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New Halle Library green space invites students to decompress

Campus park location coming this October

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

Students at Eastern Michigan University may have noticed last week that the fences around the construction area near the Halle Library were taken down. What used to be the Brown and Munson dorm buildings is now a grass field.

Walter Kraft, Eastern Michigan's vice president of communications, said the goal was to create an outdoor space where students can feel comfortable and decompress.

"It's exactly what everybody envisioned," Kraft said.

The new green space is part of an initiative to make campus more open and welcoming.

The Welcome Home Plan

The Welcome Home Plan began with the construction of Lakeview and Westview apartments, which were finalized in August 2024. The two housing complexes were envisioned as modern facilities with student comfort in mind.

The next step of the plan was to demolish the Brown and Munson dorm

buildings to open a green space where they used to stand.

Throughout the process, EMU invited students to give input by participating in focus groups and helping the university decide what students need on campus.

Kraft said he hopes that the new green spaces will be used and loved by students.

"I want to give credit to the facilities plant and the great design team," Kraft said.

The new green space already seems to be appreciated by lounging geese and squirrels darting up and down its trees. Students are now welcome in the space to enjoy it for themselves.

New park coming to campus

The other dedicated green space, located where the Jones and Goddard residence halls used to be, still needs a little more time.

The soon-to-be-unveiled park will feature streetlights to keep the area lit at night. Brittany Mobley, the university's senior media relations specialist, wrote in a statement that along with grass and trees, the space will feature plazas and



On Tuesday, Sept. 23, the fencing in front of Halle Library was taken down to unveil the new green space.

Max Taylor / The Eastern Echo

elements of the former buildings.

The park is being built around the courtyard that used to be hidden by the old residence halls.

Now it's going to be a space for students to do homework and relax, classes to meet, food trucks to park on campus and more, Kraft said.

The space is scheduled to be completed next month.

Ypsilanti District Library celebrates September's library card sign up month

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

This September, the Ypsilanti District Library is celebrating National Library Card Sign-up Month.

As part of its celebration, the library has set a goal to issue 500 new library cards during the month of September. As of Sept. 28, it has issued 467, only 33 short of its goal.

Sam Killian, community relations coordinator for the Ypsilanti District Library, believes it is an essential part of Ypsilanti.

"[The library is] always a thing that has been relevant and a part of the community," Killian said.

During September, the library is highlighting its Library of Things — a collection of items patrons can check out, including craft supplies, fitness equipment, games, garden tools, kitchen utensils, medical equipment, and more. Some items are obtained through donations, but most are purchased from the library's budget.

Killian said the library is "first and foremost a connecting place."

There are many services the library offers to patrons without a card, including free computer and internet access, meeting rooms and children's play areas. The three YDL locations also serve as warming and cooling centers during harsh weather.

For Ypsilanti residents interested in signing up for a library card, they can apply for one online or in person at any



The front entrance of the Ypsilanti Public Library, off of Michigan Avenue, on Monday, Sept. 22. Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo

of the three YDL locations. Doing so requires a valid photo ID and proof of residence or employment in the YDL service area.

Celebrate Smeest Fest at YDL

In correlation with National Library Card Sign-up Month, YDL is celebrating Smeest Fest in honor of the

local cryptid. Smeest Frog is a local legend, said to be a "large, hairy frog" spotted around Ypsilanti.

The celebration includes an illustration contest, Smeest Frog-themed Mad Libs, zines, a Smeest Frog D&D character for teens to play, and more.

The library doesn't know if Smeest Frog will reappear next year, but

perhaps the cryptid will find time in his schedule to hop around for another festival in the future.

YDL renovations in downtown Ypsilanti

Patrons visiting the Michigan Avenue location of the library during National Library Card Sign-up Month

can experience the location's recent building renovations.

After suffering flooding damage during the summer of 2023, the downtown library location was closed for 22 months.

Katie Dover-Taylor, Michigan Avenue's Branch Manager, said there were hurdles to repairing the library and that many issues were uncovered during the renovation process. The two other YDL locations took on its patrons and staff, but community members were constantly asking when it would be repaired.

It was very evident people were missing the downtown branch," Killian said.

Since they were rebuilding, they decided to enhance the original library design. After the renovations, the Michigan Avenue location has three new meeting rooms, a new youth area and a tech lounge on the first floor.

"It's a more welcoming atmosphere for kids, families and teens," Dover-Taylor said.

The people of Ypsilanti missed their local library. Killian said that the day the Michigan Avenue branch reopened, there was a line of people filming the new space and high-fiving. The large outpouring of support from patrons has not gone unnoticed by staff.

"We have a lot of gratitude to return and be part of the fabric of the downtown community," Dover-Taylor said.

The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti-area communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as *The Normal News*, *The Echo* distributes weekly printed editions on campus and throughout the surrounding community during the fall and winter academic semesters; and publishes year-round on the web. Contents are 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 community by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.*

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CORRECTIONS

- In the Sept. 23, 2025, issue of *The Eastern Echo*, the dates of EMU's National Hazing Prevention Week events were misstated.
- In the Sept. 23, 2025, edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the name of staff writer Ky'anna Coats was misspelled.
- In the Sept. 23, 2025, edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the date of the Star Lecture: Ypsilanti Mayor Nicole Brown calendar event was misstated.
- In the Sept. 23, 2025, edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the name of the Depot Town restaurant, Maíz, was misspelled.
- In the Sept. 23, 2025, edition of *The Eastern Echo*, the dates in the headline of *What's the Move* were misstated.

Where to find the newest volume of *Cellar Roots*, EMU's Art Magazine:



SEPT

30

Pride Flag Installation

3-5 p.m.

Student Center — Room 354

OCT

1

Campus Farmers Market

4-5 p.m.

Student Center — Patio

OCT

2

The Lightning Thief:
The Percy Jackson Musical

7-9 p.m.

Judy Sturgis Hill Building — Legacy Theatre

OCT

3

Wind Symphony Concert:
Re(new)al

7:30-9:30 p.m.

Pease Auditorium — 494 College Place, Ypsilanti

OCT

4

EMU Day at Detroit City
Football Club

4 p.m.

Keyworth Stadium — 3201 Roosevelt St., Hamtramck, MI 48212

OCT

5

Sierra Club Hike

5-7 p.m.

North Bay Park — 1151 S. Huron St., Ypsilanti

OCT

6

"Agents of Change:"
An AAAS 50th Anniversary Film Presentation

5-7:30 p.m.

Strong Hall — Room 111

WEATHER
FORECAST

Tuesday, September 30

High: 79 | Low: 52
Sunny / Mostly Clear



Wednesday, October 1

High: 71 | Low: 47
Mostly Sunny / Partly Cloudy



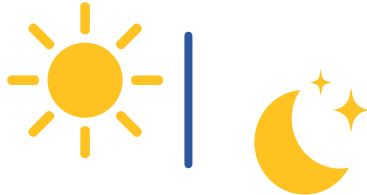
Thursday, October 2

High: 70 | Low: 45
Mostly Sunny / Mostly Clear



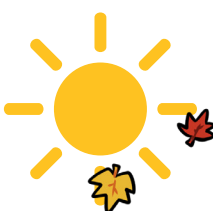
Friday, October 3

High: 76 | Low: 48
Sunny / Clear



Saturday, October 4

High: 79 | Low: N/A
Sunny



Source:

The National Weather
Service

Where to find
The Eastern Echo:

Off Campus:

- Ma Lou's, 15 W. Michigan Ave.
- Ypsi Real, 106 W. Michigan Ave.
- Maíz, 36 E. Cross St.

On Campus:

- Pray-Harold
- Student Center

Where to find our links:



Instagram @easternechoofficial



TikTok @theeasternecho



Facebook @ The Eastern Echo

Staff, faculty struggle with dining changes, loss of student community spaces

Ameera Salman
Editor-in-Chief

Staff and faculty at Eastern Michigan University have expressed their frustration alongside students regarding changes to EIDining’s locations and offerings. Students initially raised concerns after an Aug. 18 email announced the closure of Pray-Harrold, Student Center, Mark Jefferson and Crossroads markets, in addition to several Student Center restaurants. EMU junior Jason Folk started the petition, “Restore Accessible Dining Options at EMU,” which has garnered

1,635 signatures as of Sept. 28. But students are not the only ones frustrated by the changes. EMU is home to over 1,000 teaching faculty and staff, many of whom spend long hours on campus just like their students. Sara Lynne Schultz is the coordinator for the Math and Statistics Tutoring Center, located in Pray-Harrold. Schultz is on campus Monday through Friday, from about 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. “I basically live in Pray-Harrold,” Schultz said. “I would go down [to the market] for a snack or even their hot water to make tea or coffee.”

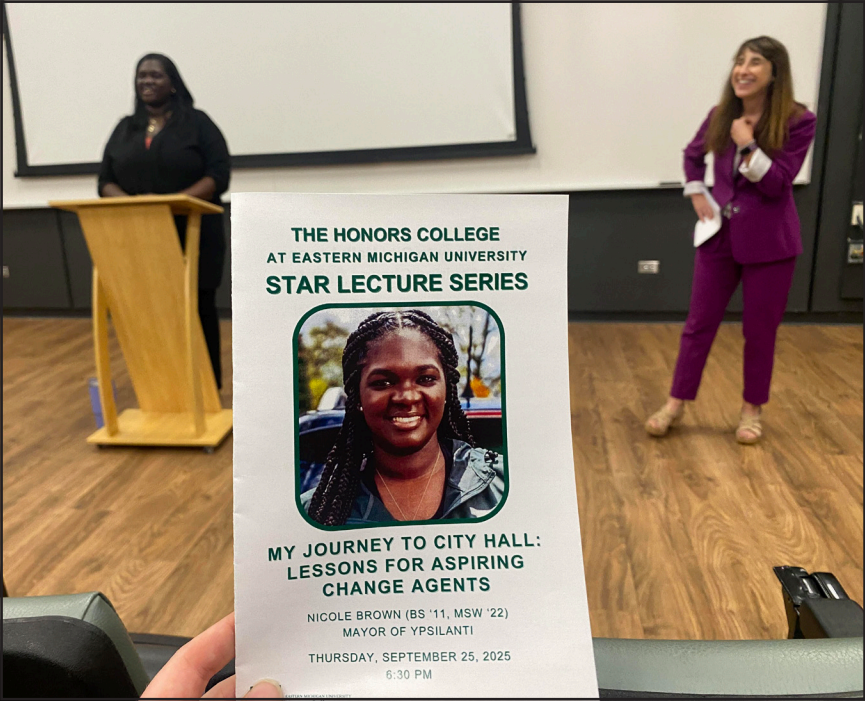
When the university announced the closure of the Pray-Harrold market, Schultz said she was upset by the impact of the changes. “The closed markets in academic buildings are not helpful,” Schultz said. “For anyone with a tight schedule, it’s virtually impossible to make it to where they’re funneling people.” The university said in an email sent Sept. 10 that the market spaces in Pray-Harrold and the Student Center would reopen in a vending-style format. “The Market at Pray-Harrold will soon reopen with grab-and-go favorites,” the email said.

Amanda Maher is an associate professor in the department of History and Philosophy who also works in Pray-Harrold. “I probably bought my coffee there three to five times a week,” Maher said. “That was the first thing I did and I was often the first person there.” But Maher said the closure of the market is more than just losing her morning coffee. “Losing the marketplaces in place of what they’re calling ‘frictionless vending machines’ represents a significant loss of social and community spaces on campus,” Maher said.

Ypsilanti Mayor, Nicole Brown, shines in EMU’s Star Lecture series

Natalie Kyle
Managing Editor

Each academic year, the Eastern Michigan University Honors College hosts a series of Star Lectures — a group of six presentations throughout both semesters in accordance with an annual theme. This year, the college began the series Thursday, Sept. 25, with a lecture from Ypsilanti Mayor Nicole Brown, titled: “My Journey to City Hall: Lessons for Aspiring Change Agents.” The Star Lecture theme for the 2025-26 year is “Be the Change.” This theme was chosen with counsel from student representatives on the Honors College Advisory Committee, in reference to the saying, “Be the change you wish to see in the world,” an excerpt of a longer quote attributed to the activist Mahatma Gandhi. Ann Eisenberg, dean of the EMU Honors College, explained why the theme was chosen during the lecture’s introduction. “Our goal in selecting this theme was to inspire young people, students, to recognize their own power to make a difference in the world,” Eisenberg said. “To think about how they might do so now, as students, and soon, rather than later.” Brown is a two-time alumna of Eastern Michigan University. After earning her Bachelor’s of Science in Communication and Social Work in 2011, she returned to EMU and completed her Master’s of Social Work in 2022. After becoming the youngest member to be elected to the city council



Ann Eisenberg, dean of Eastern Michigan's Honors College, laughs while answering student questions with Ypsilanti Mayor Nicole Brown.
Natalie Kyle / The Eastern Echo in 2014, Brown went on to become the first Black woman to serve as mayor of Ypsilanti when she was elected in 2022. During the lecture, Brown encouraged students to be bold and embrace opportunity. “Be courageous enough to step into rooms where you may be the only person who looks like you,” Brown said. “Do not shrink to fit into places you’ve already outgrown. So when the world tells you to quiet down, stay in line or be realistic, don’t.” Students eagerly participated in the Q&A session at the end of Brown’s lecture. Several questions were asked regarding Brown’s experiences as mayor and the civic opportunities available for college students. Brown explained that an entry-level way for students to get involved in the Ypsilanti community is to join one of the city’s numerous boards and commissions. Notably, this included Ypsilanti’s new Ad-Hoc Tenants’ Rights Subcommittee. Recently approved on Tuesday, Sept. 23, the committee has been formed to promote safe renting and address housing instability. Brown said the new committee is seeking Ypsilanti renters to participate in crafting tenants’ rights

and holding landlords accountable. Those seeking to participate on boards and commissions can visit the City of Ypsilanti’s website and complete an online application. Notably, the digital presence of the Ad-Hoc Tenants’ Rights Subcommittee is still under development. Brown also mentioned that students can get involved in their communities by attending city council meetings and giving public comment. She emphasized that students and community members are always welcome to contact her and her colleagues with questions, comments or concerns. When asked for the single most important takeaway she hopes students and community members would learn from her lecture, Brown reemphasized the importance of bravery. “Do not let fear deter you from your passions, or the things that you don’t know are yet your passions,” Brown said. “Because if I had let fear stop me from running for city council, I wouldn’t be here today.” The next Star Lecture, titled “Set the North on Fire,” will be given by Peter Blackmer, associate professor of Africology and African American studies at EMU. Blackmer will explore the history of the Northern Student Movement, a student-led civil rights activist organization founded in 1961. The upcoming lecture will be held Wednesday, Oct. 22, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Students and community members are invited to attend the lecture in Sill Hall, Room 124, or participate virtually through Zoom.

EMU repair coach Sydney Schimmel returns, ready to patch up community needs

*Ky'anna Coats
Staff Writer* The Halle Fix-It-Hub has finalized its new schedule. Oct. 2 will serve as the first clinic this semester where students can get help repairing what’s broken. One member of the repair team will be Sydney Schimmel, a previous student repair coach who said she is ready to return and share her expertise. “I gained confidence in my skills just because somebody needed help, and I was the only one able to help them,” Schimmel said. At the Halle Fix-It-Hub, Eastern Michigan University community members have the opportunity to bring in damaged items and receive the needed guidance, working alongside coaches, to repair those items themselves. The coaches are ready to help with repairs for bikes, toys, electronics, clothing and more. The clinic is scheduled from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at Eastern’s Halle Library. The Oct. 2 event is the first of four scheduled for the fall semester. Schimmel specializes in jewelry and sewing repairs but it didn’t begin that

way. “I told them I don’t know how to sew,” Schimmel said. “I only knew one stitch, but I ended up using that one stitch to fix it.” Schimmel has a long background in creative expression. Majoring in art and psychology with a minor in creative writing, she also has an art business. Free Sun Spirit LLC is her five-year-old business that specializes in jewelry, digital art and woodwork. Actively trying new mediums, she said she wants to continue making jewelry and poetry as she works toward becoming a spiritual life coach and massage therapist. The Halle Fix-It Hub events have become another outlet for her to explore new skills. “I’ve gotten better at sewing through trial and error, realizing that it actually worked more often than not,” Schimmel said. Schimmel has been a coach since Halle Fix-It-Hub’s events began more than a year ago. She encourages more students to participate. All of the events are approved for learning beyond the classroom credits, group three. “I know that everyone has a hole in something or a zipper that needs



Sydney Schimmel, center, helps a student repair a coat at the very first Halle Fix-It Hub, held Feb. 18, 2024, alongside a librarian repair coach, at right, in the Halle Creative Studio. *Courtesy of Halle Librarian, Michael Barnes* fixing,” Schimmel said. All Fix-It-Hub events are held in the Halle Creative Studio, room 115. Most clinics include a mix of three student and librarian repair coaches available to help. Due to varying skillsets, Schimmel said, whenever she wasn’t able to help a participant, another coach was. “It’s a resource that not many people know about and could really be beneficial for a lot of students,” Schimmel said. “I really like the Fix-It-Hubs because it reduces waste, the cost

of buying things new, and you don’t have to pay someone to fix it.” The Halle Fix-It-Hub is continually looking for more repair coaches with different areas of expertise. The sign-up sheet is available on its website. **Future Halle Fix-It-Hub Event Dates:**

- Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025
- Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025
- Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025

 All events are open to students, faculty and staff.

What's the Move?

Sept. 30 - Oct. 6
*Israel Shriki
Staff Writer*

A2Y Chamber Event: Taste & Shop in Ypsilanti, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025 The 14th annual YpsiTasty Grub Crawl or Shop Local event comes to town on Tuesday. Students who want to experience Ypsilanti through its food and historic zones, or just to support local businesses, can get a little taste of everything in one evening. The event runs from 4 to 8 p.m. Vendors will operate in three areas: downtown Ypsilanti, Depot Town and Cross Street. A list of participating restaurants and shops is updated regularly on the A2Y website. Among the vendors are Insomnia Cookies, Plant-Based Coneys, Bitter Truth BBQ, Earthen Jar, Tap Room and the Ypsilanti Food Co-op. Live music will be provided by the Flaunt Love Trio with Dan DahSoulman Carter. Participants who are interested in traveling from one zone to another can use the Golden Limousine Trolley, which will be operating all evening, transporting participants from one area to the other areas. Ticket prices are \$25, or \$15 for students. Tickets for children ages 6-15 are \$10. Children 5 and younger are admitted free. Each ticket includes the ability to taste options at multiple vendors. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the A2Y website.

Ypsi Fine Arts Club, Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025 The Riverside’s Ypsi Fine Art Club welcomes the public to visit or participate in its next exhibit night gathering, from 5 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday. Artists, art lovers and people of the community are welcome to join and see the artworks displayed. The gatherings are held the first and third Wednesday of each month at the Riverside Art Center, 76 North Huron in Ypsilanti. Artists who are interested can present up to two of their original artworks during the event. **Freak Fest, Friday to Sunday, Oct. 3-5, 2025** Dance and music lovers can join three days and nights of live bands as the weekend event known as Freak Fest takes over Ypsilanti. Wyrd Byrd Ypsi, Ziggy’s and other music venues plan to host multiple performances in different downtown Ypsilanti locations. For more information, visit the Freak Fest Facebook page.

Trash Talk Tour 5th Annual Celebration: Volunteering Opportunities, Friday to Sunday, Oct. 3-5, 2025 ZeroWaste.Org, based in Ann Arbor, and the Washtenaw Zero Waste Coalition are hosting their fifth annual 3T or Trash Talk Tour from Friday to Sunday and are looking for volunteers. The two sustainability organizations create opportunities for people to gather and act to protect the globe. The weekend kicks off at 3 p.m. Friday with a community cleanup at the University of Michigan central campus. The next tour stops include a clothing swap at the Ypsilanti Farmers MarketPlace at 9 a.m. Saturday, a tour of Recycle Ann Arbor’s operations at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, a Gleaning Food Rescue Event at 10 a.m. Sunday at the Green Things Farm Collective and the Zero Waste Fall Festival at the Kiwanis Thrift Sale starting at noon Sunday. For more options on the tour, visit the Trash Talk Tour website. Volunteers will assist with welcoming participants, organizing activities and ensuring the event goes to plan. Students and anyone who are interested in volunteering need to sign up for a role in a specific spot. For more information, see registration information online or contact Lydia McMullen-Laird through the same page link or through the Zero Waste organization website *Editor’s note: Have an item for What’s the Move? Send it to calendar@easternecho.com.*

What to know about EMU’s Board of Regents

Lilly Kujawski
News Reporter

Ever wonder how tuition costs are determined or how important decisions on campus are made? The Board of Regents, Eastern Michigan University’s governing body, is responsible for key operations at EMU, many of which may affect students’ lives.

Here’s what students should know about the regents and what they do at EMU.

How are regents appointed?

There are eight regents on the board, including a chairperson and vice chair. Regents are appointed by the Michigan governor and serve eight-year terms, as set by the State of Michigan Constitution. The candidates selected by the governor must also be approved by the Michigan senate.

Most recently, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer appointed two new regents, Sean Gray and Jenita Moore, who began their terms this year.

There are no explicit term limits imposed on the regents. Regent terms are staggered with no more than two expiring in the same year, according to Michigan’s Constitution.

What do the regents do?

Michigan’s Constitution grants the board “general supervision of the institution and the control and direction of all expenditures from the institution’s funds.” Additionally, the regents also have the power to elect the university’s president.

The regents make decisions on campus ranging from policies to the cost of tuition. The regents appoint

or remove personnel, make decisions about academic programs, approve contracts and budgets, confer degrees, vote on capital projects, and make other decisions about the day-to-day operations of the university.

EMU policies, from the student code of conduct to the college’s mission statement, are approved by the Board of Regents.

Additionally, the regents sit on board committees, including the Finance and Investment Committee, the Educational Policies Committee, the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Student Affairs Committee, the Athletic Affairs Committee, the Personnel and Compensation Committee and the Audit Committee. Regents can also serve on the EMU Foundation Board of Trustees and the Eagle Administrative Services Board.

Who are the regents at EMU?

There are eight regents on the board. Nathan Ford is the board chairman and was appointed by Gov. Whitmer in 2020. His current term expires in 2028. Marques Thomey, vice chairman of the board, was appointed by Whitmer in 2023. His current term expires in 2030.

Sean Gray was appointed by Whitmer in 2024. His current term expires in 2032. Michael Hawkes was first appointed in 2011 by former Gov. Rick Snyder and then reappointed. His current term expires in 2026.

Jessie Kimbrough was appointed by Whitmer in 2020. Her current term expires in 2028. Jenita Moore was appointed by Whitmer in 2024. Her current term expires in 2032.

Chad Newton was appointed by Whitmer in 2021 to fill the remainder of



Board of Regents meet for their regular board meeting at Welch Hall on Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023. Aaron Hughes / The Eastern Echo

former regent Rich Baird’s term. That term ends in 2026. Anupam Chugh Sidhu was appointed by Whitmer in 2023. Her current term expires in 2030.

How to attend a meeting

The EMU Board of Regents meets a minimum of four times a year, according to the board’s bylaws. As a public body, the Board of Regents are bound by Michigan’s Open Meeting Act. That means whenever a quorum, or a majority of appointed regents, meets, the meeting must be open to the public, with proper notice provided.

In some cases, the Board of Regents may hold closed sessions. Closed sessions are allowed for a public body to discuss certain sensitive matters

such as dismissal or suspension of an employee or negotiations of a collective bargaining agreement, according to Michigan law. However, decisions must be made during an open session.

The EMU board typically meets every other month. The next Board of Regents meeting, and first one of the fall semester, will be on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 2 p.m. The meeting will be held in Welch Hall, room 201. The meeting will also be live-streamed on EMU’s YouTube channel.

How to make a public comment

Anyone who wishes to address the board with a public comment must fill out the “Request to Address the Board of Regents” form located on the EMU

board of regents website and submit it at least 24 hours before the meeting begins. Additionally, the form can be submitted to the vice president and secretary of the board at room 207 in Welch Hall.

The number of speakers allowed to make public comments at a meeting is limited to the first 10 individuals who sign up. Public comments occur during the “communications” portion of the meeting agenda, which is limited to 30 minutes. Each person will be allowed to speak for three minutes.

Call 734-487-2410 for questions about dates, times and locations of meetings.

How to start a student organization at EMU



Many students and student organizations participate in EMU’s EagleFest as an opportunity to participate in campus life and recruit new members. Courtesy of Campus Life

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

With over 150 student organizations on Eastern Michigan University’s campus, there’s a group for everybody, but if someone can’t find exactly what they’re looking for, they can always start their own.

Gathering the team

The first step is to find two other people to be executive board members and one professor or staff member to be an advisor.

The E-Board members must have specific titles and roles, including one president and two of the following based on the organization’s need: vice president, treasurer, social media coordinator, member at large and more.

If there are complications in finding an advisor, the student can reach out to Campus Life for support.

Establishing the rules

The next step is to develop a constitution and bylaws.

These are very important to state the mission of the group and the specific jobs each board member needs to accomplish.

If there are ever problems within the organization, the students can refer

back to the bylaws.

A template for these laws can be found on the “Start an Org” page under “Resources” on the EMU Campus Life website.

Standing out

The third step is submitting the application to Campus Life, detailing why this organization should exist and why it’s different from other groups that may be similar. With so many organizations on campus already, it’s important to differentiate new ones.

Juniper Bamrick, Campus Life coordinator, said competition is not good for student organizations, and a new one will not be successful if it’s too similar to an existing one.

In order to make sure any new ideas are different enough, check out the group profiles on Eagle Sync. While submitting the application, the E-Board and advisor forms also need to be filled out and submitted.

Making a mark

The last step of the process is having a new student organization meeting with a Campus Life staff member. This explains the resources Campus Life offers and how they can help if the group needs anything.

Traditionally, student organizations

are defined as a group run by students, for students.

The organizations are generally placed into two different categories. One is interest based, centered around a hobby, game, book, genre, fandom, anything that people like. The other type is centered around an identity, such as race, gender or sexuality.

“Having a community or a passion is a great reason to start an org,” Bamrick said.

However, if starting a whole new organization seems like too daunting of a task, students can form a subcommittee within an existing organization. As long as the student leaders of the group are okay with it, subcommittees can be formed without any registration at all.

“Subcommittees are a great way to test things,” Bamrick said. “If the subcommittee gains enough members, then eventually it can form its own organization.”

There are many benefits to being registered as an official organization according to the EMU Campus Life website: a \$300 fund that can go to supplies or custom merchandise, meeting rooms, storage space, getting shoutouts on Loop and having a table at EagleFest.



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Eastern Michigan football drops MAC opener to Central Michigan, 24-13



Eastern Michigan running back Dontae McMillan struts into the open field during the team's win against ULL on Sept. 20, 2025. Julius Stewart / The Eastern Echo

Caleb Henderson
Sports Editor

Another trip to Mount Pleasant—another loss for the Eastern Michigan football team.

The Eagles had lost seven straight games in Kelly/Shorts Stadium prior to Saturday afternoon, with that losing streak extending to eight after the team's 24-13 loss to Central Michigan to kick off their 50th season of conference play.

Eastern Michigan's defensive woes continued throughout the early portions of the action by allowing three straight touchdown drives to their in-state foes by the time the clock had reached 10:46 in the second quarter, a hole the road team would fail to dig themselves out of the rest of the way.

During the opening 30 minutes, five explosive (20+ yard) plays encompassed the domination from the Chippewas on the offensive side of the ball. The home team held a 21-6 lead heading into halftime thanks to major contributions from Central Michigan's gadget quarterback Angel Flores and halfback Nahree Biggins.

Flores would lead all players in rushing with 22 carries for 135 yards, in addition to throwing a two yard touchdown pass. Biggins contributed 113 yards on the ground himself, including a 49 yard touchdown. As a whole, the Chippewas racked up 308 yards rushing on the day, which was more than double EMU's total of 123.

Eastern Michigan would outscore Central Michigan in the second half 7-3, but by then the damage was

already done.

Rudy Kessinger's missed field goal late in the fourth quarter proved to be the green and white's final nail in the coffin. The Chippewas executed a perfect four minute offensive game plan to run out the remainder of the game clock, winning new head coach Matt Drinkall's first conference opener at the helm.

Noah Kim put a rushing touchdown on the board for the third straight week, but also tossed an interception for the third straight game, finishing with a season low of 176 passing yards.

Dontae McMillan added 71 yards on the ground on 14 carries, while Tavierre Dunlap contributed 34 yards of his own. Benson Prosper was the Eagles' leading receiver with 38 yards on three catches.

For the second straight week, Terry Lockett Jr. was shut down by the opposing secondary, tallying a season low single catch for just four yards. Teams continue to key in on "The Deuce" and neutralize the early season connection between the high-profile receiver and Noah Kim.

With the win, Central Michigan improves to 3-2 on the season and 1-0 in conference play, while Eastern Michigan drops to 1-4 in 2025 and 0-1 in the Mid-American Conference.

Next week, the Eagles take another road trip with a trek out to Buffalo, New York, for their second conference game against the Buffalo Bulls. Viewers can stream all of the action live on ESPN+ on Oct. 4, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

The Echo Q&A Series: Coach Megan Cunningham builds synergy for women's basketball



Assistant Women's Basketball Coach Megan Cunningham, second from the right, cheers her team from the sidelines in this photo from the 2024-25 season. EMU Athletic Department

Josh Cromwell
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: The Eastern Echo staff meets regularly with interesting people on and off campus. Engage in those conversations with us through our weekly Q&A report.

Megan Cunningham is an assistant coach on Head Coach Sahar Nusseibeh's women's basketball staff at Eastern Michigan University. Transferring from Canisius University with her head coach ahead of the 2024-25 season, Cunningham is back for her second year as an Eagle. She said she is excited to share the hard work and dedication the staff and players have put in to be the best team they can be.

With years of experience under her belt, Cunningham said she hopes the culture the team has worked hard to create will be showcased this upcoming

2025-26 season. Other assistant coaches on the team shared the same sentiment, explaining that they believe this team has a go-getter mentality.

Q: How long have you been coaching?

A: 2018-19 was my first season in college basketball, so what would that be? Probably about seven years now. This season is my eighth year.

Q: Only being in your second year here at Eastern, what interested you about the EMU position?

A: Well, Shareese [Ulis] and I, we came with Coach Sahar from our previous school. We believe in her as a coach, and there were quite a few reasons behind our move. Overall, I think it was a lot of opportunities that we didn't have at our previous institution, not just for us as a staff, but for our players. We have had an

opportunity here to provide resources to our players both on the court and off of it.

Q: Following your head coach is a big deal; there must have been something about being a part of her staff that drove you to make the move with her. What was it about being on Coach Sahar's staff that clicked for you?

A: It's hard to summarize everything that makes Coach Sahar such a great coach. I would say the main one, though, is her ability to create an environment for us as an entire program to thrive on and off the court. She cares about each one of us; that doesn't stop when you get off the court. Not every coach is good at creating that type of environment.

Q: I know last season the team went 2-27, and it was the first year for

the staff. What is the key difference about the team from last year?

A: We have had a big overhaul within our team foundationally and worked towards creating the team culture we want. This year we were able to build our team based on that. Everyone is really working towards the same goal. These girls are in it together and focused on winning as a team.

Q: This season's team has basically been built from the ground up with only two players returning. How did you guys go about establishing this team?

A: Our major thing was recognizing what types of young women and players that we wanted to bring together as a team and build a culture around... [that] is kind of the starting block of how this team developed. Once we found that, it was a clear vision of how we have to move from there. The players we have this year are hungry for wins and all about supporting each other.

Q: One more wrap up question: why should EMU fans come out and support the team this year?

A: There's just synergy this season. They're a great group of players... and there's just this connection. Not only have we brought on new talent, but they all really want to work for it and connect with the community.

The Eastern Michigan University women's basketball team will start off their season by playing the University of Louisiana-Monroe Monday, Nov. 3, 2025. Viewers can follow the team's first game on ESPN+.

The first home game for the EMU women's basketball team will take place Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025, at the Gervin Game Above Center. Tickets for any of the 13 home games can be purchased online through Eastern Athletics at emueagles.event.net. Tickets range from \$10 for general admission to \$30 for courtside seats.

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales: Sept. 30- Oct. 06

Caleb Henderson
Sports Editor

With fall sports in full swing, here's a look at some of this week's top stories from Eastern Michigan University's various athletic disciplines.

Football | Eastern Michigan continues MAC play with road trip to Buffalo

After last week's defeat to in-state foe Central Michigan opened Eastern Michigan football's 50th season of Mid-American Conference play, the Eagles hit the road again this weekend to take on the University at Buffalo Bulls.

The Bulls have had the green and white's number in recent years, with the Eagles holding a 1-4 record to Buffalo since 2018. The one win scored by Eastern Michigan came on the road in Buffalo during the 2023 campaign, when the Eagles won 24-11.

Last year, the Bulls returned the favor and knocked off Eastern Michigan at home, 37-20.

Viewers can stream all of the action live on ESPN+ Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025, with kickoff scheduled for 3:30 p.m.

Volleyball | Eastern Michigan loses opening two conference bouts to WMU, NIU

Following an 8-5 non-conference portion of the season, Eastern Michigan's volleyball team carried on the momentum into MAC play, hoping to continue their early season trajectory in alignment with the 2018 squad — one that won the MAC Tournament.

However, the Eagles have now fallen in back-to-back matches to open conference play, with a Sept. 25, 2025, loss to Western Michigan University by a score of 3-1, and another to Northern Illinois University on Sept. 26 in a clean sweep.

Now having to dig their way out of a 0-2 hole to begin conference play, the green and white look to regroup during their first home matches in nearly a month. The team will shoot their shot again during back-to-back days of action against Bowling Green University on Friday, Oct. 3, 2025, at 6 p.m., and the University of Toledo on Saturday, Oct. 4, at 4 p.m.

Both matches will be available for streaming live on ESPN+.

Soccer | Eastern Michigan drops first conference match against Miami (OH), 1-0

The Eastern Michigan women's soccer team is now 2-1 in MAC play following a 1-0 defeat on the road to Miami (OH) on Sept. 25, 2025.

Eastern's loss dropped them to a four-way tie for second place in the conference, with a critical stretch of games against Ohio University, Bowling Green University and Ball State University still to come over the next 11 days.

Viewers can stream the action against Bowling Green on Sunday, Oct. 5, 2025, at 1 p.m. and Ball State on Thursday, Oct. 9, at 3 p.m. live on ESPN+.

Women's Golf | Eastern Michigan returns to action in Oklahoma Intercollegiate

Following a seventh place finish in last week's Golfweek Red Sky Classic, the Eastern Michigan women's golf program returns to action on Oct. 6-7 at 9 a.m. in the Oklahoma Intercollegiate.

The return of the Leovao sisters is highly anticipated for this matchup, with Janae and Jasmine returning from their foray into the LPGA Q School Pre-Qualifier to re-join the squad and help the team revert back to their winning ways to start the campaign.

In their absence, returning sophomore Savannah de Bock led the way by posting a 207 in the previous tournament; the second lowest score in program history to tie for fifth individually in the tournament and helping the team gain 10 spots in the final standings over the final two days of the Red Sky Classic.

EMU Theatre takes audiences to Mount Olympus in 'The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical'

Josh Cromwell
Staff Writer

Eastern Michigan University's theater department is no stranger to tackling big and fun projects, including the upcoming performance of "The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical."

"The scope of this project is huge," said show director Pam Cardell. "We have a cast of 18, nine understudies, 40 plus crew members, and a creative design team bringing this to life."

Adapted from the bestselling novel "Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief" by author Rick Riordan, the musical follows a boy who discovers that his father is a Greek god. Consequently, the son, Percy, must embark on a quest unlike any other to bring peace to Mount Olympus.

After learning that he is the son of a legendary god, Percy Jackson finds himself at a camp meant to teach and foster the talent these children of the gods possess. Camp Half-Blood becomes home for Percy and many others who are part of a community

tucked within the mortal realm to keep them safe from otherworldly dangers.

Cardell, assistant managing director in the university's School of Communication, Media and Theatre Arts, said taking on a feat such as Percy Jackson is no small task. Due to the amount of training the cast had to do, auditions and casting were completed in the spring of this year rather than in fall, which is the usual show scheduling.

Much of the story involves fight scenes, which Cardell said require complicated choreography. The actors have gone to great lengths to learn those moves, spending hours practicing on and off the stage.

"The cast had a 'Camp Half-Blood' day in July to do some bonding and learn some fight choreography basics," Cardell said. "The cast spent four days learning all the music, and then eight days learning all of the blocking, dance choreography and fight choreography."

Fans of the book series will recognize the characters and plot of the original story, but this show will offer a few new unexpected twists and turns. Rest assured, the cast and crew have

worked to incorporate as many easter eggs as possible for fans of the original series, show organizers said.

"The Lightning Thief" cast will present five shows at the Legacy Theatre on campus beginning Thursday, Oct. 2. That includes 7 p.m. performances Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 2-4; and 2 p.m. matinees Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 4 and 5. Tickets are available through the university's online box office, on the show's web page or on the EMU Theatre Facebook page.

The show was designed for all audiences and includes surprises for everyone, organizers said. The theater department team that selected the show said the musical was a great choice.

"We were looking for a musical that both college students and our general audience members would enjoy," the team said in an announcement on the choice of the musical. "The themes of this show seemed particularly fitting, young people discovering the power within themselves, celebrating what makes us unique, friendship, and young people working together to take on the 'monsters' in our world."



Cast and crew for EMU Theatre's Production of "The Lightning Thief: A Percy Jackson Musical" run through an onstage rehearsal at the university's Legacy Theatre on Friday, Sept. 26. Courtesy of EMU Theatre

The Echo Q&A Series: Kristin Danko, Executive Director of Neighborhood Theatre Group



An actor from The Neighborhood Theater Group based in Ypsilanti performs during one of its Black Cat shows at The Back Office Studio in downtown Ypsilanti. Courtesy of The Neighborhood Theatre Group

Matt Hodges
Staff Writer

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The performing arts scene in Ypsilanti goes beyond EMU Theatre. In the heart of the city, just behind Ziggy's, lies the Back Office Studio, a coworking space that also houses the Neighborhood Theatre Group.

Kristin Danko is the executive producer and founder of Neighborhood Theatre Group. In a conversation with *The Echo*, Danko reflects on the origin of the company, how it's grown over the years, and its plans for the future.

Q: How did Neighborhood Theatre Group get its start?

A: It was founded in 2015 by myself and my partner Aaron Dean. We were actors in Chicago, and we moved here in 2013 because I wanted to start a theater company. We came here because of the arts administration master's program at Eastern. So, I came here, went to grad school. We weren't gonna stay, but we fell in love with Ypsi, so we ended up staying here and our first show was my graduate thesis project.

Q: What was that first show?

A: It's called "Beaver's Long Strange Trip." It's a musical about the 1950s television show "Leave it to Beaver." We set it two or three years after the show ended, so Beaver went to college, and Wally went off to fight in the Vietnam war.

Q: How have you seen the group grow over the years?

A: It's been insane. When we first started there was a core group of seven or eight of us. We slowly grew that core group to about 15. We were growing really well, and then the pandemic happened. So, it was really rough. The pandemic happened in our fifth season. We were on kind of a growth spurt, but then things got dicey for a while. But then after the pandemic we came back and kind of restructured—and the structure we have right now has allowed for more local theater artists to join.

Now we have 60 members. We've also started a film branch called NTG films, and they've done a few music videos and shorts. We also hold artist mixers every other month for multidisciplinary artists to come together and connect. We also teach classes. We're teaching a playwriting class that's running right now, and we're launching a beginning acting class in the winter.

Q: How can somebody who's interested join?

A: You can come and volunteer and see if you dig it. If you wanna get involved backstage, you can send me an email and I'll put you in contact with our technical director. If you're interested in acting, come audition! Our next round of auditions will be coming up either at the end of December or January.

Q: Are any of your members students or alumni from Eastern?

A: We have recently gotten a lot more graduates. When we first started there weren't many, but now we have a lot of EMU alum, which is exciting.

Q: What's your next show?

A: Our next one's called Black Cat Folklore. We have a Halloween show called Black Cat. It used to be a cabaret production and now we've evolved it into our Halloween show. This one's based on folk horror, and it's devised, which means it's written

from scratch by our ensemble. We basically started this summer. We had no script when we first met in June and now, we have a full script and a full show. It's gonna be more immersive — think of campfire stories. It's gonna be very Halloweeny and spooky.

Q: What's your favorite show that you've done?

A: There's a show we're doing in December called "A Man for Christmas," which is the third time we're doing the show. It is a parody of Hallmark Christmas movies. Me and Aaron wrote it back in 2019, and it's such a hoot. It's always fun to bring it back, I think a lot of people need laughter, especially during the holidays. We don't redo shows very often, but it's a fan favorite.

Q: What's it like producing a show from scratch?

A: It's not easy, but it is. It's a lot of hard work, but the effort just shows in the work. It's

so cool when people come together and make something original that you can only see here.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

A: Come see a show! It's really fun, it's in a really unique space, and I'd like to get more folks to come. Our space is limited, and we do tend to sell out some of our shows. Also, you can check us out on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok. We also have a Patreon if you want to see the behind the scenes and a lot of exclusive content as well.

Black Cat Folklore performances are scheduled for Oct. 17-19 and 23-25, with shows at 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday. The show will be held at Back Office Studio, 13 N. Washington St. Tickets are \$20 at the door, \$15 online, and \$12 for students. More information about upcoming shows and auditions can be found on the Neighborhood Theatre Group's website.

Cellar Roots


Volume 52


Deadline
Dec. 13


An annual fine arts / literary magazine that highlights student artists and provides a platform to publish creative works. Features 2D & 3D artwork, written works, and more.

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The Presentation | Julia Bartlett, Comics Artist



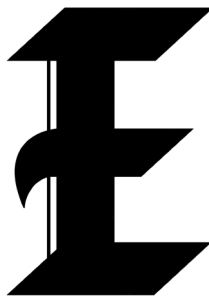
Moonlight 11-1 | FunkyL0af, Comics Artist



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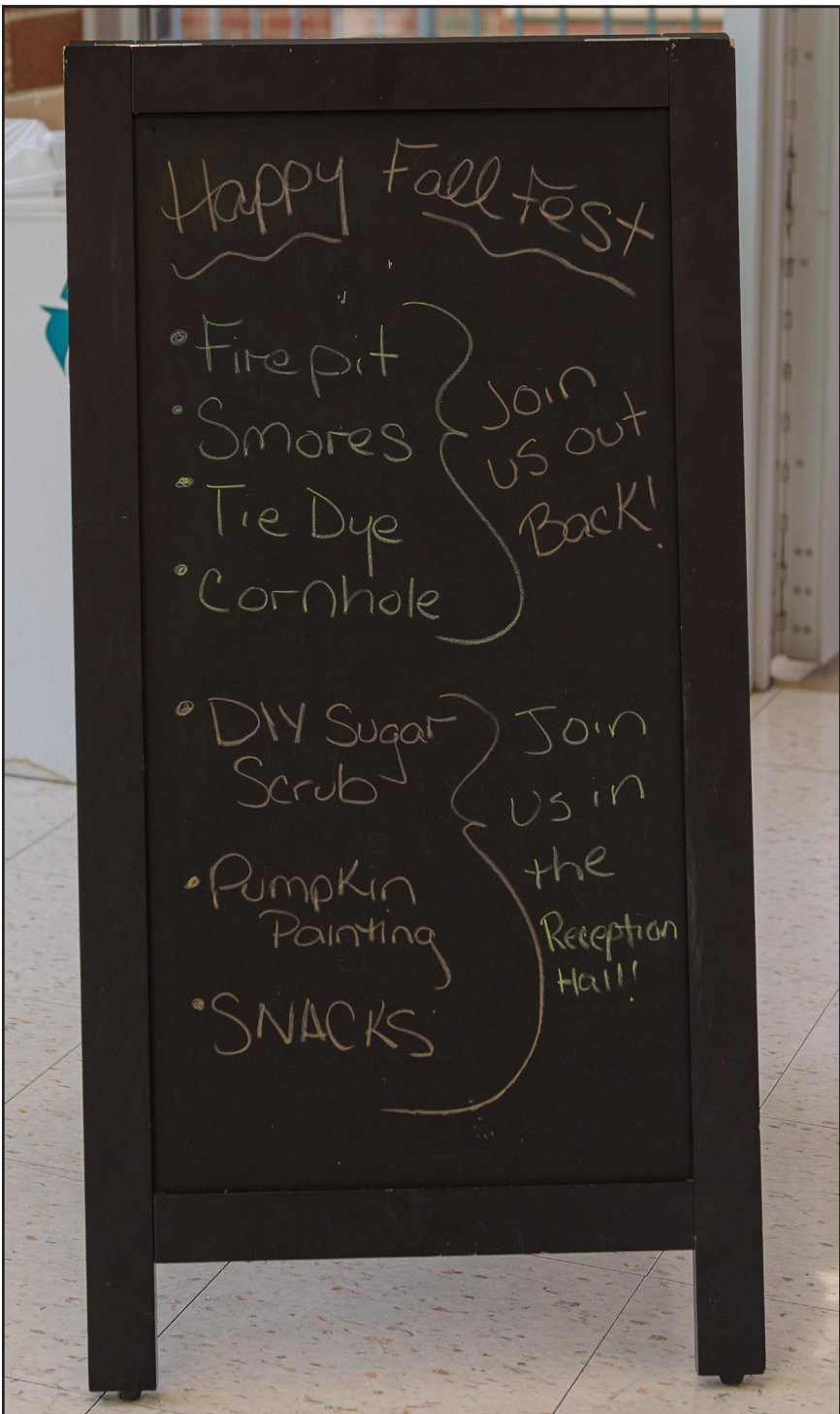
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Students partake in autumnal activities at annual Honors College Fall Fest



The sign listing activities at the Eastern Michigan University Honors College Fall Fest event on Friday, Sept. 16.

Photo Gallery by Kaleb Stanley

The Honors College of Eastern Michigan University is back again with its annual Fall Fest. This year's Fall Fest 2025 featured s'mores, bonfires, DIY sugar rubs, pumpkin painting and other activities.

The event allowed students to unwind, hang out with friends and enjoy the fall spirit. The event was held at the Honors College Reception Hall and the back parking lot Friday, Sept. 26.



A close-up of a student painting a pumpkin green at the Honors College Fall Fest. Pumpkin painting is one of many activities participants could engage in at the event.



The raffle basket on the event information table.



Joe Garriss runs the Engage@EMU booth.



Victoria and Rubi Shields make sugar rubs.