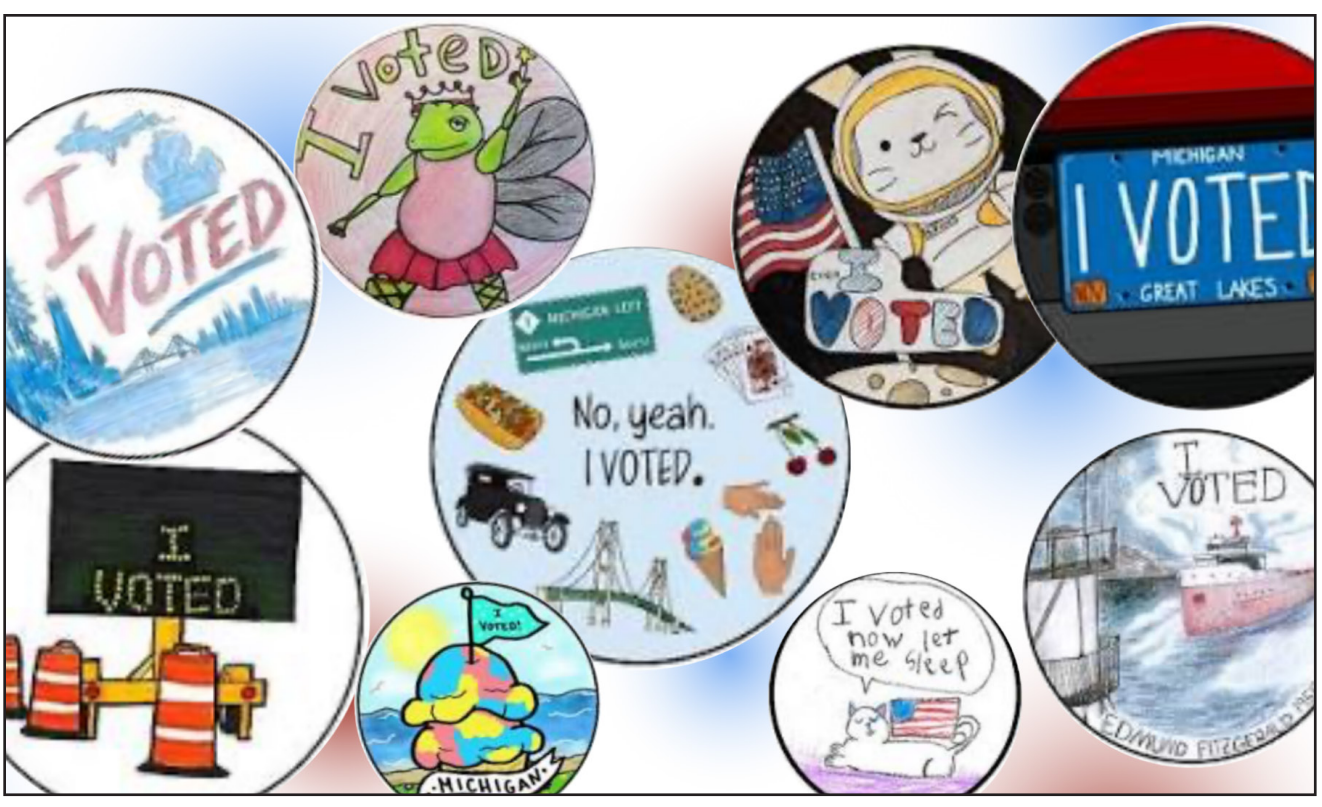




The Eastern Echo

Volume 143, Issue 19
Serving EMU and Ypsilanti since 1881

Tuesday, September 29, 2026
easternecho.com



A collection of the winning “I voted” stickers created by Michigan residents. AnnaBelle Favre/The Eastern Echo (Images courtesy of Michigan Government)

How EMU students can vote in Ypsi

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

With Election Day coming up Nov. 3, some students are preparing to vote for the first time ever, while others might have questions about the process. Students at Eastern Michigan University are eligible to vote in Michigan regardless of whether or not they live in-state. Here is what to know about voting as a student.

The Michigan voting website states

that students can register to vote as long as they meet the following requirements: the student is a U.S citizen, has lived in a Michigan city or township for at least 30 days (or will have by Election Day), will be 18 by Election Day and is not currently serving a sentence in jail or prison

EMU students who live on campus can register to vote using their on campus address. Below are the ways students should write their on campus addresses when registering to vote.

Example: 999 Walton Hall Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Examples: B299 Cornell Courts Ypsilanti, MI 48197 OR C299 Village Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Examples: 642 Lakeview Ypsilanti, MI 48197 OR 732 Westview Ypsilanti, MI 48197

SEE HOW TO VOTE, PAGE 7

EMU AAUP approves new 3-year faculty union contract

Laura Meriweather
Managing Editor - Operations

The Eastern Michigan University chapter of the American Association of University Professors ratified a new three-year faculty union contract after online voting closed on Friday, Sept. 18, according to EMU-AAUP President Matthew Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick told *The Eastern Echo* that the final vote was 300 yes votes and 75 no votes out of a total possible 451 votes, meaning that one in five faculty union members voted no. Despite membership numbers being lower this year compared to the last vote, percentage turnout seemed to be similar, Kirkpatrick said.

In a pre-vote interview on Sept. 15, Kirkpatrick said that the negotiating team had done the best they could to secure the best terms possible for faculty members given the underlying circumstances of low enrollment and financial challenges currently facing EMU.

“We got raises, we fought off significant changes to healthcare, we added language protecting faculty intellectual property around things like AI,” Kirkpatrick said, adding that he believed clarifying language had also

been added around the layoff clause.

The contract will now go to the Board of Regents for ratification consideration on its end. This saga marks the first AAUP contract negotiation under EMU President Brendan Kelly, who said in an interview with *The Echo* in April that his approach to such a negotiation would be “going in and trying to create the best terms and conditions for employment that make sense for the university, that make sense for the people we’re in service to and that make sense for employees who are serving the university.”

Kirkpatrick said that he felt this negotiation had lived up to that standard.

In September 2022, EMU faculty went on strike during an embittered gridlock negotiation with former EMU President James Smith. Kirkpatrick declined to speak directly about Smith, but said, “I think that EMU was ready to embrace a different kind of leader and I think [Kelly] is that leader, and I hope that he is able to move us together toward a stronger institution.”

The Echo has requested a copy of the official contract and will provide additional information as it becomes available.

U-M to host second town hall about proposed data center

Katherine Tatomir
Newsletter Editor

On Thursday, Oct. 1, the University of Michigan will host a second town hall about its partnership with Los Alamos National Laboratory to build a high-functioning data center in Ypsilanti Township.

The town hall will take place in the ballroom of Ypsilanti Marriott at Eagle Crest from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Registration to attend in-person is full, but there is a waitlist available, and the event will be livestreamed on the U-M YouTube channel for those who cannot attend.

The town hall is formatted to be a guided discussion led by U-M officials, followed by a Q&A where audience

members will have the opportunity to make comments and ask additional questions.

The data center has received pushback from some community members, who have vocalized their dissent, citing environmental and ethical concerns, as well as criticism of Los Alamos National Laboratory’s involvement.

A press conference and protest was scheduled for the first town hall on Sept. 9, but was rescheduled for Oct. 1 due to inclement weather. The protest was organized by a group of community members that oppose the data center. The protest is expected to start at 3 p.m. by the Marriott entrance sign.

Ypsilanti Marriott at Eagle Crest is



University of Michigan official speaks at Sept. 9 town hall regarding the proposed data center in Ypsilanti Township. Sam Peterson / The Eastern Echo

located at 1275 S. Huron St. in Ypsilanti Township. A livestream recording of the Sept. 9 town hall is available on the University of Michigan YouTube channel.

YOU CAN REGISTER TO VOTE AT YOUR CAMPUS ADDRESS

Voting at school is easier and gives you a say in what's happening where you actually live.

Michigan

Online voter registration deadline
October 19

Early voting
October 24 - November 1

Election Day
November 3



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.

COPYRIGHT © 2026 (The Eastern Echo) All rights reserved.
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

The Eastern Echo
Fall 2026
Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief:
Lilly Kujawski
editor@easternecho.com

Managing Editor - News:
AnnaBelle Favre
news@easternecho.com

Managing Editor - Operations:
Laura Meriweather
managing@easternecho.com

Sports Editor:
Ruby Brannon
sports@easternecho.com

Podcast Director:
Anthony Thaxton
podcast@easternecho.com

**Arts Editor,
Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief:**
Jada Hauser
cellarroots@easternecho.com

Comics Editor:
Yiri Thompson
design@easternecho.com

Photo Editor:
Max Taylor
photo@easternecho.com

Design Editor:
Zeinab Agbaria
digital@easternecho.com

Copy Desk Chief:
Allie Beecher
copyeditor@easternecho.com

Advertising & Marketing:
advertising@easternecho.com

Student Media Advisor:
Christine Uthoff
advisor@easternecho.com

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:



YPSITASTY

GRUB CRAWL & SHOP LOCAL EVENT

PRESENTING SPONSOR



SUPPORTING SPONSORS



a2TECH360



LOCATIONS TO LOOK FOR...



Participating Restaurants

- Aubree's Pizzeria & Grill
- Bridge Community Cafe
- Cook's Condiments
- Dos Hermanos
- Earthen Jar
- Growing Hope at MI-HQ
- Hyperion Coffee
- Insomnia Cookies
- Maiz Mexican Cantina
- Ohana Lounge
- Plant Based Conesys
- Red Rock Barbecue
- Tanduri Korner
- The Sidetrack Bar & Grill
- Thompson & Co.
- Watertower Distilling Co., LLC
- Ypsi Alehouse
- Ypsi Cocktail Club
- Ypsilanti Food Co-op

Participating Shops & Businesses

- Black Stone Bookstore & Cultural Center
- Depot Town Cats & Dogs
- Hinton Real Estate Group
- Puffer Reds
- Putt-R-Round
- Ypsi Hardware
- Yours Truly Event Venue

FREE

TROLLEY STOPS

- Downtown
- West Cross Street
- Depot Town



Ride the Golden Trolley!

#EATLOCAL #SHOPLOCAL #SUPPORTLOCAL



YOUR ADVENTURE
BEGINS HERE!

NEW! Heidrun's Mead Hall

NEW! Wizard Wand Workshop

NEW! Race For the Crown 5K

Open Weekends Aug 22 - Oct 4
Plus Labor Day, Sept 7 & Festival Friday, Oct 2

2026 Michigan Renaissance Festival

248.634.5552 | MichRenFest.com

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 Conesys
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



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Ypsilanti officials consider data center ordinance proposal



Ypsilanti City Hall is at 1 S. Huron St., Ypsilanti, and serves as the venue for City Council meetings. Lilly Kujawski / The Eastern Echo

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

The City of Ypsilanti is considering a proposed ordinance that would change the zoning law for data centers within city limits.

At the Ypsilanti City Council meeting on Sept. 15, City Planner Josh Burns presented a slideshow regarding the proposal, explaining the key aspects the ordinance would address.

“Data centers are a specialized type of infrastructure,” Burns said. “They house computer servers and related equipment that is used to store, process, manage and transmit digital information. It’s important to note that data centers support more than just cloud computing and artificial intelligence. Data centers have become

critical infrastructure for modern life, and if they were to suddenly disappear, the consequences would be catastrophic.”

Burns stated that without data centers, many internet functions could no longer work. This includes banking and credit card transactions, pharmacy systems, emergency communications, government services and more.

“However, recognizing that data centers serve an important function does not mean data centers belong everywhere,” he added. Burns said data centers combine high energy and infrastructure demands with continuous cooling, backup power generation, mechanical noise and relatively low employment density.

Burns said that within the last year, there have been about 26 locations

across Michigan that have had data center proposals.

There are three categories of data centers that this new text amendment is proposing: accessory data center, small data center and large data center.

Under the proposed amendment, a small data center would be capped at 20,000 square feet, five megawatts annually in energy consumption and 20,000 gallons per day of cooling water, to be on at least 2.5 acres, Burns said in the presentation. Anything above that threshold would be classified as a large data center, requiring at least five acres.

This text amendment proposes that data centers have setbacks of 75 feet on the sides and 100 feet at the rear, 60% maximum lot coverage and 20% tree canopy at maturity. The proposal requires 40% windows and doors on each elevation and no blank wall over 50 feet. The goal is to prevent a windowless box facing a public street in the city.

If a data center were to be proposed, there would need to be a complete application. The application requirements would include the following: a draft development agreement, an operational installment (having someone thoroughly go through the proposed data center operations, anticipated staffing and hours of operation), an environmental site assessment, an emergency operation plan and a decommissioning plan.

In regards to water consumption, open-loop water cooling systems would be prohibited under the proposed zoning text, Burns said.

Councilor Desir  Simmons, Ward 3, asked Burns to define what an open-

loop system means. Burns stated that an open-loop system is a cooling-based system where a developer is drawing water into the facility and actively discharges it as it continues coming in, requiring greater water consumption. A closed-loop system is essentially the opposite — a system that recycles the water repeatedly before requiring it to be discharged.

All water must come from the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority, he said. This means no groundwater, wetland, river or stream withdrawals, and no discharge to any natural water system.

“Folks complain about the hum [from data centers] in other communities,” Mayor Nicole Brown said, addressing noise concerns residents have. She asked who would go out to the data center to measure the noise if residents of Ypsilanti file complaints about the humming.

“I don’t expect that a data center is going to go out of their way to address noise complaints just because their neighbor left a complaint,” Burns said. “So, ultimately, if residents are experiencing that issue, they are able to leave a complaint with the city.”

Burns said the city would be able to either hire an acoustical engineer to go out and do a study of the decibel levels at the property line or bring in a decibel reader to confirm whether or not the noise is louder than it should be.

The proposal states that between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., the decibels coming from the data center would be required to decrease on the property line.

Brown brought up the issue of

data centers impacting the health of residents if a data center were to be in Ypsilanti.

“That’s one of the difficult things you know, in new technology, is ultimately, we won’t probably know a lot of the environmental, the health impacts for realistically another decade or two,” Burns said. He also said that air pollution and water pollution are concerns that the city should regulate if a data center were put in Ypsilanti.

Overall, the proposed text amendment as a whole would allow the City of Ypsilanti to decide where data centers are permitted, evaluate land use impacts and neighborhood compatibility, establish measurable operational standards, advance guiding values within the master plan, and coordinate reinvestment in vacant spaces, Burns said.

Councilor Amber Fellows, Ward 3, expressed her gratitude for the presentation, for all the work Burns has put into this, and to Council for increasing the public participation for the zoning text amendment.

“Originally, this was going to be a first reading of the ordinance, and now it is a presentation, and we’re going to have some more public input sessions before it ever comes to first reading,” Fellows said. “So, this gives us a prolonged process to do some editing of drafts, and that is where we need to be.”

A new ordinance requires a first and second public reading, before it becomes law. The next Ypsilanti City Council meeting is at 7 p.m. on Oct. 6 at City Hall, at 1 S. Huron St., Ypsilanti.

Conference to highlight the legacy of Black student activism at EMU

Bilal Ahmed
News Reporter

In the upcoming weeks, Eastern Michigan University’s Halle Library will serve as the main venue for a two-day conference examining the legacy of campus activism. This event will be organized by the Department of Africology and African American

Studies and will bring together different generations of students, faculty and EMU alumni.

The conference will take place Thursday, Oct. 1, and Friday, Oct. 2. Attendees will analyze different historical movements, measure the progress of campus against its past demands and begin to outline a strategy for future advocacy.

The chairperson of the AAAS department, Tony Pressley-Sanon, said in a news release that the conference is a moment to reflect on the past and present of the campus’s activism while paving the way for genuine inclusivity.

The timing of the event marks the 10th anniversary of demonstrations in 2016, when Black students raised awareness of racist vandalism on

campus, said a news release. This also coincided with the broader Black Lives Matter movement across the country. This eventually led to the creation of the Black Student 10-Point Plan, which aimed to seek out structural changes, hire more Black faculty members, require cultural competency training for the Department of Public Safety, provide Black students with dedicated

spaces and add mandatory race relations courses.

To help in preserving the history, the AAAS is also collaborating with the University Archives in gathering any historical items and records of oral history interviews with past alumni.

This event is free and open to the public, with complementary parking and light refreshments served.

EMU implements new Proofpoint email security, students and faculty voice frustrations

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

With the fall semester underway, Eastern Michigan University students might notice aa new email security system operating in their inboxes.

In July, EMU implemented the system Proofpoint to all who have emich.edu emails. The system is meant to block any spam or phishing email attempts before getting into a user’s inbox. External emails now feature a safety banner and smarter link protection to keep users safe from untrustworthy websites.

If a student, faculty or staff member receives an email from an unknown sender, they can click the new “Report Suspicions” button, located in the Gmail sidebar, to alert IT.

Suspicious emails get put in a secure quarantine folder which users can access and review in a message sent by End User Digest. The message will let the user know how many emails were put into quarantine, why they were quarantined, what the email was and who sent the email.

From there, users can decide to

release the email in their inbox, allow that sender to keep emailing them or block the sender, an article from the EMU Service Portal website states. The same article also states that email accounts that are trusted go into the user’s personal Safe Senders list while email accounts that are not trusted go into the user’s personal Blocked Senders list. Both of these lists can be accessed and edited at any time.

Despite the benefits of Proofpoint, some users have complaints about the new system, including on social media.

Steven Krause, an English professor at EMU, made a post on Facebook about Proofpoint the morning of July 17, two days after the system was implemented.

“A little tip based on my own experiences: If you were expecting a message in your EMU email account inbox that isn’t there, it’s probably being held up by Proofpoint, EMU IT’s new spam fighting tool that basically makes anything that doesn’t come from EMU as spam,” Krause wrote.

Proofpoint may place emails in the spam folder or will quarantine them if the emails seem to be spam or low-

priority. However, Proofpoint does not always place emails in the correct categories. If a user’s emails are not actually spam or low-priority, but Proofpoint labeled them as such, the user would have to report them as “Not Spam” to get the emails back in the user’s inbox.

Alli Bowerman, an incoming freshman, talked to The Eastern Echo about Proofpoint, as well.

“For me, I’m an incoming freshman, so it makes me a little scared about ignoring or flagging anything because it feels like every email is important,” she said.

Matthew Lorenz Medina, a senior at EMU, also shared thoughts about Proofpoint, saying that it doesn’t always catch whether or not an email is a potential scam. While many scam emails go into the spam folder, some emails that are scams go straight to the user’s inbox without a warning, Medina said.

“Overall it’s been kind of a stupid system,” Medina said. “But you know, it’s really funny that they mark most external emails as spam but I just directly got a BCC’d email claiming to

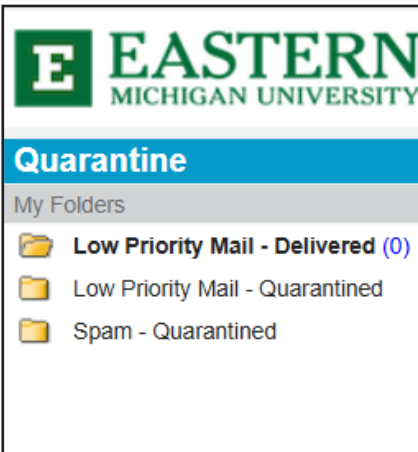
be financial aid, but it’s clearly trying to scam me.”

The Echo exchanged emails with Allan Edwards, the information security analyst on the IT team, about Proofpoint.

“Proofpoint needs to learn which marketing messages you want,” Edwards wrote. “Google previously had a history and allowed mass communications from senders like that on the basis of that history, but Proofpoint needs to be trained. Once you allow specific senders you want [to receive messages from], it will mostly only catch mail that is genuine spam.”

When asked why some emails that are not sent by external senders are marked as such, Edwards stated, “This will be true of any messages not sent from an @emich.edu including messages from Google about emich.edu. This feature has already been helpful in encouraging caution with suspicious messages and can prevent people from inadvertently responding to scams. This tag will also appear on many legitimate emails, but we think it’s worth it, just as a reminder.”

Those who have questions about



Emails are placed in a folder when marked as spam or are quarantined, and services like Proofpoint organize these folders. Lelaina MacDonald / The Eastern Echo

Proofpoint can visit EMU’s IT team in room 118 at Pray-Harrold, call the IT team’s help desk at 734-487-2120 or submit a ticket through the IT department website.

YpsiTasty returns, showcasing local restaurants and businesses



A chalkboard outside an Ypsilanti restaurant advertises the annual grub crawl known as YpsiTasty, which is scheduled for Sept. 29. (Photo courtesy A2Y Chamber of Commerce)

Bilal Ahmed
News Reporter

Local food, community and small businesses joined forces again to organize YpsiTasty. The food-focused event returns Sept. 29 with an evening of tasting and exploring the city’s restaurants and retailers.

Organized with the A2Y Regional Chamber, the annual event gives residents and visitors an opportunity to experience local restaurants while supporting businesses throughout the community. YpsiTasty has been bringing people together for about 15 years.

Julanne Williams, a marketing

and promotions specialist with the chamber, said YpsiTasty has grown into a popular food crawl featuring some of city’s popular restaurants. Hundreds of people are expected to participate in this year’s event. YpsiTasty was created to showcase the city’s local food scene and to encourage people to visit businesses they might not have experienced previously. Instead of staying at one restaurant for the evening, participants travel among participating locations and sample different foods.

Jenn Hayman, the chamber’s senior vice president for marketing, communications and events, said restaurant participation helps to strengthen the local business community.

“Our participating restaurants include Aubree’s Pizzeria & Grill and The Sidetrack Bar & Grill, along with other local food businesses,” Hayman said.

The event runs from 4-8 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29. Participants can purchase tickets online in advance through the chamber’s website. Tickets are \$25; or \$15 for students and \$10 for ages 6-15. Each ticket gives the participant tasting rights at the listed restaurants, giving them a sample of that venue’s signature dish.

Participants can also explore other downtown, Depot Town and Cross Street retailers and boutiques for special offers during the event.

A trolley will be available to transport participants among the different stops. Hop-on, hop-off service will be complimentary. Free parking is available at the Ypsilanti Commerce Center lot at 301 W. Michigan Ave., courtesy of Stewart Beal.

For the organizers, putting together the event involves coordinating with restaurants and businesses, promoting the event and ensuring the evening runs smoothly for attendees.

For participating restaurants, YpsiTasty provides an opportunity to reach new customers and introduce them to their food, organizers said.

“It’s a great opportunity for restaurants to introduce themselves to people who may not have visited them before,” Williams said. “They get to showcase some of their food and connect with potential new customers.”

Hayman said the event gives restaurants increased exposure by attracting hundreds of people to the city, and it encourages attendees to return to those venues after the event.

In addition to a meal, YpsiTasty offers visitors a chance to explore the city, discover new restaurants and connect with the local community, she said.

As YpsiTasty returns for another year, organizers hope the event will continue to introduce people to Ypsilanti’s food scene while encouraging residents and visitors to support local businesses.

What's the Move? Sept. 29 - Oct. 5

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

Looking for something to do? Here are some events for those who need a break this week.

Disability Awareness Workshop — Sept. 30

From 11 a.m. until noon in Room 201 of the Marshall Building, students can attend the Disability Awareness Workshop, where they will learn how to use the Disability Resource Center, explore ways to communicate with professors about accommodations and discover other helpful tools on campus. Lunch will be provided.

Students can reach out to Elena Carlson at ecarls14@emich.edu with any questions.

Saturn: Jewel of the Heavens — Oct. 1

The EMU Planetarium is giving students the opportunity to observe Saturn. Students will have access to an in-depth look at Saturn, exploring its rings and many of its moons.

This event will take place in the Mark Jefferson Science Complex from 8-9 p.m. in Room 402.

Those interested can purchase their \$5 ticket on the EMU website. Students can also visit the EMU Planetarium website for further information.

Ypsiween and Freak Fest — Oct. 2

Presented by First Fridays, Ypsilanti’s favorite haunts will bring the thrills with art, music, food and performances in the city.

Attendees can catch the spooky fun at two street festivals on Washington Street at Michigan Avenue, featuring both Freak Fest on South Washington and Ypsiween on North Washington.

Ypsiween is 5-10 p.m. on Friday Oct. 2.

First Friday Food Court — Oct. 2

First Friday Food Court is a reoccurring, monthly event which features local food vendors, music, chalk art, free board games and family-friendly activities. The event will be at the Ypsilanti Farmers Marketplace, hosted by Growing Hope.

From 5-7:30 p.m., all are welcome to attend this free event at 16 S. Washington St., Ypsilanti.

Cultural Expo! — Oct. 3

As part of EMU’s Weeks of Welcome, Cultural Expo! will take place 5-9 p.m. in the Student Center Ballroom. The Weeks of Welcome website describes this event as a celebration where students can share their cultures through interactive tables, workshops, cultural cuisines and live performances.

Students can attend for free and will have the opportunity to win socks. Students are encouraged to bring their friends and experience other aspects of the world.

Crystal Skull Studio 10 Years of Shear Terror — Oct. 4

To celebrate 10 years of “shear terror,” as described on the hair salon Crystal Skull Studio’s Instagram page, there will be a celebration from 4-8 p.m. There will be raffles for T-shirts, services and hair products, and there will also be snacks and drinks. There will be a live DJ set from Jerry Downey Jr., in addition to tarot readings with Faye. Guests are encouraged to wear spooky attire.

Crystal Skull Studio is at 950 N. River St., Ypsilanti.

Plant Families Workshop — Oct. 5

From 5-7 p.m. at the Growing Hope Urban Farm, located at 922 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti, people of all ages can learn about the common plant families that surround them. Attendees will be able to identify characteristics of the plant families and how knowing more about the plant families relates to the food we eat.

EMU Theatre to present mythical world of 'Metamorphoses'

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

Eastern Michigan University Theatre is about to perform its upcoming production “Metamorphoses” by Mary Zimmerman. The production, which was directed and choreographed by Jennifer Felts, brings to life the myths of renowned characters King Midas, Aphrodite, Poseidon, Orpheus, Eurydice and many others.

“Metamorphoses” will be at the Sponberg Theatre on Oct. 8, 9 and 10 at 7 p.m. and October 10 and 11 at 2 p.m. The show is recommended for ages 13 and older and is open to the public.

The EMU Theatre page said that “Metamorphoses” explores this myriad of stories in an imaginative and captivating series of vignettes, weaving together tales that are passionate, funny, heartbreaking, whimsical and resonant; stories that touch upon the beauty and ugliness of human nature, the mystery of the divine and the theme of transformation.

“This production is a love letter to the CAS reorganization and to our newly formed School of Performing Arts. It is truly a year of ‘Metamorphoses,’” Felts said. “These beautiful myths are brought to life with water as a central element. To create this world, we have engineered a pool into the set, designed by Kristin Ellert-Sakowski and built by technical director Dustin Miller alongside our talented student staff.”

There will be a pool of water onstage that is meant to help with shifting from one world to another, being able to represent the metaphorical and the literal. Audiences should be aware that some splashing from the pool may impact the first few center rows during the show.

“There’s a lot of taking care of things, whether it’s people or props or the actual space we’re in because of the pool. And so it’s not just making sure that actors are feeling safe on stage, but also that they are physically safe on stage and they’re not slipping and that they’re not freezing cold. It’s a lot of just protecting the space and protecting the props and making sure that we’re putting in extra care and effort into the show,” Lily Ban, the assistant stage



A model shows the expected set of "Metamorphoses," an upcoming production from EMU Theatre. (Photo courtesy of Jen Felts)

manager, said.

Levi Greunke, the scene shop worker and cast member, said that the pool brings some fun challenges for the show.

Dustin Miller, the technical director, said that working on this production has been an incredible learning and teaching experience as a technical director.

“With the added element of the pool in the scenic design by Kristin Ellert-Sakowski we’ve been able to dive into the world of plumbing, waterproofing and safety that will be invaluable to the

students as they enter the workforce,” Miller said.

Felts described the show as a story of hope, love and resilience. She said that it is an exciting, moving and poignant piece of theater.

“Our students have worked incredibly hard to bring this production to life,” she said. “We are so proud of their creativity, dedication, and artistry, and we can’t wait to share this extraordinary production with our audience.”

Grace Gil, the assistant stage manager, said that people should come

to see “Metamorphoses” because of how much work everyone involved put into the production.

“It’s gonna be sick as hell and you should come see it,” Gil said. “If you are a student, you get a discount.”

Ban told *The Echo* that this show brings accessible language to the audience to help them comprehend Greek myths.

Those who are interested can purchase tickets online which can be found on the “Metamorphoses” webpage on the EMU Communication, Media & Theatre Arts site.



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo



ELECTION 2026

Find more election coverage on easternecho.com

Meet the candidates running for Michigan Supreme Court

Hannah Borders
News Reporter

The Michigan Supreme Court consists of seven justices that serve eight-year terms. Terms are staggered so that only two seats are open each election cycle. Supreme Court candidates are nominated by political parties but are elected on a nonpartisan ballot.



Megan Cavanaugh

Megan Cavanaugh (Democratic Party), the current chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, is running for reelection. She has been on the Michigan Supreme Court since 2018. Cavanaugh has a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering from the University of Michigan and a juris doctorate degree from Wayne State University Law School, her campaign website says. She has 15 years of experience practicing appellate law in Detroit. She has taken on leadership roles within the State Bar of Michigan and has focused on improving access to courts and the administration of justice statewide.

Cavanaugh's campaign website says, "Elected to the Michigan Supreme Court in 2018, Megan has championed a justice system that is accessible, transparent, and centered on people. She has led efforts to improve child welfare outcomes, strengthen legal representation for families, collaborate with tribal courts, and ensure that courts serve every community with fairness and dignity."



Noah Hood

Noah Hood (Democratic Party) is a current justice on the Michigan Supreme Court, running for reelection. Hood has a bachelor's degree in anthropology and languages from Yale University and a juris doctorate degree from Harvard Law School, his campaign website says. Hood began his career practicing commercial litigation in Detroit, before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office in Toledo, Ohio. Hood was later appointed to the 3rd Judicial Circuit Court in Detroit in 2019 and presided over the Veterans Treatment Court during his tenure. In 2022, he was appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals before being appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court in 2025

by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

Hood's campaign website says, "Today, Justice Hood continues his service on Michigan's highest court, bringing a deep respect for the law, a commitment to thoughtful judicial decision-making, and a lifelong dedication to the people of Michigan."

Thomas Howe

Thomas Howe (U.S. Taxpayers Party) is running for Michigan Supreme Court.



Casandra Morse-Bills

Casandra Morse-Bills (Republican Party), a presiding judge of Michigan's 23rd Judicial Circuit Court, is running for Michigan Supreme Court justice. Morse-Bills has a bachelor's degree from the University of South Florida and a juris doctorate degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, her campaign website says. She began her career as a private practice attorney before becoming the prosecuting attorney of Oscoda County, Michigan. Currently, Morse-Bills serves a member of the Michigan Judicial Council and is the presiding judge of Michigan's 23rd

Judicial Circuit, presiding over cases in the Probate, District, and Circuit Courts.

Morse-Bills' campaign website says, "Judge Casandra Morse-Bills is a lifelong Michigander dedicated to upholding the Constitution, the rule of law, and the principles of fairness and accountability in the courtroom. Born and raised in Oscoda County, Judge Morse-Bills understands the values, work ethic, and traditions that shape the communities of this state."



Michael D. Warren Jr.

Michael D. Warren Jr. (Republican Party), a presiding judge of Michigan's 6th Judicial Circuit Court, is running for Michigan Supreme Court justice. Upon graduating from law school, Warren became a member of Michigan's State Board of Education in 1999. In 2002, he became a judge for the Oakland County Circuit Court and has held that position. In 2007, Warren authored his first book, "America's Survival Guide." He later published a second book, "The Revolutionary Words that Forged America," his campaign website says. He has been recognized as Judge of the Decade

by the International Association of Top Professionals, inducted into the IAOTP Hall of Fame, and received the Distinguished Public Servant Award from the Oakland County Bar Association.

Warren also has experience in education, being a business law professor at Wayne State University and having taught constitutional law at Western Michigan University Cooley Law School, his website says.

Warren's campaign website says, "Judge Michael Warren has served on the Oakland County Circuit Court since 2002, establishing himself as one of Michigan's most accomplished and respected jurists. Over his tenure, he has presided over more than 400 jury trials and over 1,000 days of trial proceedings — more trial experience than the entire current Michigan Supreme Court combined. He interprets the law as written and does not legislate from the bench."



Jody White

Jody White (U.S. Taxpayers Party) is running for Michigan Supreme Court.

Meet the candidates running for Michigan attorney general

Hannah Borders
News Reporter

The position of attorney general of Michigan is on the ballot this November as current officeholder Dana Nessel finishes her second term.

Michigan's attorney general is the state's top lawyer and law enforcement official. Their responsibilities include safeguarding the public, helping victims of crimes, preserving natural resources, protecting consumers and addressing illegal business practices, according to michigan.gov.

Republican Doug Lloyd, Democrat Eli Savit and four third-party candidates are running for attorney general this election season.



Doug Dern (Natural Law)

Doug Dern is running for Michigan attorney general as a member of the Natural Law Party. He is the chair of the Natural Law Party of Michigan, according to ballotpedia.org. Dern is a corporate mentalist and trial attorney with over 35 years of experience, his website says. Dern connects courtroom

psychology and stage mentalism with his keynote presentations at corporate events, according to his website. His "Beyond the Evidence" performances demonstrate how perception, nonverbal cues and human assumptions drive decision-making, according to his campaign.



Jason Dye (Libertarian)

Jason Dye is running for Michigan attorney general as a Libertarian. Prior to his work in politics, Dye founded We The People News, his campaign website says. Dye's campaign highlights eight issues: public corruption task force, judicial accountability, ending qualified immunity, ending civil asset forfeiture abuse, government transparency, courtroom and public meeting recording, stopping corporate capture, and property rights and tax reform. Dye hopes to create public corruption function focused on enforcing consequences for government abuse and misuse of office. He wants to hold judicial officials accountable and end qualified immunity. He aims to increase government transparency and have government proceedings be recorded and available to the public

by default. His campaign promises to defend homeowners, landowners, small businesses and ordinary people from what he describes as predatory government practices.



Doug Lloyd (Republican)

Doug Lloyd is running for Michigan attorney general as a Republican. Lloyd is the current prosecutor of Eaton County, Michigan. Prior to being named prosecutor in 2013, he served as assistant prosecutor, senior assistant prosecutor for the Economic Crimes Unit and chief assistant prosecutor for Eaton County. Prior to his current position, Lloyd was appointed by former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to the Organized Retail Fraud Advisory Board. He also served on the Insurance Fraud Task Force, has been confirmed by the Michigan Legislature to serve on the State Drug Treatment Court Advisory Committee, and was a previous president of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan. Lloyd's campaign describes five main priorities: prosecuting criminals fairly, without political favor or bias; advising lawmakers in crafting strong, common sense laws; protecting

individuals' God-given constitutional rights without compromise; standing firmly against political lawfare; and rooting out corruption and defending Michigan's sovereignty.



John Ludtke (U.S. Taxpayers)

John Ludtke is running for Michigan attorney general as a member of the U.S. Taxpayers Party.

Jeff Polonowski (Green)

Jeff Polonowski is running for Michigan attorney general as a member of the Green Party.



Eli Savit (Democrat)

Eli Savit is running for Michigan attorney general as a Democrat. Savit is the current prosecutor of Washtenaw County. Prior to his work in politics, Savit

was both a special education and general education teacher of U.S. history. After graduating from the University of Michigan Law School, he served as a clerk on the U.S. Supreme Court for Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. He previously served on the Senior Legal Counsel for the City of Detroit before taking on his current role as the prosecutor of Washtenaw County.

Savit's campaign outlines eight key issues: keep Michigan safe, fight for people's rights, defend workers, protect consumers, safeguard the Constitution, protect the environment, promote justice for all and work with local communities.

Savit promises to prosecute serious crimes and work to prevent them from happening in the first place. He would work to enforce civil rights such as voting rights, education rights, reproductive rights, and free speech and due process rights. He hopes to prioritize consumer protection and litigate to stop price gouging, deceptive practices and other consumer abuse.

Savit promises to hold polluters accountable for their damaging impact on the environment. His campaign says he will work to allow alternative approaches like mental health and substance use care for people accused of low-level offenses.

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





The Eastern Echo



Subscribe to our newsletter!

The Eastern Echo

We're hiring!

Get more info at:
easternecho.com/page/hiring



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Dominant Eagle defense grounds Lindenwood in 29-3 victory



Eastern Michigan University kicker, No. 46 Rudy Kessinger, kicks a field goal in the game against Lindenwood on Sept. 26 at Rynearson Stadium. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

On Sept. 26, the Eastern Michigan University football team returned home to Rynearson Stadium and delivered a dominant performance, securing a 29-3 victory over Lindenwood University on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

Playing before a crowd of 6,109 fans on Maxx Crosby Field at “The Factory,” the Eagles improved to 2-3 on the season while handing the Lindenwood Lions their third defeat. Coming off a demanding two-game road stretch, EMU established control early with disciplined execution across all three phases.

Grounded by a stingy defensive unit that held Lindenwood to just three points and 191 total offensive yards, Eastern Michigan set a physical tone from the opening kickoff.

Head coach Chris Creighton noted postgame that while the team continues to pursue its full potential, returning home to secure a decisive win provided vital momentum as conference play approaches.

Stifling defense controls the game

Eastern Michigan’s defensive unit delivered its most complete outing of the season, holding Lindenwood scoreless through the entire first half and surrendering only a single field goal late in the third quarter. The Eagles restricted Lindenwood’s passing game to a meager 55 yards on 10-of-17 completions, while limiting the Lions to just 2-of-13 on third-down conversion attempts. Lindenwood was forced to punt six times and turned the ball over on downs twice in the second half.

EMU’s defensive front consistently penetrated the backfield, recording four sacks for 11 yards and eight tackles for loss. Linebacker Zach Mowchan spearheaded the defense with seven total tackles, supported by Bryce Llewellyn with six tackles and a tackle for loss, and Elgin McDuffey with six tackles and a three-yard sack. Marvell Eggleston also contributed five tackles. Coach Creighton praised the unit postgame, highlighting that the defense pitched a functional shutout for the vast majority of the afternoon and never allowed Lindenwood to threaten the

end zone.

Noah Kim and Benson Prosper lead air attack

Offensively, Eastern Michigan accumulated 396 total yards and 25 first downs, controlling the tempo and maintaining possession for over 31 minutes. Quarterback Noah Kim orchestrated the passing game with precision, completing 23 of 38 passes for 257 yards, two touchdowns, and zero interceptions. Kim’s primary target was wide receiver Benson Prosper, who registered a standout day with 10 receptions for 109 yards and a touchdown. Prosper ignited EMU’s offense in the first quarter with a 24-yard touchdown catch, later adding a 26-yard reception to extend second-quarter drives.

Wide receiver Harold Mack proved equally effective, hauling in six catches for 80 yards, culminating in a 19-yard touchdown strike in the fourth quarter to put the game out of reach. Additional aerial contributions came from tight end Joshua Long with 35 receiving yards and freshman Dalin Wilkins, who recorded his first career collegiate catch. On the ground, EMU generated

Eastern Michigan volleyball battles, falls to Ohio in four-set MAC clash

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

On Friday, Sept. 25, 2026, the Eastern Michigan University volleyball team hosted Ohio University at the Gervin GameAbove Center in Ypsilanti, Michigan. In front of 229 fans, the Eagles fought back after dropping the first two sets to force a fourth frame, but ultimately fell to the Bobcats 1-3 (16-25, 19-25, 26-24, 22-25) in a match lasting two hours and one minute.

With the result, Eastern Michigan moved to 7-7 overall and 1-1 in Mid-American Conference play, while Ohio improved to 8-4 overall and 1-0 in the MAC.

Set-by-set breakdown

Set 1: Ohio takes early control

Ohio set the pace early in the opening frame, outhitting Eastern Michigan .207 to .062. The Eagles produced eight kills in the set, backed by defensive work from Surabhi Srinivasan to keep EMU in system. However, heavy serving pressure allowed the Bobcats to build a comfortable lead and take the set 25-16.

Set 2: Bobcats extend lead

Offensive rhythm proved difficult for EMU in set two, as the Eagles hit .000 with six kills and six errors, marking the first set of the 2026 season in which EMU hit at or below .000. Despite Lina Govoni distributing the offense and Srinivasan delivering EMU’s lone

service ace of the night, Ohio took the frame 25-19 to establish a 2-0 match lead.

Set 3: Eagles rally in extra points

Facing a sweep, Eastern Michigan responded with its cleanest offensive display of the match, recording 15 kills on four errors for a .289 hitting percentage. Powered by Taeley Mahler and errorless swings from Maddie Herman, the Eagles fought off Ohio’s push to close the match and took the third set 26-24.

Set 4: Ohio closes out match

EMU maintained its offensive rhythm in the fourth, recording 17 kills and a .277 hitting percentage. Nattie Slusher and Azra Eriç led the attack, while Herman provided defensive resistance at the net. However, Ohio answered with 18 kills on a .304 clip. Combined with nine total service aces on the night to EMU’s one, Ohio secured the frame 25-22 to finalize the victory.

Key individual performances

Nattie Slusher: Led the EMU offense with a team-high 11 kills and 11.5 points.

Taeley Mahler: Recorded 10 kills on an efficient .308 hitting percentage, adding four digs and two block assists.

Maddie Herman: Posted a career-high eight kills on zero errors (.471 hitting percentage) while leading the team with three block assists.

Surabhi Srinivasan: Anchored the back row with a match-high 21 digs, her fourth straight match with double-



Middle-blocker for Eastern Michigan University’s women’s volleyball team No. 5 Maddie Herman passes the ball over the net, scoring the ninth point of the first set during match versus Ohio University at the George Gervin GameAbove Center Sept. 25. Maddy Makin / The Eastern Echo

digit digs, and added five assists and EMU’s only service ace.

Lina Govoni: Directed the attack with 35 assists, along with seven digs and a block assist.

Azra Eriç: Contributed eight kills, three assists, and two block assists.

Match notes & historical context

Serving Margin: Ohio’s nine

139 rushing yards led by Amareon Blue (58 yards, 1 TD), Joey Mattord (48 yards), and Braydon Bennett (33 yards).

Special teams milestones and red-zone kicking

Special teams played a key role in building and extending EMU’s comfortable margin. Kicker Rudy Kessinger delivered a career highlight performance, converting three of four field goal attempts. Kessinger drilled a career-long 51-yard field goal in the second quarter, followed by successful kicks from 42 yards and 28 yards. Creighton commended Kessinger’s poise after early-game adversity, acknowledging the importance of establishing consistency in the kicking game heading into Mid-American Conference play.

In punting duties, Daniel Hull booted a 45-yard punt, while return specialist Quinn Fracassi provided advantageous field position with 33 punt return yards across three attempts, including a game-long 30-yard return late in the second quarter.

Looking ahead to Mid-American Conference play

Eastern Michigan opened the scoring in the first quarter with Blue’s two-yard touchdown run and Prosper’s 24-yard reception to jump out to a 13-0 lead. Kessinger’s pair of second-quarter field goals expanded the cushion to 19-0 at halftime. After Lindenwood’s Will Graham put the Lions on the board with a 44-yard field goal in the third quarter, EMU responded with 10 unanswered points in the second half to seal the 29-3 victory.

Reflecting on the win, Prosper noted that after back-to-back road losses, the team approached the game with singular focus to execute their assignment and secure a victory. Coach Creighton emphasized that the win allowed several younger players to gain valuable game experience while establishing a positive locker room mood. With non-conference play concluded, Eastern Michigan now turns its focus to MAC action as they prepare to travel to face the University of Massachusetts Minutemen on Oct. 3.

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales: Sept. 28 - Oct. 4

Jeffrey Ellingsworth
Sports Reporter

Oct. 1: Women’s soccer at Ball State

Tale: After a road trip to Buffalo, the Eagles will get back on the road to face Ball State in Muncie, Indiana for Eastern Michigan’s third MAC game of the season. The Eagles haven’t beat the Cardinals on the road since 2019, but between some usual powerhouse MAC teams having a down year and Eastern having an excellent start to the MAC season, the Eagles have a fighting chance to change the status quo. The Cardinals are 3-1 at home this season, so Eastern Michigan will have to dig deep to get a favorable result.

Tip: The Eagles have something, or rather someone, that the Cardinals do not: goalkeeper Ella Holland. Holland is on a tremendous run, giving up less than half a goal on average during the season. The Cardinals are averaging less than one goal per game, so Eastern Michigan’s defense needs to stay strong and keep Ball State from getting any favorable shots. Winning this game will help the team’s chances to get into the MAC tournament but it’s just one step in the right direction.

Oct. 2: Men’s and women’s cross country at the Joe Plane Invitational in South Bend, Indiana

Tale: With both teams coming off of a couple of weeks of rest, they will travel together to the Joe Plane Invitational, hosted by Notre Dame, as they look to remain in form during a tough month of races. This will be the teams’ first of several races in October, with the Mid-American Championships approaching at the end of the month. Kian Wiles and Christiana Coleman will lead their respective squads as they continue to face some of the best teams in the country.

Tip: With plenty of teams coming to South Bend for the race, both Eagle cross country teams will need to get out ahead of the pack so they don’t get boxed in and lose opportunities to move up during the race. The runners will need to use some energy early to gain position so they aren’t forced to play catch-up heading into the finish.

Oct. 3: Lightweight rowing at Michigan State

Tale: History will be made Oct. 3 as Eastern Michigan lightweight rowing competes for the first time in program history when the Eagles travel to East Lansing to take on Michigan State. The inaugural competition will give Eastern a chance to see where it stands against in-state competition while beginning a new chapter for the program.

Tip: With this being the first competition in program history, the Eagles will need to stay composed and trust the work they have put in leading up to race day. A strong start, consistent rhythm and a strong finish will be key as Eastern Michigan looks to make its first race a memorable one.

Oct. 3: Volleyball against Central Michigan

Tale: After taking on the Broncos just one day earlier, the Eagles will return to the George Gervin GameAbove Center to take on their other in-state rivals, the Central Michigan Chippewas. This will be the teams’ second matchup of the season after the Eagles swept the Chippewas in three straight sets on Sept. 22.

Tip: With the Eagles playing two rivalry games on back-to-back days, rest and recovery will be essential. Eastern Michigan will need to take care of business against Western Michigan as efficiently as possible so the players can rehydrate, recover and prepare for the Chippewas. Central Michigan will also be looking for some revenge after being swept earlier in the season, so the Eagles cannot afford to overlook their second in-state rivalry matchup.



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Opinion

The WellNest Watch
Social support and social networks provide shoulders to lean on



Ebrima Jobarteh
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.

Today, stress has overwhelmingly become a risk factor for many behaviors. From increased crime rates, suicidal tendencies, family disharmony and academic setbacks to impulsive behaviors such as spontaneous tantrums, stress provokes reactions that make one’s situation worse than it initially was. Fortunately, some avenues mitigate these situations for people who have identified and utilized them. This is called social support.

Social support can include: financial and transportation support; emotional support expressed as love, empathy, trust and care; informational support such as directions, advice and suggestions; appraisals such as constructive criticism, feedback, affirmation and praise; physical support; and professional support. Social networks, on the other hand, are the means through which people get social support. These could range from individuals, groups, neighborhoods, places of worship, parks and recreation centers, workspaces, cooperatives and the wider society.

Social supports exist for a reason – to help the ones in need when in need. However, social support without identifiable social networks defeats the purpose. Social networks are defined by density (i.e. how well your networks know each other), complexity (i.e. the different types of individuals/ groups or support systems in one’s network), intensity (i.e. closeness of social networks), homogeneity (i.e. individuals or groups with similar characteristics), geographic dispersion (i.e. where one’s social networks reside) and reciprocity (extent to which support is given and received).

Identifying one’s social networks helps one to know whom to turn to for a particular need. From a public health perspective, social networks provide accurate information, timely access to treatment at healthcare facilities, early help and reduced rates of isolation.

With rising costs of housing and basic commodities coupled with erratic adverse weather conditions, identifying one’s social networks and gaining support from them can reduce the stress that comes with these daily struggles and lessen the mental health sequelae that emanate from them.

Eastern Michigan University provides numerous resources, such as the Swoop’s pantry, the Women’s Resource Center, the Office of Access and Opportunity, and other academic and financial resources, for students to use as they navigate life on and off campus.

8 Washtenaw County restaurants now accept some SNAP benefits



Located on Whittaker Road, StimuLatte Cafe sells lattes, energy drinks and smoothies. Gabriella Payeur / The Eastern Echo

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

The Washtenaw County Health Department is encouraging local restaurants to join the Restaurant Meal Program, an initiative that allows

has been implemented in Michigan for a few years, but the county only started to promote it recently. With the help of summer interns, the department learned more about the program and started getting the information out to the community, Parsons said.

“We see the big benefit, really a win-win situation, both for our licensed restaurants and for the folks who are eligible to participate in the program,” Parsons said.

The program is for anyone who receives SNAP benefits and is 60 years or older, disabled and receives disability, homeless or is the spouse of someone who fits into one of these categories. Any eligible participants are automatically enrolled; eligibility messages are sent to the MIBridges account.

Typically, SNAP is only taken at grocery stores, and recipients can only buy ingredients, not hot, prepared foods, Parsons said. The Restaurant Meal Program is intended to increase access for community members.

“It’s targeted for folks who are more vulnerable in our community, who may not have access to cooking equipment or may have disabilities that might limit their mobility,” Parsons explained.

Currently, in Washtenaw County there are eight participating restaurants: Subway at four locations, KFC, Issa’s Pizza, Papa John’s and StimuLatte Cafe. The process to sign-up takes a few months; applications have to be sent to officials at the state and federal level to be approved, Parsons said. There are some restaurants currently pending in the approval process.

While it is free for the restaurants to join the program, the one possible barrier is that many point-of-sale systems don’t have a way to process SNAP benefits or. In those cases, the restaurant would have to purchase a new system that can do that function.

Khalid Awwad, the owner of StimuLatte Cafe, said he had to buy a new point-of-sale system because the original interface couldn’t process EBT cards. Awwad initially found the program after visiting a McDonalds that accepted EBT and then researching it more.

“This could be very beneficial for the community and our business as well,” Awwad said.

Since starting the program back in February, the cafe has averaged four or five customers a month using their EBT cards, Awwad said. He believes that while they had to pay for a new system and they get charged per swipe, it is worth it for the community.

“This is a benefit; take it, enjoy your time,” Awwad said.

Awwad has been posting on the cafe’s socials about the program and customer’s being able to use their SNAP benefits, but the posts get comments claiming it’s AI, he said. Even after months of posting about the program, people are still shocked, Awwad said.

Along with taking EBT cards, StimuLatte Cafe also gives a 5% discount for students, faculty and staff of EMU, Washtenaw Community College and Ypsilanti District Schools.

For more information and a map of all participating locations in Michigan, SNAP recipients can visit the Washtenaw County Health Department website.

How to vote
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Students living off campus may use their home address when registering to vote.

As for where and how students can register, there are three ways: the Washtenaw County clerk’s office, online or by mail.

Clerk’s office

To register in-person, students will need to go to their local clerk’s office. To find out which clerk office to go to, students can go to the Michigan Voter Information Center site and access the “Your voter information” page.

When registering, students are required to provide proof of residency such as a Michigan driver’s license, a state ID, a U.S passport, a utility bill, insurance documents, a bank or credit card statement, financial aid or school enrollment documents, a lease agreement, a paycheck or other

government check or a government document. For in-person registration, students must also have a photo ID. If they don’t have one, they will be asked to sign a form called an affidavit and then will be able to register to vote.

The Michigan Department of State states that a voter registration application may be completed on-site and submitted or taken home and submitted later. Applications must be received by, or postmarked as sent to their local clerk’s office, at least 15 days before Election Day in order to be able to vote.

Online

To register online, students will need to have either their Michigan driver’s license number, Michigan state ID or the last four digits of their Social Security number. The Michigan Department of State website has the online application students can complete and submit if choosing to register online.

Voters are only able to register to

vote online 15 or more days prior to Election Day. Within 14 days of the election, online registration will no longer be available. Therefore, those who want to register would need to do so in-person.

Mail

To register by mail, students must have their applications postmarked as sent at least 15 days before Election Day. There are printable applications online as well as at the clerk’s office. Students can visit their local county clerk, request an application be mailed to them or print an online application.

Students must include their Michigan driver’s license number or Michigan state ID number, the last 4 digits of their Social Security number or if a student does not have any of the above, they can check a box on the application that says, “I don’t have a valid Michigan-issued driver’s license or Michigan-issued state ID card, or a Social Security number.” Students can also include a copy of a current and

valid photo ID, paycheck stub, utility bill, bank statement or government document that lists their name and address.

Applications must be sent by mail or scanned and emailed to the Washtenaw County clerk at least 15 days before Election Day. Mailed applications must be postmarked as sent 15 or more days before Election Day.

Within 14 days of the election, and on Election Day, students may only register by visiting their local clerk’s office or satellite office to register in-person with proof of residency documentation.

For more information or for students living on campus who have questions, students can visit the Student Voting page on the Michigan Department of State website or contact Vote@EMU, the university-sponsored, nonpartisan voter registration and education initiative, at engage_emu@emich.edu or 734-487-6570.

Are you looking to...

Sell something?

Organize an event?

Hire someone?

Sublease your apartment?

Give a shoutout?

Find your lost items?

Starting at \$10

Buy an Eastern Echo Classified Ad Today!

For more info, contact: Advertising@EasternEcho.com

Earth Witch | Katelyn Hollis



City Angel: Part 4 - The Prospect | AJ Grams



Xena: The Rivalry & The Fatal Error | Katelyn Hollis



Flies for SOME reason.. | Julia Barlett



Something about a Freshie #9 | Isaiah Sanders



Scan to read more comics!



Eastern Michigan University cheerleaders run onto the field with EMU flags after the Eagles scored a touchdown during the game against Lindenwood University on Sept. 26. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo

EMU welcomes fall with game days, crafts, community



Alex Frond displays their finished Nyan Cat Pumpkin, which was painted at the 2026 Honors College Fall Fest on Sept. 25 at the Eastern Michigan University Honors College. Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo



Macy, an Italian Greyhound, attends the Eastern Michigan University Rec/IM 2026 Greyhound Walk in the Instrumental Fields on Sept. 27. Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo



No. 5 middle-blocker for Eastern Michigan University, Maddie Herman, spikes the ball towards the Ohio University team, Sept. 25 at the George Gervin GameAbove Center. Maddy Makin / The Eastern Echo



The Eastern Michigan University football team takes the field for the game against Lindenwood University on Sept. 26 at Rynearson Stadium. Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo



Campus Life hands out free jerseys to students at the EMU Gaming Arena on Sept. 25 on the Student Center's third floor. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo



Attendees play Settlers of Catan at the EMU Gaming Arena on Sept. 25, 2026 on the Student Center's third floor. Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo

YOU CAN REGISTER TO VOTE AT YOUR CAMPUS ADDRESS

As a student, you're eligible to vote here – regardless of where you grew up. **Voting at school is easier and gives you a say in what's happening where you actually live.**

Register before the deadline:

Michigan

Online voter registration deadline **October 19**

Early voting **October 24 – November 1**

Election Day **November 3**

**nextgen
america**

Paid for by NextGen Climate Action

SCAN TO
REGISTER

