and USA Today. He has authored three nonfiction books and created an award-winning documentary on the Detroit bankruptcy.

Sally Wright Day
Day served as editor-in-chief of The Echo from 1981-82. Her career included reporting for the Livingston County Press and serving as a news editor for MSN News.

Additionally, from 1987-90, Day served as the college media advisor at Eastern and created a bootcamp for college journalists.

She became managing editor of the Eastern Michigan University Faculty Center for Instructional Excellence in 1988 and was named executive editor in 1992. From 2003-12, Day served as an assistant editor at the Ann Arbor Observer before going to work as news editor for MSN. After retiring, Day opened her own design, editing and art company.

Larry O'Connor

O'Connor served as The Eastern Echo sports editor from 1982-84. Over the following 40 years, he worked at news publications across Michigan, including 11 years as a web producer and copy editor at The Detroit News.

That work also included feature and government reporting for The Observer and Eccentric Newspaper chain, in Farmington and in Livonia, and for the Jackson Citizen Patriot.

O'Connor continues to work as a freelancer for magazines and newspapers, including USA Today, Soccer News, Music Express and the Derry Journal in Northern Ireland.

Previous inductees

In addition to Allen, the other members of the The Eastern Echo Hall of Fame are as follows:

Rob Musial, who was inducted in 2024, worked at the Detroit Free Press, The Detroit Sunday Journal and the Oakland Press.

The members inducted in 2025 are Kim Kozlowski, who covered education for The Detroit News and

now Bridge Michigan; Joe Misiewicz, known as Dr. Joe, who worked for the National Armed Services Radio Network, and covered the Watergate trial, before teaching journalism at Eastern Michigan, Central Michigan, and Ball State universities; and Kristy Montee, who worked as a reporter and editor at the Sun-Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, before turning her pen to fiction, writing the P.J. Parrish novels with her sister.

Eastern Echo Student Media Gala and Hall of Fame Banquet

Kyle invited everyone to the spring gala, which starts at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 2, in the McKenny Ballroom at Eastern Michigan University. Tickets are available through the university's online box office, <https://bit.ly/EchoGala2026>.

The event includes the ceremony, dinner and a silent auction benefiting The Eastern Echo's Student Media Development Fund, which supports the operations of The Echo print and online editions.

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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www.EasternEcho.com

THE ECHO MISSION

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

HOW TO REACH US

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Winter 2026
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CORRECTIONS

- On page 8 of the Feb. 24, 2026 issue of *The Eastern Echo*, the name of Frankie Cramer's character in the EMU Theatre play "Proof" was misstated. Cramer played the character Claire in the play.
- On page 4 of the Feb. 24, 2026 issue of *The Eastern Echo*, the word preparation was misspelled.

Where to find fine arts magazine,
Cellar Roots:



CALENDAR

MAR 10

EMU alumnus, Joshua Woodcock, film screening and Q&A

5-8 p.m.

Student Center — Auditorium

MAR 11

King's Casino

7-9 p.m.

Student Center — Ballroom

MAR 12

Pride Prom

6:30-9 p.m.

McKenny Hall — Ballroom

MAR 13

A Primer on Indigenous Rights

3-4:30 p.m.

Strong Hall — Room 111

MAR 14

Good Vibes Only! A Musical Theatre Cabaret

2-3:30 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m. (also on March 13, 7-8:30 p.m.)

Judy Sturgis Hill — Sponberg Theatre

MAR 15

Glow Fit Fest

5-7 p.m.

Rec/IM Building — Rooms 121, 126, 127 and 226

MAR 16

Basketball League Games

6-10 p.m.

Rec/IM Building — Third Floor Courts

WEATHER FORECAST

Tuesday, March 10

High: 70 | Low: 52
Partly sunny / Rain



Wednesday, March 11

High: 64 | Low: 26
Rain / Cloudy*



Thursday, March 12

High: 39 | Low: 27
Partly sunny / Mostly cloudy*



Friday, March 13

High: 48 | Low: 27
Mostly cloudy* / Mostly cloudy

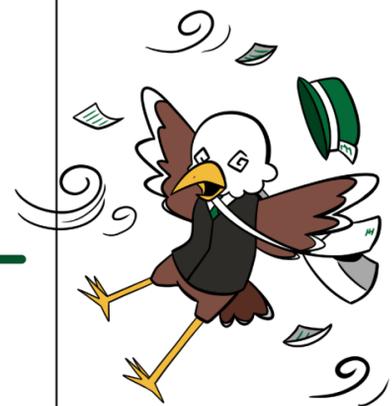


Saturday, March 14

High: 40 | Low: N/A
Partly sunny* / N/A



*Chance of precipitation



Source:
The National Weather Service

Where to find *The Echo*:

Off Campus:

- Ypsilanti City Hall, 1 S. Huron St.
- Basil Babe, 701 W. Cross St.
- Black Stone Bookstore & Cultural Center, 214 W. Michigan Ave.

On Campus:

- Alexander Hall
- Boone Hall
- Ford Hall

Where to find our links:



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Ypsilanti's second No Kings protest set for March 28

AnnaBelle Favre
News Reporter

Ypsilanti Indivisible plans to host another Ypsilanti No Kings Day protest March 28. A national protest against the Trump administration, this will mark the country's third No Kings Day and the second one held in Ypsilanti.

The movement began June 14, 2025, which coincided with the U.S. Army's 250th Anniversary Parade, as well as President Donald Trump's 79th birthday. People took to the streets as a response to the policies of the Trump administration. Thousands of political groups, such as MoveOn, Indivisible and the American Civil Liberties Union, banded together for the nationwide protest. June 14 brought more than five million protesters to the streets.

On Oct. 18, 2025, millions of people across the nation joined together a second time with signs, shirts and flags. These protests have been non-violent, public demonstrations in cities across many states.

The Ypsilanti No Kings Protest in October, hosted by Ypsilanti Indivisible and Ann Arbor Indivisible, had more than 4,000 people in attendance.

Gordon McAllister, the founder of Ypsilanti Indivisible, told *The Eastern Echo* that the March 28 event will begin at the Ypsilanti Farmer's Marketplace at 16 S. Washington St. in Ypsilanti. At 10 a.m., there will be a kids' table and supplies for participants to make posters and signs. At 11 a.m., the march and rally will begin, and it will continue until 1 p.m.

Protesters will begin at the Ypsilanti Farmer's Marketplace, walk down Washington Street and turn down Michigan Avenue. They will then stop to protest and rally in an open space on Michigan Avenue before returning back to the marketplace. Marshalls will stand at each intersection, and the group has been approved to have tables at the farmers market, McAllister said. Since the protest will be moving and on public streets, no official permit or permission is needed.



A protester holds a sign with "No Kings" written on the back for the No Kings protest in Ypsilanti on Saturday, Oct. 18, 2025. Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo

McAllister said he encourages people to shop at the marketplace and other local businesses on the day of the protest.

This third protest will focus on a breadth of topics, both local and national.

"This is No Kings III, but also no ICE, no data centers, and also Free Krystal Clark," McAllister said.

The No Kings movement focuses on the policies of the Trump administration, as well as those protesting the actions of Immigration and Customs Enforcement authorities, with protesters pushing to reform the immigration and deportation issues they feel the Trump administration has caused.

On the local level, there has been pushback against the University of Michigan and Los Alamos National Laboratory project to implement a data center in Ypsilanti Township. Krystal

Clark is a woman who has been in the Huron Valley Women's Prison and has faced several medical issues due to the mold growing in the building. The Free Krystal Clark movement supports the release of Clark from prison to receive proper medical care and aims to reform the prison system under the Michigan Department of Corrections.

McAllister founded Ypsilanti Indivisible in September 2025. He said, "We do national events and local and social groups that are already on the ground in the Ypsilanti area. We don't want to take over or anything like that. We just want to help where we can."

McAllister encourages anyone interested to attend this event: "It gives them an opportunity to voice their opinion on their signs. To me, protesting is partly therapy for the people doing the protesting. Everyone goes away feeling uplifted."

McAllister described the protest as

an upbeat atmosphere, encouraging attendees to wear colorful clothing or costumes, bring instruments and songs and connect with their community.

"What we are asking people to do is to come and plan for a party-type presentation. We want people to be upbeat. Anything that people can think of to make people smile during what's going on but still get the word out," he said.

While Eastern Michigan University students were on fall break for the last protest in Ypsilanti, McAllister was still impressed by the turnout of young people. He hopes that with school in session, even more college students will be encouraged to come.

"We need to get the young people out there, because they're going to feel the breadth of what's going on, more so than us gray-haired people. We are fighting for our grandkids' future," he said.

Ypsilanti selected among 7 Michigan cities for downtown development program



A vacant storefront at the intersection of North Huron Street and Pearl Street in downtown Ypsilanti on Feb. 24. Recast Leaders, a program that Ypsilanti was recently selected for, seeks to fill storefronts like these with small businesses. Laura Meriweather / The Eastern Echo

Laura Meriweather
News Reporter

This year, Ypsilanti will be one of the newest participants in Recast Leaders, a downtown development program led by DC-based Recast City. As said in a recent press release from Recast City, over 200 cities have participated in the program in 44 states since its founding in 2014.

Ypsilanti city government submitted an application to the program after an open selection process was announced in November 2025 for counties in Michigan. Recast City announced on Jan. 27 that the application had been approved, placing Ypsilanti among six other Michigan cities to receive funding: Eastpointe, Gibraltar, Lathrup Village, Marysville and Pinckney. The program has received funding in Michigan from the Michigan Municipal League and the Detroit-based Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.

Elize Jakobson, Ypsilanti's downtown development executive director, said in an email that the application process was straightforward.

"The City had to make its case on why Recast City could be a good fit for our community," Jakobson said, adding that the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority initially was going to take the lead. "But we recognized that there are areas outside of the immediate DDA districts, including Water Street, that should be considered when talking about attracting or retaining scalable small manufacturing businesses. To expand it beyond our boundaries, we partnered up with the City to apply on behalf of both organizations."

Recast City's press release said that the 10-month program was set to start in February 2026, but Jakobson said that it had not yet started as of Feb. 23.

The program's model for downtown revitalization focuses on placing small,

often maker-based businesses in empty storefronts. Recast City, led by author, founder and CEO Ilana Preuss, also provides consulting in collaboration with three or four community representatives. Recast City is described on its Facebook page as a consulting firm, and Preuss refers to it as a firm in her 2021 book "Recast Your City: How to Save Your Downtown with Small-Scale Manufacturing." Preuss clarified in an interview that she sees Recast City as a small business.

Preuss said that similar organizations often struggle with a lack of communication with the cities they seek to improve.

"What we do is we flip it on its head and we work with communities to say, 'Okay, what do you want to achieve in this place,'" Preuss said. "'How do you want to experience this place on Wednesday at 3 o'clock or Saturday at five?' Let's paint that picture for ourselves and let's talk about, 'Who do we want to make sure is benefiting from that?'"

Preuss, who grew up in the suburbs of Washington, DC, said that her mother's abilities in textile arts and handiwork inspired her career trajectory.

"My mother was always making things," Preuss said. "She sewed, she knit, she taught all of us how to use a drill and hang blinds... Tools and making things and projects were always a part of what we did. I got really involved in the makers movement 15 years ago and loved what they were doing to educate people that, you know, everybody can make things."

When asked about the issue of gentrification, Preuss said she defines it as money coming into communities, which is often desperately needed.

"We want to do it in a way that doesn't displace people from the community who are there now," Preuss said. "So a lot of what we look at is,

'How are we making sure that the programs we create or the policies that we pass benefit the people who live there, first and foremost?'"

Ypsilanti has historically required references to be submitted when private contractors are interested in submitting a bid, and the Michigan Municipal League recommends that local governments check with past clients of consulting firms, but Jakobson said that the Ypsilanti city government had not spoken to other local governments that had participated before applying to the program.

Preuss said that Columbia, Missouri, is a past participant in the program. "Once they interviewed business owners, they found that there was a huge demand for our commercial shared kitchen. They outgrew their first base within a year ... they got funding and grants to build out in a second space. They have 51 businesses working out of that space now."

To supplement in-person sales, Recast City also aims to help local businesses build their online sales.

"Even going into the pandemic, we saw changes in retail happening, especially in smaller cities and towns where major retail chains were already consolidating their footprints," Preuss said. "The pandemic just expedited that process where folks really looked more at only their prime locations. Anything that didn't already have a ton of foot traffic wasn't going to survive."

Jakobson said that they hope the program can help Ypsilanti fill long-term commercial vacancies.

"We also want to be able to retain existing businesses in the City of Ypsilanti when they find that they need to grow," Jakobson said.

More information about Recast City can be found on its website at recastcity.com.

What's the Move?

March 10-16

Allie Beecher
Copy Desk Chief

Looking for something to do this week in Ypsilanti? Try one of these local events.

'FAWN' by Charli Brissey — March 13-15

From March 13-15, choreographer and filmmaker Charli Brissey will present "FAWN," a solo interdisciplinary performance exploring themes such as grief, desire, power and vulnerability. Born from experiments in sound, video, dance and writing, Brissey's hour-long performance will explore different meanings of the word fawn and different lineages behind the word, the event's Eventbrite.com page said.

Performances will take place at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse at 8 p.m. Friday, March 13; 8 p.m. Saturday, March 14; and 6 p.m. Sunday, March 15. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 5:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets vary in price and are free for Ypsilanti residents.

To learn more about the performance and purchase tickets, visit the event's page on Eventbrite.com or on YpsiReal.com. The Ypsilanti Freighthouse is at 100 Market Place.

Lucky Bones Artisan Market — March 14

Looking for a unique find? Join the Holy Bones community at the Lucky Bones Artisan Market on Saturday, March 14. From noon until 6 p.m., artisans will offer unique St. Patrick's Day-themed creations.

Lucky Bones will take place at the Michigan Firehouse Museum, located at 110 W. Cross St. in Ypsilanti. The event is free to attend, open to the public and most artisans accept both cash and card.

To learn more, visit the Lucky Bones page on YpsiReal.com, or check out the Holy Bones Instagram @holybonesfestival.

Pi(e) and a Pint 2026 — March 14

On Saturday, March 14, Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels will celebrate Pi Day with its annual Pi(e) and a Pint fundraiser. From 1-4 p.m., attendees can enjoy pizza, drinks and Putt-R-Round indoor mini golf at the Corner Brewery, located at 720 Norris St. in Ypsilanti.

Adult tickets are \$25, kids' tickets are \$15 and family pack tickets are \$70. All proceeds will benefit Meals on Wheels. To purchase tickets and learn more about the event, visit e.givesmart.com/events/NuB/.

Drag Music Bingo: St. Patrick's Day Edition — March 15

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day a few days early with this event at the Tap Room, an Ypsilanti restaurant and bar. On Sunday, March 15, from 1-3 p.m., attendees can sing, dance, play bingo and see a drag show. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., and the event is open to all ages.

Drag Music Bingo is free to attend, but tipping is greatly appreciated. Those who want to attend should reserve a spot on the event's page on Eventbrite.com. The Tap Room is at 201 W. Michigan Ave.

Trinity Health Environmental Services Career Fair — March 16

Looking for a job? Try this career fair with Trinity Health Monday, March 16. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., attendees will have the chance to learn about working at Trinity Health and speak directly with the recruiting team. Attendees should wear scrubs or business casual attire and bring several copies of their resume.

The career fair will take place at the Trinity Health Women's Health Center - Ann Arbor, located at 5320 Elliott Drive, Suite 100, in Ypsilanti. To learn more and register, visit the Upcoming Career Events page in the Careers section of the Trinity Health Michigan website.



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Gov. Whitmer appoints 2 regents to Eastern Michigan University board

Lilly Kujawski
Managing Editor - News

Two new regents will begin terms on Eastern Michigan University's Board of Regents in January 2027.

Appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Christopher Kaufman and Kirk Profit are set to begin terms starting Jan. 1, 2027, succeeding outgoing regents Chad Newton and Michael Hawks, whose terms end in December 2026.

These appointments are subject to the advice and consent of the Michigan Senate.

Profit, of Ann Arbor, is a former member of the Michigan House of Representatives and former co-owner of Governmental Consulting Services Inc., a written statement from the governor's office said. He will succeed Newton.

Profit has a Bachelor of Science in philosophy and political science from EMU and a juris doctorate degree from the University of Detroit Mercy. He graduated from EMU in 1975, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Kaufman, of Detroit, is the co-founder of StockX, an online marketplace and clothing reseller with a focus on sneakers. He will succeed Hawks.

Kaufman has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from EMU, a Master of Fine Arts from Cranbrook Academy of Art,

and a Master of Science in Learning and Organizational Change from Northwestern University.

Kaufman is the author of the book "Empathy at Work: Building Better Businesses Through People-First Leadership." He recently visited EMU's campus to share business tips and advice from his book during a fireside chat.

Profit works as a lawyer and legal consultant at Profit Legal Services, PLLC, his LinkedIn said. He serves on the board of directors of Michigan Future Inc., which its website describes as a Michigan-focused, nonpartisan, nonprofit think tank.

Both Kaufman and Profit have experience as adjunct faculty members at EMU, said their LinkedIn profiles. Kaufman serves on the advisory board for the Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation at EMU.

In a written statement, EMU Board of Regents Chairman Nate Ford praised Profit and Kaufman for the leadership they will bring to the university.

"Chris brings a powerful entrepreneurial perspective and deep ties to our academic mission, while Kirk's extensive public service and legal experience strengthen our governance and community connections," Ford said in the statement. "We are grateful to Governor Whitmer for appointing leaders who

understand the transformative impact of higher education and who share Eastern's commitment to opportunity, equity, and service."

In a post on his LinkedIn, Kaufman called himself a proud alum of EMU and said he was honored to be appointed to the Board of Regents.

"Higher education is at an inflection point, and institutions like EMU play a critical role in expanding opportunity, driving regional growth, and preparing students for a rapidly changing world," Kaufman said in his post.

As the governing body of EMU, the Board of Regents is granted by Michigan's Constitution "general supervision of the institution and the control and direction of all expenditures from the institution's funds." Additionally, the regents have the power to elect the university's president.

Regents make decisions for the university, such as setting policies and approving the cost of tuition. There are eight regents on the board, all of whom are appointed by the governor.

Regent Hawks, whose term expires at the end of this year, was appointed by Former Gov. Rick Snyder in 2011, then later reappointed. Regent Newton, who will also finish his term at the end of this year, was appointed by Whitmer in 2021 to finish out the term of Former Regent Rich Baird.

Opinion

The WellNest Watch

Rethinking health: Why well-being deserves a bigger conversation



Kegan Tulloch
Contributor

Editor's note: In *The WellNest Watch*, master's degree candidates in the public health program at EMU's School of Health Promotion and Human Performance explore news, research and standard practices in the field of health and wellness.

When we talk about health on campus, the conversation usually revolves around flu season, counseling appointments during finals, or hitting the gym after winter break. But what if health is much bigger than that? What if health isn't simply about avoiding illness, but about having the conditions to truly thrive?

The World Health Organization defines well-being as a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. It is not just happiness or temporary comfort. Well-being encompasses quality of life, a sense of meaning and purpose, and the ability to contribute to the world around us. In other words, it is both deeply personal and inherently collective.

This broader understanding challenges a common assumption: that health is solely an individual responsibility. While personal choices matter, well-being is shaped by much more than daily habits. According to the WHO, it is influenced by social, economic and environmental conditions. Access to education, stable housing, safe neighborhoods, financial security and supportive communities all shape whether someone can flourish.

For college students, this definition feels especially relevant. Academic pressure, tuition costs, food insecurity, shifting social networks and post-graduation uncertainty all affect our sense of stability. When a student is juggling coursework with multiple jobs, it is not simply time management skills at play; economic conditions become part of the health equation. When someone feels isolated in a new environment, social connection becomes just as important as physical wellness.

Well-being also operates beyond the individual. Societies themselves can experience well-being. A well-functioning society provides equitable access to resources, protects its most vulnerable members, and creates environments where people can safely participate and contribute. In this sense, well-being becomes a measure of how our institutions are performing, not just how individuals are coping.

Recent global challenges, including pandemics, economic instability and climate change, have made this clearer than ever. These events do not affect everyone equally. Students from marginalized communities may face disproportionate stressors, from financial strain to limited access to healthcare. If well-being depends on fair and supportive systems, then improving it requires more than encouraging self-care. It requires structural awareness and collective action.

That does not mean individual strategies are irrelevant. Sleep, movement, meaningful relationships and setting boundaries remain essential. But focusing exclusively on personal resilience can mask larger issues. If a campus culture treats burnout as normal, students may see their stress as a personal weakness instead of understanding it as a result of broader systemic pressures. If counseling centers are understaffed or difficult to access, mental health struggles become harder to navigate, regardless of mindfulness apps or motivational quotes.

A well-being framework encourages institutions to ask different questions. Instead of asking only how they can treat illnesses, universities can also ask how they can create an environment where students are set up to thrive. That might include ensuring accessible health services, fostering inclusive spaces, promoting financial support programs and cultivating a campus culture that values balance alongside achievement.

Importantly, well-being also connects to sustainability. Environmental conditions such as clean air, green spaces and safe water are part of the foundation that allows communities to flourish. For students concerned about climate change, this perspective links environmental advocacy directly to health. Protecting the planet is not separate from promoting well-being; it is part of the same goal.

The power of framing health as well-being lies in its inclusivity. It integrates physical health, mental health, social connection, purpose and environmental stability into one cohesive vision. It reminds us that thriving is not a luxury reserved for a few but a reasonable expectation for all.

On a college campus, where students are shaping their futures and identities, this approach matters. It pushes us to look beyond GPA and graduation rates and consider the quality of the student experience. Are we building environments where people feel supported, safe and valued? Are we preparing graduates not just to enter the workforce, but to live meaningful, sustainable lives?

Reframing health as well-being does not eliminate stress, deadlines or life's unpredictability. But it does shift the conversation from survival to flourishing. And in a time when many students are doing more than ever just to keep up, that shift may be exactly what we need.

Editor's note: Contributors to *The WellNest Watch* health column are Kegan Tulloch, Ebrima Jobarteh and Ruby Wyles, graduate assistants in the Office of Health Promotions, and Shafaat Ali Choyon and Nathaniel King, graduate hall directors in the Department of Residential Life. All five are master's degree candidates in the Public Health Program from the School of Public Health Promotion and Human Performance at Eastern Michigan University.

EMU to hold self-defense class open to students, community



Andrea Elliott is a community engagement officer and Special Victims Unit investigator at Eastern Michigan University's Department of Public Safety. Lilly Kujawski / The Eastern Echo

Lilly Kujawski
Managing Editor - News

Editor's note: The following article contains references to sexual violence.

Members of the campus and local community alike can learn to protect themselves with the Eastern Michigan University police's six-week self-defense class, which begins Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

The class is part of the national Rape Aggression Defense program, which began in 1989, and teaches realistic self-defense techniques for women, alongside lecture and discussion.

Officer Andrea Elliott said the class will teach basic self-defense techniques, including stances, strikes, kicks, ground techniques and how to punch. Elliott is a community engagement officer at EMU, as well as a Special Victims Unit investigator on the university police force.

The class welcomes both students and community members and is open to women and non-binary individuals 16 years or older. Class participants under age 18 need a parent or guardian to sign a waiver to enroll. When there is interest, the EMU Department of Public Safety also hosts a similar class for men.

"The reason we have separate classes is that men and women are usually attacked for different reasons," Elliott said. Nonbinary people can participate in whichever class they feel most comfortable and can reach out to

the public safety department to identify which class would be most appropriate for them.

The class will culminate in a simulation activity in which participants will wear boxing gloves and padding and practice self-defense techniques on officers and dispatch employees in padded gear acting as assailants.

"I joke with the young ladies: You get to beat up a police officer and get away with it," Elliott said. The simulation, held during the final class session, is optional.

In addition to basic self-defense techniques, the class will also teach other skills, such as situational awareness, how to respond if approached by someone unsafe and confidence building, Elliott said.

"A lot of people have noted in the past, and we even see it sometimes with some people, that they gain confidence," Elliott said.

Elliott said attackers often target people who appear insecure or vulnerable, and this class can help participants learn to carry themselves assertively as a protective measure.

In most cases of sexual assault reported at EMU, the survivor knew their attacker, Elliott said. Nationally, 60% of rapes are committed by someone known to the survivor, reported the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. The class is informed by this, providing different situational options for self-defense and education around emotional abuse and manipulation.

Elliott said the class teaches participants to respond by using the element of surprise in self-defense. However, the class also teaches that compliance is an option, too.

"No one has the right to judge you for complying, if that's the case, because, '¶¶ no one is in that situation, particularly, but you,'" Elliott said. "The person, the attacker, may have a gun, a knife; you don't know what they have. So only that person can make that decision."

Elliott said anyone would benefit from participating in a self-defense class, and she encouraged people to sign up for it. Previously, Elliott has seen mother-daughter duos participate in the class.

"We strongly encourage people to sign up with friends," she said. "It is a good de-stresser."

Class details

Registration is currently open for the self-defense class. A registration

link can be found on the university's safety department webpage. The class meets once a week from 5:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays for six weeks, starting March 11, in McKenny Hall.

The cost of the six-week class is \$25, but if interested participants find the fee cost prohibitive, there are scholarships available, as long as the participant is willing to commit to the entire class, Elliott said.

The class is open to women and nonbinary people, 16 and older.

Students can earn Learning Beyond the Classroom credit through participating in this course. Additionally, upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive a signed form, which they can show at any other RAD self-defense class to participate and practice for free.

"You only have to pay once," Elliott said. "We have a couple of people from a previous class last semester who are going to be coming back to practice with us, and they don't have to pay again."

For questions about the class, contact Elliott at aelliott@emich.edu.

Safety tips

Elliott offered some general safety tips to the campus community. She advised people to be aware of their surroundings and to avoid walking with both earbuds in or while looking at their phone.

"I would recommend that you at least only put in one earbud so you can kind of hear what's going on around you," she said.

She also recommended students download the EagleReady app, which offers safety resources and has a mobile blue light function. The app also allows users to share their location with a friend. The EMU police station also gives out self-defense spray for free, along with guidance on responsible use, she said. Elliott reminded people to keep their doors, including car doors, locked.

She said that if students need to walk alone on campus, they can use the safety service Student Eyes and Ears for University Safety, or SEEUS, which provides students with an escort to an on-campus destination. Reach SEEUS at 734-487-3387, and find hours and more information online.

In case of emergency, the EMU police can be reached at 734-487-1222 or by dialing 911 on campus. DPS is located at 1200 Oakwood St., Ypsilanti.



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Eagle Watch | Feb. 23 – March 6

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales:

March 10-16

Darrell Justice
Sports Reporter

Women's swimming
March 9-11: NCAA Zone C Diving Championships

The 2026 NCAA Zone C Diving Championships will be held at Eastern Michigan University's Jones Natatorium. Only athletes who meet the required qualifications will be invited to the Zone C Diving Championships. The championships will be streamed on the EMU Athletics YouTube channel.

March 12-14: College Swimming Coaches Association of America National Invitational Championship

The CSCAA National Invitational Championship is a postseason invitational meet that allows swimmers who did not qualify for the NCAA Championships to compete at a national level. Live results will be available on the CSCAA website.

Women's gymnastics

March 15, vs. Kent State University

These two teams met earlier this season on Jan. 23. The Eagles got the win over Kent State with a final score of 193.750-193.150. The Eagles are looking to add another conference win to their current 2-3 conference record before the Mid-American Conference Championships on March 21. Fans can watch this conference matchup on ESPN+.

Baseball

March 11, vs. Michigan State University

The last time these two teams played at Oestrike Stadium was 2017. A player to watch is Ty Stecko. Stecko is the current team leader in home runs and slugging percentage and is tied with Devan Zirwas for having the most runs batted in. Viewers can watch this in-state matchup on ESPN+.

March 13-15, vs. Ball State University

Eastern Michigan holds a historical edge over Ball State with an all-time record of 85-54. The series gives the Eagles another opportunity to build momentum early in MAC play. Live stats for this three-game series will be available via StatBroadcast.

Women's lacrosse

March 14, vs. Kent State

The Eagles are on a two-game win streak against Kent State, with their most recent matchup in April 2025 ending with a score of 15-8. The game will be streamed on ESPN+.

Women's tennis

March 13, vs. Northern Illinois University

Eastern Michigan holds the advantage in the all-time series against the Northern Illinois Huskies, leading the matchup 23-9. This will be the first conference matchup of the year for the Eagles. They are looking to start strong with a win in Ypsilanti. Live stats will be available via StatBroadcast.

March 15, vs. University of Massachusetts

This will be the first meeting between Eastern Michigan and the University of Massachusetts. The Eagles were on a three-game win streak prior to their recent loss to Stetson University. They will be looking to get back on track with a conference win over UMass. There is currently no confirmed media coverage for this event.

Women's golf

March 9-10: GameAbove Golf Invitational

EMU is coming off a second-place finish at the Alice and John Wallace Invitational. At the GameAbove Golf Invite in Rolling Hills Estates, California, the Eagles will be up against a field with 10 other teams, including the University of Oregon; Texas A&M University; the University of California, Los Angeles; and others. This event will be live-streamed on YouTube.

Read the full article on easternecho.com

He nearly orchestrated a massive upset against the undefeated Miami University, ranked No. 19 in the AP Top 25, on Feb. 24. Lawson II exploded for 29 points, the highest scoring output for an EMU freshman since James Thompson IV in 2015 and the most against a Division I opponent since the 2002-2003 season. Remarkably, 24 of those points came in the second half as he spearheaded a comeback effort that trimmed a 26-point deficit to just six. Currently leading the MAC in 3-point percentage, his six triples in that game solidified his status as a premier conference threat.

Swimming and diving: Rose Kendrick

Diver Rose Kendrick was named the MAC Freshman Diver of the Year at the 2026 championships in late February. Kendrick is just the third Eagle in program history to earn this prestigious individual honor. Her championship weekend was highlighted by a fourth-place finish in the 3-meter diving final, where she earned a total of 279.30 points. She also secured a seventh-place finish in the 1-meter final earlier in the meet. Her elite execution helped Eastern Michigan secure a sixth-place finish in the overall team standings.

Track and field: Sam Vesperman

Freshman Sam Vesperman earned Co-Indoor Men's Freshman Performer of the Year honors on the final day of the MAC Indoor Championships on Feb. 28. Vesperman secured the award following a gritty fifth-place finish in the pole vault, where he cleared a height of 4.65 meters (15-03.00). His contribution was vital to the

men's team's third-place finish in the overall standings. A Grosse Ile local, Vesperman's immediate impact on the field events highlights the bright future of the program as it transitions to the outdoor season.

Baseball: Nathan Borchardt

Junior catcher Nathan Borchardt has quickly emerged as a focal point of the Eagles' offense, leading the team with a .333 batting average during their early-season road stretch. Throughout the four-game series against Southern Illinois University Edwardsville from Feb. 27 to March 1, the transfer student maintained a productive .300+ average, solidifying his reputation as one of the program's most reliable hitters. His early success is highlighted by his first home run as an Eagle and a season-high three-hit performance. Borchardt's consistent ability to reach base and provide a steady presence behind the plate has provided a vital spark for the Eastern lineup.

Gymnastics: Kyrie Lowe

Kyrie Lowe reached a major milestone Feb. 27, capturing her fifth all-around title of the season during a competitive home tri-meet against Western Michigan University and Illinois State University. Lowe's total score of 39.100 matched her career high and was instrumental in leading the Eagles to a season-best team score of 195.200. Her performance was highlighted by an electrifying 9.850 on the floor exercise, matching her career best, and a 9.825 on the uneven bars. As a dominant force in all four rotations, Lowe's consistent elite execution remains the driving force behind the gymnastics program's competitive 2026 campaign.



With Miami University blocking the pass, No. 0 Gregory Lawson II of the Eastern Michigan men's basketball team tries to find a way to pass the ball to his teammate on Feb. 24 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center.

Courtesy Prielipp / The Eastern Echo

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

Women's basketball: Sisi Eleko

Senior forward Sisi Eleko reached a massive career milestone Feb. 28 during a road contest at Northern Illinois University. Eleko recorded 20 points and 10 rebounds, marking the 50th double-double of her decorated NCAA career. This achievement distinguishes her as one of only four active NCAA Division I players to reach that peak. While the team fell short of a Mid-American Conference Tournament berth, Eleko leads the conference in rebounding and has remarkably scored in double digits in every single game she has played this season.

Men's basketball: Gregory Lawson II

Freshman guard Gregory Lawson

Women's lacrosse: Emerson Henry

Sophomore midfielder Emerson Henry delivered a historic offensive performance March 1, leading the Eagles to a 13-10 comeback victory over Austin Peay State University. Henry netted a career-high five goals, marking her fourth career hat trick and propelling Eastern Michigan to its best 5-2 start on the season. Her explosion included two goals on the woman-up advantage, tying for the third-highest single-game total in program history. Beyond scoring, Henry added eight draw controls and eight shots, demonstrating her multifaceted impact as a primary catalyst for the surging Eagles.

Eagle excellence: Eastern Michigan shines at 2026 MAC Championships

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

The final weeks of February saw the Eastern Michigan University Eagles take flight across the Midwest, leaving a trail of broken records and podium finishes in their wake.

Competing at the Mid-American Conference Championships for both track and field and swimming and diving, EMU athletes demonstrated that the program's future is as bright as its present. From the track in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, to the Ocasek Natatorium in Akron, Ohio, the green and white asserted themselves as elite competitors in a high-stakes post-season environment.

Distance dominance and triple jump glory

In Mount Pleasant, the EMU men's track and field team established itself as a powerhouse, ultimately securing a third-place overall finish with 98 points. The weekend was defined by Kian Wiles, who authored one of the most impressive individual performances in recent program history. Wiles captured double gold on the final day of competition, outlasting the field to

win the mile in 4 minutes, 7.31 seconds before returning to the track to claim the 800-meter title in 1:52.47. His 20-point contribution was pivotal for the Eagles' podium team finish.

The Eagles also bookended the meet with relay success, as the 4,000-meter distance medley relay team of Ronan Codyre, Michael Hawkins, Ty Dailey and Jimmy Geller secured EMU's first title of the weekend with a time of 10:04.50.

The excellence extended to the jumping pits, where Eastern Michigan swept the triple jump titles. Gabe Oliveira took the men's crown with a leap of 15.30m, adding to his earlier third-place finish in the long jump.

On the women's side, Mariah Taylor provided a historic highlight by winning the triple jump with a personal-best mark of 12.69m. Her jump stands as the third-best indoor mark in EMU history and served as the sole individual title for the women's squad during the meet.

Shattering records in the water

While the track stars were sprinting in Michigan, the EMU swim and dive teams were making waves in Ohio. Finishing sixth overall with 263 points, the Eagles' performance was

highlighted by a series of record-book entries. Marlee Christie proved to be a sensation, delivering a 22.83-second 50-yard freestyle leadoff in the 200-yard freestyle relay that tied for the third-fastest time in program history. Christie didn't stop there, later clocking a 49.77 in the 100-yard freestyle prelims to claim the No. 3 spot on that all-time list as well.

Joining Christie in the upper echelon of EMU history was Nina LaRosa. The Bay Village native surged to a fourth-place finish in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1:01.25. This personal best moved her into third place among EMU's fastest performers in that event. The distance lanes also saw consistent scoring from Nehir Oz, who secured sixth-place finishes in both the 500-yard and 1,650-yard freestyle events.

The future is green: Freshman standouts

The most encouraging sign for the Eagles was the recognition of their youngest stars. In the diving well, Rose Kendrick capped an incredible debut season by being named the MAC Freshman Diver of the Year. Kendrick, only the third Eagle to ever receive the honor, finished fourth in the 3-meter

diving final and seventh in the 1-meter final.

The track team boasted its own rising star in Sam Vesperman, who was named the Co-Indoor Men's Freshman Performer of the Year. Vesperman earned his accolades by clearing 4.65m in the pole vault to finish fifth and secure vital points for the men's third-place team effort.

Looking toward the national stage

As the conference dust settles, the road continues for several standout Eagles. The qualified divers will return home to Ypsilanti as EMU hosts the NCAA Zone C Diving Championships at Jones Natatorium from March 9-11. Meanwhile, track and field standouts will look toward Fayetteville, Arkansas, for the NCAA Indoor Championships on March 13-14.

Whether in the pool or on the track, the 2026 MAC Championships served as a testament to the depth of Eastern Michigan's athletic talent. With a collection of individual titles, all-time program marks, and two Freshman of the Year trophies, the Eagles have set a high bar for the upcoming outdoor and spring seasons.



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Ypsilanti artisan market moves to Michigan Firehouse Museum



On Feb. 14, customers found unique artisan crafts at the Art Makers and Heartbreakers Holy Bones event. This event was Holy Bones' initial launch at its new location, the Michigan Firehouse Museum. Courtesy of Holly Bones

Allie Beecher
Copy Desk Chief

On Feb. 14, eager shoppers gathered around tables filled with unique artisan crafts at the Art Makers and

Heartbreakers event at the Holy Bones Artisan Market. A new change made this event extra special — it was Holy Bones' initial launch at its new location, the Michigan Firehouse Museum, after the organization made the decision to move there from the

Ypsilanti Firehouse. Launched in 2019 as a festival and Halloween marketplace, Holy Bones is a local Ypsilanti organization that hosts recurring artisan markets, said Holly Bones, the Holy Bones curator. "We like to host our events at

historic buildings around Ypsilanti, [which] gives the people an opportunity to come in and see some really cool architecture and just a little bit of history while they browse local artisans. We have a little bit of a spooky vibe to our markets, but it's opened up over the years," Bones said. "We have people that just sell things that you wouldn't find at the standard street fair or craft show, and it's just a little bit more niche for people that are looking for something maybe a little bit strange and unusual."

Holly Bones began hosting markets at the Ypsilanti Firehouse in 2022. In October 2025, however, the team made the decision to move out of Ypsilanti Firehouse due to the skyrocketing prices of hosting community events there, Bones said.

"We were weighing the options for keeping it affordable [for artisans]," she added. "This isn't a moneymaker; it's just a way for us to encourage artisans to keep making ... things on theme and stay active and stay creative."

Bones and her team wanted to keep Holy Bones as affordable as possible for the participating artisans while also ensuring that their money was going toward a good investment. Bones said they were grateful when they reached out to the Michigan Firehouse Museum and got an immediate response. The Michigan Firehouse Museum is more than just a museum; it is also a building steeped in history, Bones said.

"We took a look at the space and just knew immediately that it was the new home. It had to be a building that

didn't make you feel like you were, you know, just going to a space of convenience," Bones said. "I wanted it to be something really cool where you're looking up, and you're actually seeing a structure that has a little bit of history baked into the walls."

Bones shared that she is even more excited about the move to the Firehouse Museum than she could have imagined. She also noted that she has seen more and more families coming to Holy Bones events, and she hopes that even more families will continue coming now that the market has moved into a more family-friendly space. Beyond just visiting the Holy Bones artisans, she said, attendees can now explore the museum exhibits as well and make a day out of their trip to the Holy Bones market.

"[We're] excited to kind of grow with the community we've built over the years and find a way that everybody can enjoy," Bones said.

The next event for Holy Bones is Lucky Bones, a St. Patrick's Day-themed artisan market that will offer good luck charms and works centered on luck and fortune. It will take place at the Firehouse Museum March 14, from noon until 6 p.m. Bones encouraged anyone who is interested to stop by and check out the new space and the event.

Those who would like to learn more about the organization or about vending at a Holy Bones market can find more information by visiting Holy Bones on Instagram @hollybonesfestival or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/hollybonesfestival/.

Eastern Michigan alum publishes debut novel, 'Life is Your Masterpiece'

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

Eastern Michigan University alum Dave Marz has published a debut novel, "Life is Your Masterpiece."

The book centers around Lucca Martilla, a Mexican-American painter from rural Michigan. Lucca falls in love with the girl who lives on the farm he paints, but her parents' racist ideologies force them apart. The story follows Lucca as he goes to art school and learns how to open up as a person and be confident in himself. Ultimately, Marz said the book is a love story and a coming-of-age story.

The novel weaves Marz's own life experiences with a crafted narrative, centering issues like racism, gender identity and sexuality. Originally, the book started as an autobiography focused on his career in academia, Marz said. After facing pushback from publishers, Marz switched it to be a contemporary novel instead.

"That gave me some more freedom to write about certain things, themes and so on, that didn't have to be so much about me," Marz said.

Marz estimates the book is about 90% true. From the feelings about being a military kid to being in the art scene in Chicago, most of it goes back

to Marz's own life experiences, some of which happened at EMU.

Marz completed his undergraduate studies at Washtenaw Community College and EMU and said the transition between the two colleges was very jarring. The college experience was new to Marz; suddenly, he was immersed in a diverse and outgoing environment. It's important to be around people from other places and be exposed to new perspectives, Marz said.

It wasn't just the culture that was a shocking adjustment; it was the academics as well. WCC is about getting students into the workforce. At EMU, it's more artistic and expressive, Marz said.

"It was more conceptual; I thought that was really cool," Marz said about EMU. "That's what I wanted to bring to my classes when I was teaching."

When Marz came to Eastern in the 90s, there weren't many Mexican professors, which sparked the idea in him to be a teacher. From there, Marz started plotting out courses and imagining how to be a good professor. After teaching for 20 years at universities across the country, Marz retired to focus on writing and being an artist.

Marz's background as a graphic designer shines through the book,

partly in the main character, who is an artist, and partly in the making of the book. The cover art is a mixed media watercolor photograph made by Marz. The pink on the front and blue on the back reflect the duality within the novel, Marz said.

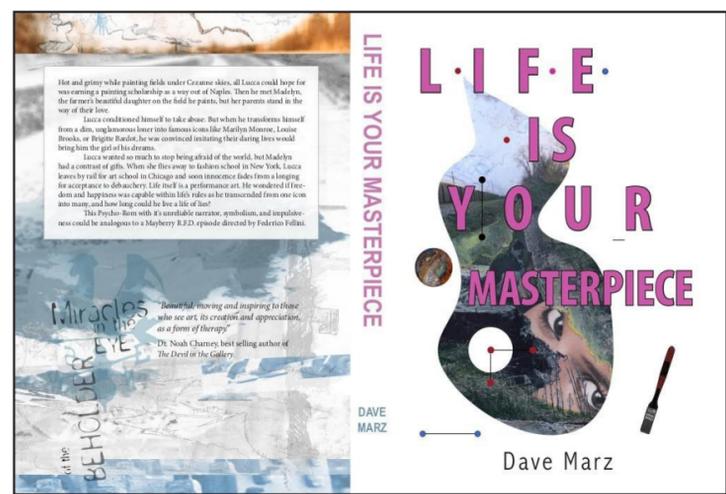
"Life is Your Masterpiece" took 10 years to write and publish. It morphed into four different books and evolved over time as it passed through editors, Marz said. Although Marz may not be a seasoned writer, he's open to learning and growing.

"You become a life-long learner, and when you do that, you enrich yourself," Marz said

Come summer, Marz will work to promote the book by speaking on podcasts and hosting book signings. The audience for the novel tends to be younger people, Marz said, which was his intention.

"It tends to be people who are young and full of idealism," Marz said about the audience of his book.

Initially, Marz was concerned about publishing the novel in the current political climate, citing polarization in the country and the turmoil surrounding themes featured in the book. At first, he wondered if the book should be delayed. But in the end, Marz decided this was the perfect time to release the novel.



Front and back cover of "Life is Your Masterpiece" by Dave Marz. The cover art is a mixed media watercolor photograph made by Marz. Courtesy of Dave Marz

"I've got to speak up now; I've got to do it now," Marz said.

The book's ending isn't necessarily a happy one. While editors said that love stories must have good endings, Marz pushed back, saying many romances, including some of the most famous ones, don't end well. The resolution of the story is the important part to come away with, Marz said. There are ups and downs in life; the important thing is to be resilient and forge a path.

"I wish it was a happy, happy ending," Marz said. "But at the same time, if it's going to be more truthful and honest, I decided I was going to let it be that."

"Life is Your Masterpiece" can be purchased at Barnes & Noble or on Amazon or on Marz's website.

Marz has many ideas for his next novel, although he said he hopes it won't take 10 years this time.

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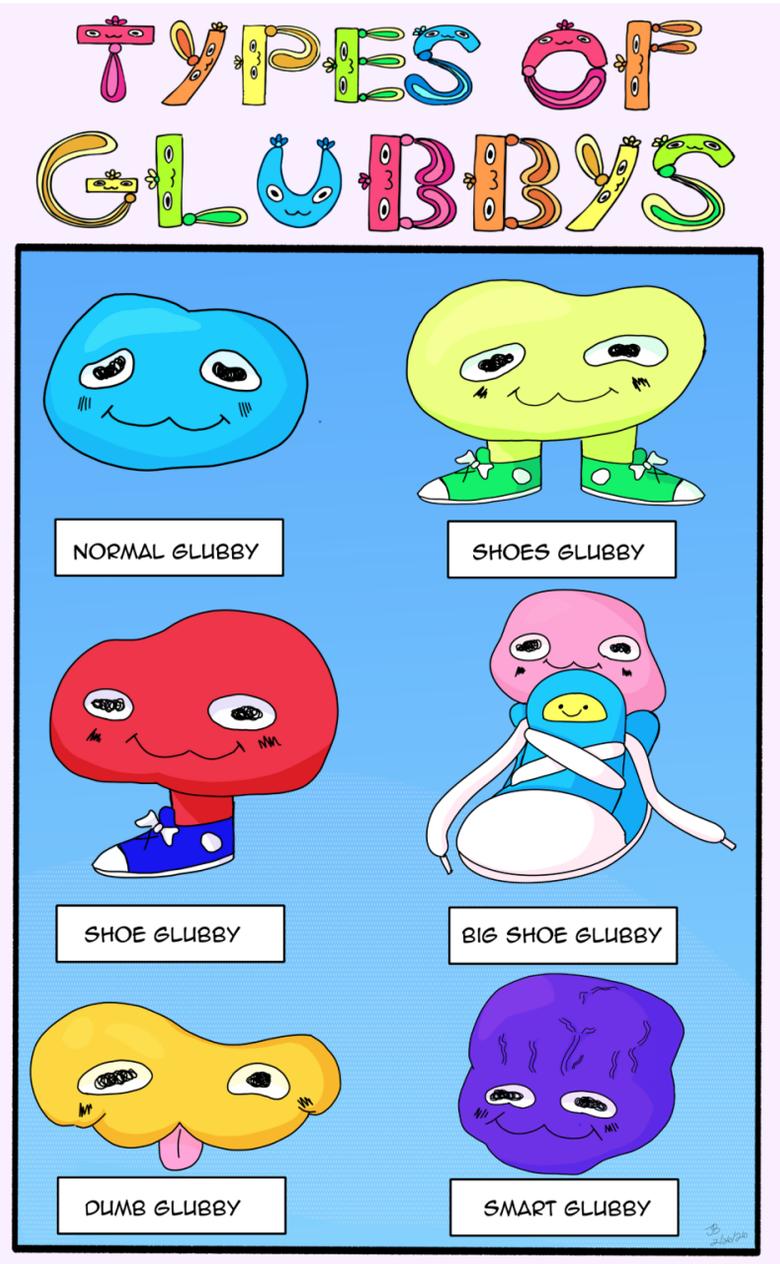
Student Media Gala

Hall of Fame Banquet

6:30 p.m. April 2

McKenny Ballroom
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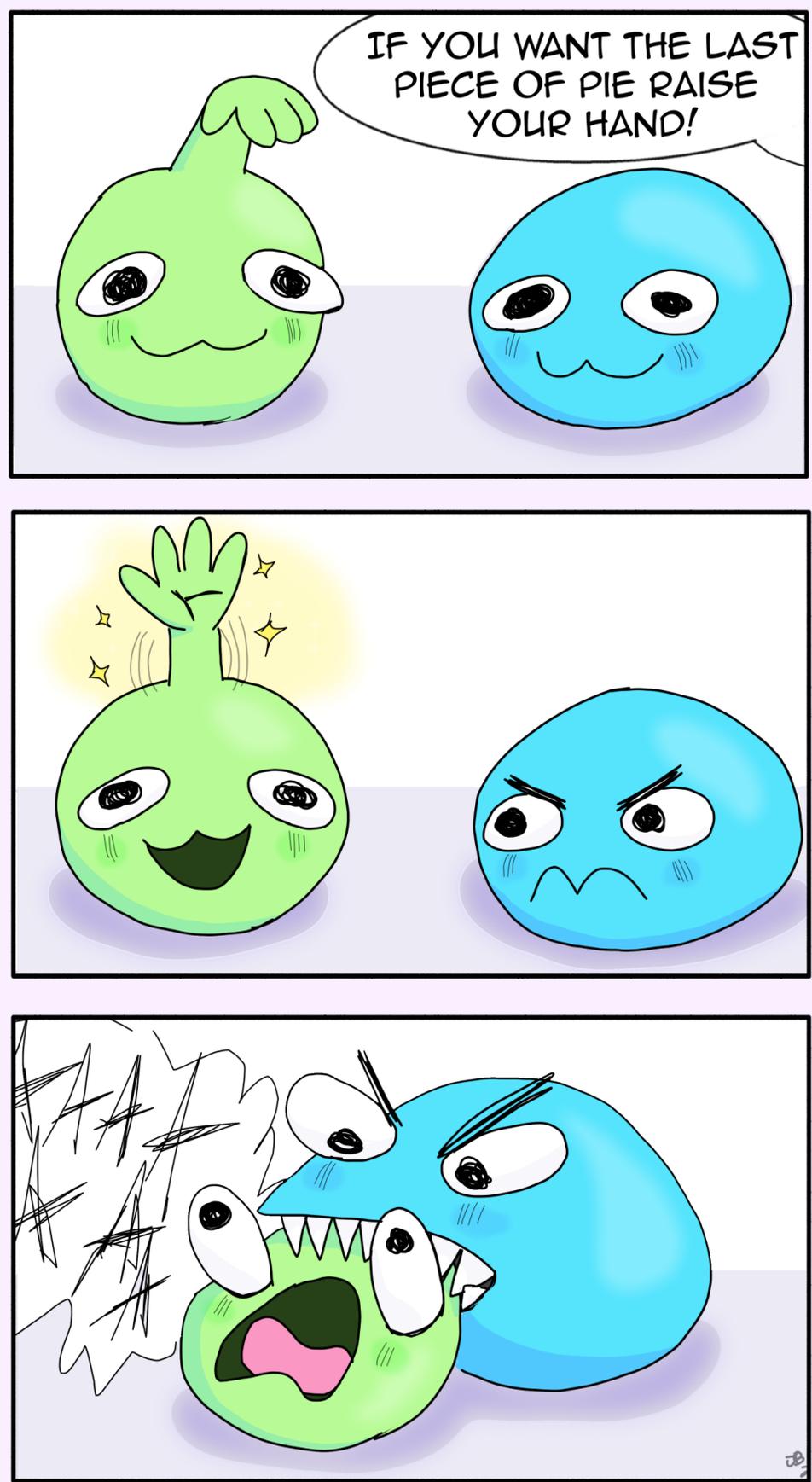
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Taco Bell? | FunkyLOaf



It's a Wonderful Day for Pie | Julia Bartlett



Clover Maze! | Rylee Curley



Sports, speech and schooling at EMU



EduTalk panelists answer questions about schooling and other concerns in the Student Center Ballroom Tuesday, Feb. 24. Owen Cardenas / The Eastern Echo



Aesha Mustafa presents her idea of a public university's role in benefiting the community at the EduTalk in the Student Center Ballroom on Tuesday, Feb. 24. Owen Cardenas / The Eastern Echo



No. 4 Mohammad Habbab of the Eastern Michigan University men's basketball team attempts to shoot a basket against Miami University on Feb. 24 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo



The Eastern Michigan University women's basketball team huddles together during Senior Night in the George Gervin GameAbove Center on the evening of Wednesday, March 4. Bea Dingman / The Eastern Echo



No. 9 Addison Patterson of the Eastern Michigan men's basketball team extends his arm for the basketball to go into the net as Miami University attempts to block the ball on Feb. 24 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo



From left to right, Mariah Brickerson, Asia O'Quinn, Joyce Jenereaux, Stephen Henderson and Laleh Walker, pictured on Student Press Freedom Day after a lecture held by Henderson and Jenereaux in Pray-Harrold at Eastern Michigan University on Feb. 26. Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo



The EMU Pep Band performs at the George Gervin GameAbove Center for the women's basketball game against Ohio University on Wednesday, March 4. Bea Dingman / The Eastern Echo



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