

Photos: Election Day in Ypsilanti

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Eagles triumph in season opener

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Voters participate in the midterm elections on Nov. 3 at the Eastern Michigan University Honors College polling location. *Maddy Makin / The Eastern Echo*

Ypsilanti voters reflect on casting ballots as Michigan sees record turnout

Kate Stephenson
News Reporter

More than 4.8 million Michigan voters cast a ballot in the past week's election, including voters in Ypsilanti.

The number of ballots cast marked an uptick from the 4.5 million in the 2022 midterms, reported unofficial state results.

Typically, midterm election voter turnout is significantly lower than years when the country's future president is on the ballot. This midterm, voters flocked to cast their ballots. In Washtenaw County, voter turnout was 71.90% — 5.72% higher than it was in 2024, a presidential election year, showed unofficial election results.

Voting was open at the Eastern Michigan University Honors College between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Election Day. The campus building served as the voting location for residents living in Ward 2, Precinct 4 and Ward 3, Precinct 1. *The Echo* spoke with voters at this polling location about their experience casting a vote this year.

Regarding the qualities they look for in a candidate, voters agreed on principles of integrity and action. However, voters varied in the specific policies and beliefs they look for.

Brittney Donaldson, an EMU alumna and current Ypsilanti City resident, said she looks for a candidate who is honest and runs on policy. Donaldson said she felt it was her duty as a Black woman to exercise her right to vote, especially because her ancestors did not have the same opportunity.

Donaldson said she has voted at the Honors College for the last four elections and has had a consistently smooth experience each time.

Ruby Brewis, a resident of Ypsilanti, said she looks for a candidate who is "generally anti-billionaire, pro-socialism, supportive of free healthcare and pro-Palestine."

Brewis said she has been consistently voting since 2022, and has had positive experiences in the polls.

Liz Street, an EMU student, said she looks for a candidate who is not "butt-old." She said as a queer person herself, she looks for candidates that support LGBTQ+ rights. She said she also looks for candidates that support free healthcare and abortion rights.

"I'm so sick of everything, and I need to see a change," Street said of her motivations for voting.

Gabrielle Walker, an EMU student, said she looks for a candidate who matches her values, which she described as very left-leaning; she seeks proponents of policies that benefit the majority of people. She said she has voted at the Honors College since she was 18 and has always had a smooth experience. Walker is very grateful to be able to vote, she said.

April Tate, a city of Ypsilanti resident, said she looks for a candidate that will do the most good for the city. She said she believes it is good for people to vote. Tate has been voting for over 20 years, but this was only her third time voting at the Honors College location, she said. She said she had a good experience and received help from the poll workers.

Jonathan Frontier, a city of Ypsilanti resident, said he looks for candidates that display integrity and honesty. He has been voting for about 20 years but said this was his first time voting at the Honors College. He said his experience at the polls was positive.

"It was great," he said. "Everyone was really helpful and timely, considering how many people were in there."

Mary Seelhorst, who has been a poll worker at the Honors College for the past six years, said she was surprised by the voter turnout this year.

"Compared to [past] midterms, this is a lot," she said. "I was not expecting this many people. It's a lot more than the normal amount."

Absentee voting was the most popular way to cast a ballot in Michigan this year, with 1,854,506 absentee ballots sent in, reported unofficial state election results. 750,448 ballots were cast in person during the state's early voting period, while 1,804,124 ballots were cast in person on Election Day.

University picks Laura Reynolds as new provost

Lilly Kujawski
Editor-in-Chief

On Nov. 5, Eastern Michigan University announced that Laura K. Reynolds will assume the position of provost and executive vice president, effective Dec. 15. Reynolds currently serves as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville, reported an article from EMU Today. The article said that the University of Wisconsin-Platteville has maintained an 82% first-year retention rate and obtained a 92% graduate placement rate. Enrollment and retention has been a focus area for EMU.

"Eastern Michigan has a strong foundation in applied learning, and I see tremendous opportunity to build on it," Reynolds said in a written statement. "I look forward to working with faculty, staff and industry partners to create more opportunities for students to put their knowledge into practice, participate in research and internships, and develop the skills and connections that will serve them throughout their lives. Higher education is extremely competitive, but we compete for the very best thing: making students' lives better and making Michigan stronger."

Currently, David Schecter has served as interim provost since appointed by EMU President Brendan Kelly in May. In an email announcement of his interim appointment, Kelly said Schecter would serve as interim provost without the option to apply for the permanent position. His last day at EMU will be Dec. 14.

EMU Regent Anupam Chugh Sidhu said in the EMU Today article that the university received 157 applicants for the provost position before hiring Reynolds.

"The committee undertook a thorough and thoughtful review process, conducting interviews and narrowing the pool to six finalists for the President's consideration. President Kelly then invited four candidates to campus for candidate forums with faculty, staff, and students, who asked questions and provided feedback," Sidhu said in a written statement. "I appreciate the campus community's strong engagement in the selection process for this important role."

Political science professors weigh in on newly gained Democratic control of Congress

Hannah Borders
News Reporter

After two years of a Republican majority, Democrats took back control of both congressional chambers following the 2026 midterm election, Associated Press reported.

This midterm election, voters across the country elected 234 Democratic candidates and 139 Republican candidates to the United States House of Representatives, making for a Democratic-led chamber with several seats still left to be called according to AP. Democrats flipped seven seats in the United States Senate, making for a 54-44 majority, with two races yet to be determined.

In an interview with *The Eastern Echo*, Eastern Michigan University political science professors Joshua Koss and Jeffrey Bernstein explained the potential impacts of the newly gained Democratic control.

Joshua Koss has expertise and interest in Congress, presidency, elections, political media and political communications. During the current fall 2026 semester, Koss teaches American Government and a political analysis of "Star Wars" course.

Jeffrey Bernstein has expertise and interest in American government and politics, campaigns and elections, and voting behavior and public opinion. During the current fall 2026 semester, Bernstein teaches Introduction to Political Analysis.

Koss and Bernstein co-taught a course, Politics in the Time of Trump, during the winter 2025 semester. The class centered around analyzing political parties and legislative-executive relations in the time of President Donald Trump's prominence.

Joshua Koss

Q: What does this election's blue wave mean for the future of our country?

A: I think it means, at the very least, for the next 2 years, you're going to have a very interesting dynamic within the federal government. You're going to have Trump with a strong opposition in both chambers of Congress. In terms of how much of this is going to curtail him, we'll see. And he's been willing to act unilaterally before, but I think this is going to make that a lot more difficult. I think that you're probably going to see a lot more investigations of the executive, and other priorities that are pushed, that are at his expense, even though he has threatened to veto a lot of things. I think that this is going to potentially cascade into 2028, as well, depending on how he responds to this in the next two years.

SEE CONGRESS, PAGE 8

The Eastern Echo

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

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THE ECHO MISSION

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

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Ypsi Real
Ypsilanti City Hall
Ypsilanti District Library
Ypsilanti Food Co-op

President Kelly delivers six-month report to EMU Board of Regents

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

At the Oct. 15, 2026 Board of Regents meeting, Eastern Michigan University President Brendan Kelly addressed university regents with a report on his first six months in office.

Kelly began by recognizing the university's women's soccer team for their best record in 13 years. He then praised EMU Theatre's play "Metamorphoses" for a sold-out weekend. Kelly said he thought it was important to acknowledge the areas where the university has a high performance.

Kelly's report started with the declining population growth in United States and how to avoid a decline in enrollment. Kelly said that one solution is to appeal to older generations and not just high school graduates. Kelly then quoted a report from 1976 about the future of EMU: "The future is likely to be most rewarding to those individuals and institutions which are best prepared to adapt to change and to changing circumstances."

"The challenges in the economy are the same now as they were then; it's just the solution that has to be different," Kelly said.

Kelly went on to discuss how he built the Division of Student Affairs to focus on student support services. Kelly then asked Vice President of Student Affairs Dwight Hamilton to give an update on how the division has been doing.

Hamilton said the execution of the Weeks of Welcome events shows the new direction that Eastern is going. He commended how many departments collaborated to make the series of events happen. There was also an increased turnout to annual events. 20% more students attended EagleFest, and twice as many students came to the first home football game than last year, Hamilton said.

"Our goal was to have students who were either new to the institution or returning to the institution coming back to an environment that was welcoming for them," Hamilton said.

Kelly congratulated Hamilton on his work and officially removed interim from his title.

Kelly then discussed his steering team led by Chris Kaufman and Maher Salah. Salah said the team has been working since the summer to design their feedback gathering process.



EMU President Brendan Kelly presents his six-month report to the Board of Regents at Oct 15 meeting. *Lauren Holloway / The Eastern Echo*

"We want to understand where we're doing well, where we need to improve, and most importantly, who we must become," Salah said.

This team has been receiving feedback from university employees, students and external stakeholders, Salah said. The next phase is to interpret the findings and create a plan to make improvements, he added.

Kelly said the team hasn't made as much progress as he would have hoped, and there is a lot of work ahead.

"If we as an institution are not willing to change what we need to change to be available today, then we risk not being available tomorrow," Kelly said.

Kelly said he is finishing evaluating candidates to be the new provost and thanked the regents that assisted him with that endeavor.

Since the meeting, Kelly has named Laura K. Reynolds as the new provost. She was appointed Nov. 5.

Kelly finished his report by reiterating a quote from a 1976 EMU document that the institutions that are best prepared for the future will be rewarded the most. Kelly said in the next six months he will be committed to making sure Eastern is that institution.

Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioners Office hosts Environmental Excellence Awards



Catie Wytychak introduces the new members of the Community Partners for Clean Streams at the Environmental Excellence Awards Ceremony on Oct. 28. *Lauren Holloway / The Eastern Echo*

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

On Oct. 28, the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office hosted the Environmental Excellence Awards Ceremony at Weber's Hotel.

Catie Wytychak, Water Quality Specialist for the Commissioner's Office, announced the new members of the Community Partners for Clean Streams. The partnership's goal is to keep the water in the community free of pollutants. The easiest way to do that, Wytychak said, is to prevent stormwater runoff from getting polluted. When rainwater flows through streets, parking lots and lawns, it picks up chemicals, pesticides and oils and carries them to nearby streams through the drainpipes. There's also a sponsorship program that awards around $1,000 to partners to build rain gardens, composting systems and other projects that improve water quality. Last year, $5,000 was given to four partners, Wytychak said.

This year four new partners were recognized: two Gretchen's House locations, Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist and the Ypsilanti Food Co-op.

Gretchen's House at HighScope and Oak Valley were recognized for their education about the environment and building rain gardens. Rain gardens are created to soak rainwater into the ground so that it doesn't collect pollutants and carry them into the drainage system.

The Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist is a Catholic congregation started in 1997; the motherhouse is located on Warren Road. The congregation cares for a large plot of land and is in the process of building a rain garden.

Ypsi Food Co-op is the only non-profit food store in Ypsi, and its bakery is 100% powered by renewable energy. The shop is working on restoring its rain garden, Wytychak said.

"We really appreciate that you are not just talking the talk, but you are truly walking the walk," Wytychak said.

Chloe Pine, the materials management specialist for the Commissioner's Office, announced the new partners with Waste Knot. The Waste Knot program is to help local businesses, schools and organizations reduce their waste and increase recycling practices. Waste Knot was started in the early '90s; now, there are nearly 200 partners throughout the county, Pine said.

Five new partners were recognized at the awards ceremony: Bug Stuff, C'mon Betty, House N2 Home, Gretchen's House in Dhu Varren and Dexter Township.

Bug Stuff Compost and Garden of Ypsilanti uses innovative composting methods to divert organic materials from the landfill, Pine said.

C'mon Betty in Ypsilanti creates artisanal relishes using watermelon rinds.

House N2 Home of Ypsilanti helps people transition out of homelessness and repairs and reuses furniture that would otherwise end up in the landfill, Pine said.

Gretchen's House in Dhu Varren and Dexter Township were recognized both for being a part of Waste Knot and Community Partners for Clean Streams.

Gretchen Driskill, the water resources commissioner, announced the Environmental Excellence Awards. The Huron River Chain of Lakes Association won the Excellence in Water Quality Protection award. The association spans nine lakes, all connected by the Huron River, where the organization works to preserve and protect the lakes, Driskill said.

The Allegra Marketing Print Mail company won the Excellence in Waste Reduction and Recycling award. In 2025, it recycled 45.72 tons of materials and saved 18,745 gallons of fuel and 320,040 gallons of water.

"Their approach is a great example of looking at waste differently; asking not simply how do we get rid of this, but can it be reused," Driskill said.

Balance Technology Inc. won the Excellence in Pollution Prevention award. Founded in 1968, the company manufactures measurement and testing equipment on a global scale. The facility is highly organized and prevents spills, minimizes contamination and ensures a safe environment for employees, Driskill said.

The Environmental Leadership award was given to David Fair, former host of Issues of the Environment on WEMU 89.1. Fair was not able to make it to the event, so Mary Lappe, co-producer of Issues of the Environment, accepted the award and spoke on his behalf.

Lappe spoke about the commitment Fair made to informing the community about environmental news. Issues of the Environment has over 1,500 episodes across more than 30 years; it's the longest running local environmental news radio program in the country, Lappe said.

"All news is environmental news," Lappe said.

The School Recycling Program Leadership award was given to Dexter High School's National Honor Society students for designing the recycling system in the school and creating educational videos.

Master Composter Leadership awards were given to Annie Broderick and Wilow Krupin for their dedication to composting.

Master Rain Gardener Leadership awards were given to Genesis of Ann Arbor and Gretchen's House Stadium for their rain garden projects.

There were booths set up around the event by organizations and awardees to hand out pamphlets and inform attendees about their practices in reducing waste. Because the event was centered around helping the environment, the name tags were recycled, and there were reusable containers for the attendees to take home the leftover food.

Eastern Michigan University World Cup soccer tournament unites students

Jeffrey Ellingsworth
Sports Reporter

This summer, during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the world crowned Spain as its world champions after the country fought its way through the elimination rounds, defeating Argentina 1-0 in the final. But Eastern Michigan University needed to crown its own champion.

On Nov. 5, EMU's Middle East and North African Student Association hosted its very own World Cup, bringing out 16 teams and more than 100 participants.

Organizers divided the turf field inside the bubble into four smaller fields, utilizing the width of the field instead of the length. Each individual field was sixty yards in length, with six foot goals on either side, as opposed to a regular eight foot goal on a standard field.

The tournament's format was a 7-on-7 with substitutions. Teams played a 20-minute game split into two 10-minute halves with a five-minute halftime. Should two teams be tied at the end of the 20 minute game, they went to a penalty shootout to decide the winner.

After reaching the seven player threshold, teams could sign up using a Google form to choose the country they would be representing and pay the $10 per-player entry fee. The entry fees were then placed in a prize pot to be given to the tournament's winners.

Prior to the form officially closing on Nov. 2, it had already had so many submissions that the club had to close the form and refund some of the teams money due to space and time constraints within the bubble.

On the men's side, 12 teams faced off for a $700 prize pot, with country representation ranging from Germany to Ethiopia. The women's side had four entries playing for a $250 cash prize, with teams representing the countries of Germany, Egypt, Portugal and Algeria. Player fees also contributed a $300 donation to charity.

The tournament gave student teams a chance to get together and have some fun before people go their separate ways. For the Eastern Michigan women's club soccer team, it gave them the opportunity to do something together before the season ends and seniors graduate. The team was split between three of the four teams in Germany, Egypt and Algeria.

For the club's starting goalkeeper Addison Cooper, joining in the EMU World Cup was a way to meet some new people and have some fun before graduating and heading back to her home state of Illinois.

Cooper led her team, Egypt, to the championship shutting out teams Algeria and Portugal before forcing three missed penalties in the penalty kick shootout of the championship game.

When asked about the tournament and her penalty saves, Cooper spoke of the high energy of the event.

SEE WORLD CUP, PAGE 6

Motor City MACtion game brings EMU pride to Ford Field



Swoop tops cheer team pyramid during the third-quarter performance at Ford Field's Motor City MACtion game. *Camryn O'Brien / The Eastern Echo*

Camryn O'Brien
News Reporter

The Motor City MACtion rivalry football game between Eastern Michigan University and Central Michigan University was held at Ford Field on Nov. 4. Students, alumni, friends and families all attended to support their teams and bring EMU pride to Detroit.

EMU fell to CMU, with a final score of 7-35. Despite the loss, fans still saw an electric night under the mega-stadium lights, with a surrounding crowd of 12,656.

Both EMU and CMU marching bands performed before the game started, and the crowd say performances from both EMU cheer and dance on the field throughout the game. During the end-of-third-quarter performance, EMU eagle mascot Swoop topped the cheer team's pyramid, which had fans get loud during the surprise.

Bringing the rivalry and football game to Detroit brought a sense of community to the fans. Madison Mitchell, a student at EMU, enjoyed seeing everyone come out to support.

"[The EMU community] is amazing. I love the Motor City. I love how students came down here together, and we're all here getting hype," Mitchell said.

Students and fans had the option to ride a bus together from George Gervin GameAbove down to Ford Field. Students on the bus said it's fun to travel with friends to get ready for the game.

Some students experienced Ford Field for the first time during this game. EMU student Iva Daneva said the field was nice, and the fans made it better for her first time at Ford Field.

The MACtion game fueled the rivalry between EMU and Central Michigan University. The game featured a fan challenge based on viral videos, the most food raised and the loudest fans. This challenge ended with EMU winning with a score of 80-20.

Fans cheered until the end of the game and kept the energy going throughout the night. The students described the atmosphere of this game as amazing and lively. Kimberlee Ventura, a student at EMU, said the game was more energetic compared to the home games.

Several mini-games throughout the game kept fans interacting: a field goal and fair catch challenge, as well as a corgi race. Groups of friends tried to lift up a friend in the air to get on the big screen, while other fans danced to the music, bringing energy to the stadium.

All Hallows Illumination fosters community as Halloween celebrations end

Hannah Borders
Arts Reporter

Ypsilanti residents filled Frog Island Park with lights, jack-o-lanterns and community for the seventh-annual All Hallows Illumination Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026.

All Hallows Illumination is a free, family-friendly event that welcomes attendees to bring the season's jack-o-lanterns to collectively illuminate the park. The event's purpose was for everyone attending to get to see all of the jack-o-lanterns lit up together, event organizer James Decker said.

The park was set up with a stage in the middle for the band, Spooktacular, to play live music. Behind the stage there was an area to play haunted mini golf, and a candle and cider tent stood near the entrance to the park. People working the tent handed out free cider to guests and LED candles to those who brought jack-o-lanterns. Colored lights illuminated the surrounding area, flooding trees to fill the space with magic.

Haunted mini golf, set up by local business, Putt-R-Round was available to all attendees for $5. Putt-R-Round is a mini golf and putt arcade at 130 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti, that offers mobile event entertainment services.

Spooktacular, an Ypsilanti-based Halloween-themed band, led by Jon Hammonds, set the mood by playing music, beginning around 7:15 p.m. The band members include Galen Bundy on keyboard, Sami Calamity on saxophone, Cory Tripathy on drums and Hammonds on bass.



Guests attending All Hallows Illumination of Frog Island Park watch Spooktacular perform. *Hannah Borders / The Eastern Echo*

The core of the event was focused on community building and appreciating art. Throughout the park, guests talked with each other, enjoyed the outdoor setting and admired their neighbor's jack-o-lantern creations.

Ypsilanti residents Karen and Josh McCollough expressed that they enjoy the community atmosphere of All Hallows Illumination and like to admire all of the different jack-o-lanterns.

"We've come to the last couple [events]. We live in Ypsi, and we just love the community atmosphere and the fact that this is a great way to recycle your jack-o-lantern at the end of the Halloween season. It's really cool to see what everybody has done with their pumpkin," Karen McCollough said.

Josh McCollough echoed her sentiment, saying, "It's neat to see the creativity that everyone has done with their [jack-o-lanterns]."

EMU alum and Ypsilanti resident Tabetha Chaney has been to four All Hallows Illumination event. They said that for them, the most important part of the event is seeing all of the people together in one place.

"I'm ... here to enjoy the community atmosphere. I've always found that it's important to be with the people that you actually live and work ... beside. So, I feel like this is an opportunity to people-watch and enjoy all that Ypsilanti has to offer, which is the people, truly," Chaney said.

Scoring in the classroom and the field: Inside EMU's 50th Hall of Fame Night

Bilal Ahmed
News Reporter

Eastern Michigan University's E-Club held an event filled with nostalgia and excitement Friday, Sept. 25, at the George Gervin GameAbove Center as it inducted six new alumni and a lifelong supporter into the Athletic Hall of Fame. The 50th annual ceremony was hosted by EMU sports broadcaster Tom Helmer.

This event brought together decades of green-and-white history and pushed the Athletic Hall of Fame's roster past the 300-member mark. Scott Whetherbee, director of athletics at EMU, shared how proud he is of the different student athletics work. The athletic department recently came to a historic success of over an average 3.517 GPA earned during the winter 2026 semester and over 10,000 community service hours.

Ken Bruchanski was honored with the 50-year service award at the ceremony.

The EMU Athletic Hall of Fame honorees included Madeleine Batson, Richard "Butch" Palmer, Jussi Rautiainen, Ashley Rodrigues, Howard Simmons and Susan Tomanek

Batson, a 2009 graduate, is known as one of the most dominant swimmers in program history. She captured 10 Mid-American Conference individual championships and contributed to five relay titles. A two-time MAC Swimmer of the Year, she set multiple school records and spearheaded EMU's team conference championships during her exceptional career.

Palmer, a foundational standard of EMU's distance running program, earned NCAA All-American status in the 3,000-meter steeplechase. His elite performances at both the national and conference levels helped establish the university as a perennial track and field powerhouse.

Rautiainen was a premier playmaker when EMU fielded a varsity men's soccer program. He holds multiple school records for career points and assists. His creative field vision and consistency earned him numerous All-MAC honors and left a mark on the program's history.

Soccer alum Rodrigues was an elite midfielder and was named 2009 MAC Player of the Year after leading EMU to a regular-season conference title. Baseball player Simmons was standout guard from the late 1960s. He was known as a pivotal force on teams that consistently made deep postseason runs in NAIA national tournaments. Tomanek, a highly decorated gymnast, secured multiple individual MAC championships, notably dominating the balance beam and floor exercise events.

The evening concluded with EMU President Brendan Kelly calling on the new inductees to maintain their unapologetic pride in their alma mater.

What's the Move? Nov. 10 - 16

Lelaina MacDonald
News Reporter

Here are some events on and off campus to enjoy this week.

Bingo Night — Nov. 10

The Honors College and Bingo at EMU are hosting a Bingo Night in the Honors College Reception Hall. From 5-6 p.m., those interested can play bingo, collaborate with peers and win prizes.

Attendees can earn an extra bingo card by donating a new or gently used children's book.

To attend this free event, students can find the registration link on the EMU EagleApp.

"Family Pains" by Emily Osgood — Nov. 11-14

PTD Productions is performing "Family Pains" by Erin Osgood, a six-person show taking place at Thanksgiving, right before the holiday arrives.

The production revolves around Pippa Matthews, who has not visited her family in the Detroit suburbs for two years. Her strict, conservative father and her germophobic, eccentric mother are not fans of Pippa's New York life as a playwright. Despite their views, Pippa has important news to share, so she decides to surprise visit her family at Thanksgiving.

Upcoming shows will take place Wednesday, Nov. 11, through Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026. Thursday, Friday and Saturday shows will take place at 7:30 p.m., while Wednesday and Sunday matinees will take place at 2 p.m.

All viewings of "Family Pains" will be at the Riverside Arts Center, located at 76 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti.

Registration Blitz — Nov. 12

With class registration upon EMU students, the university is hosting Registration Blitz, an event that aims to help currently enrolled students register for the upcoming semester.

From 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., students can go to the Bowen Field House to meet with an academic advisor, register for classes, meet with EMU faculty members, learn more about EMU's programs and prepare for the winter 2027 semester.

This is a free event approved for LBC credit, and no registration is necessary.

Bandorama — Nov. 14

The EMU Symphonic Band, Wind Symphony and the EMU Marching Band are performing a show in Pease Auditorium from 7-9 p.m.

The admission fee is $20 for adults and $15 for students. Tickets can be purchased online through EMU.

Practice Gratitude Through Writing — Nov. 15

YpsiWrites is hosting a virtual writing workshop focused on gratitude. The facilitators will offer mini-sessions on gratitude journaling, writing thank-you letters and expressing gratitude through poetry.

From 1:30-3 p.m., attendees can experiment with gratitude and learn the ways in which different journaling and writing processes through gratitude can help them.

Those interested can register online on the Ypsilanti District Library's website.

Swipe Right on Scholarships — Nov. 16

The Halle Library is holding a workshop in Room G09 from 5-6 p.m. This workshop will provide students with information and advice on how to find and apply for scholarships effectively.

Students will learn how to find EMU department scholarships, tips for writing strong applications and strategies to stand out.

This is a free event, and no registration is required.

4 Eagles earn All-MAC honors following 2026 soccer season



No. 14 Christie Fransen, Eastern Michigan University women's soccer player, controls the ball during the game against Miami University on Oct. 11 at Scicluna Field. *Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo*

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

The Eastern Michigan University soccer program celebrated notable achievements as four student-athletes earned Mid-American Conference postseason honors following the 2026 campaign.

The conference office revealed on Friday, Nov. 6, that redshirt senior goalkeeper Ella Holland and redshirt junior defender Christie Fransen were named to the All-MAC Second Team, while freshman midfielder Annalyse Bauer and freshman forward Ella Miller earned selection to the MAC All-Freshman Team.

The postseason recognition highlights both veteran reliability and emerging talent for the Eagles. This marks the second consecutive season Eastern Michigan has placed multiple players on the All-MAC Second Team or higher, a milestone not achieved since 2018 and 2019. Additionally, selecting Bauer and Miller marks EMU's first multi-player All-Freshman Team honors since Kate Robinson and Olivia Sipsock were recognized in 2023.

Veteran leadership anchors the defense

Redshirt senior goalkeeper Ella Holland of Dunwoody, Ga. capped her collegiate career in Ypsilanti by earning All-MAC Second Team honors for the second consecutive season. Holland is the first Eagle to earn back-to-back All-MAC honors since Sabrina McNeill from 2018 to 2020.

Across 17 appearances during the 2026 season, Holland registered 45 saves and maintained a 0.82 goals-against average. She wrapped up her Eastern Michigan career with 310 total saves, ranking sixth all-time in program history. Holland also set a program record with six consecutive clean sheets, beginning with a shutout of No. 3 Michigan State on Aug. 27 and extending through a victory over Ball State on Oct. 1, holding opponents scoreless for more than 623 consecutive minutes.

Joining Holland on the All-MAC Second Team was redshirt junior defender Christie Fransen of Wooster, Ohio. In her inaugural season with the Eagles after transferring from Bowling Green State University, Fransen earned her first career postseason award. Fransen led Eastern Michigan in scoring with six goals and 14 points while adding two assists. She was perfect from the penalty spot, converting all five penalty kick attempts. Fransen scored in EMU's season-opening win over Duquesne on Aug. 12 and helped secure conference victories over Central Michigan University, University at Buffalo and Kent State University, earning MAC Defensive Player of the Week honors twice.

Freshman duo delivers offensive spark

Eastern Michigan's attack gained significant momentum from freshmen Annalyse Bauer and Ella Miller.

Midfielder Annalyse Bauer of Latrobe, Pa. appeared in 16 matches with one start and scored two goals. She netted the game-winner in a 1-0 road win at Ball State on Oct. 1 before adding another goal in a 2-1 victory over Kent State on Oct. 4. Bauer was also named MAC Offensive Player of the Week during the season.

Forward Ella Miller of Mount Morris, Pa. competed in all 17 matches, making two starts. Miller recorded three goals and six points, including the game-winner against Kent State on Oct. 4. She also scored in a 3-0 win over Central Michigan on Sept. 20 and netted the equalizer in a 1-1 draw against The University of Toledo on

Habhab's 34-point double-double lifts Eastern Michigan past Coastal Carolina in 71-70 season-opening thriller

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

In a tense, down-to-the-wire season opener at the HTC Center on Monday night, Nov. 2, the Eastern Michigan University men's basketball team kicked off its 2026–27 campaign with a gritty 71–70 victory over Coastal Carolina University.

In a contest defined by relentless lead changes, physical interior battles and high-pressure free throw execution, the Eagles (1-0) fended off a furious late push from the Chanticleers (0-1) to capture a hard-earned road win in front of a spirited South Carolina crowd.

Dominant debut: Habhab commands the interior

Eastern Michigan's star of the night was sophomore forward Mohammad Habhab, who turned in a monumental individual performance off the bench. Habhab was virtually unstoppable in the frontcourt, exploding for a game-high 34 points and pulling down 13 rebounds to record a dominant double-double in his season debut.

Habhab's aggressive physicality put constant stress on Coastal Carolina's interior defense throughout the evening. Unable to contain his drives and positioning around the rim, the Chanticleers repeatedly sent Habhab to the charity stripe. The sophomore displayed remarkable poise under pressure, knocking down an astonishing 18 of his 21 free-throw attempts. Whether attacking off the bounce, securing second-chance opportunities, or drawing contact inside, Habhab provided the steady scoring engine Eastern Michigan needed whenever the offense stagnated.

Perimeter spark: Martin and Johnson provide essential support

While Habhab commanded the paint, guard Jaiden Martin provided vital perimeter firepower and defensive disruption for the Eagles. Martin poured in 17 points on an efficient 6-of-11 shooting effort from the field, including a crisp 3-of-6 display from three-point territory. Beyond his perimeter scoring, Martin made his presence felt on the defensive end, snatching three key steals that converted Coastal Carolina turnovers into fast-break opportunities for Eastern Michigan.

Forward Kaden Johnson added crucial frontcourt depth, contributing eight points on 4-of-9 shooting from the floor. Johnson's timely baskets inside helped offset Coastal Carolina's defensive traps and kept the Eagles afloat during key stretches of the contest.

Gridlock in Conway: A back-and-forth battle of attrition

The matchup proved to be a grueling tug-of-war from the opening tip, featuring 11 ties and 13 lead changes across 40 minutes of action. Neither team was able to build a comfortable margin, with defenses setting a physical tone throughout the second half. In fact, neither Eastern Michigan nor Coastal Carolina held a lead larger than four points during the entire final 20 minutes of play.

Coastal Carolina stayed within striking distance thanks to a balanced scoring attack led by Trey Perry, who paced the Chanticleers with 20 points. Guard Darius Washington III chipped in 13 points, while Jaylen Cross posted 10 points and eight rebounds, fighting hard on the glass to match Eastern Michigan's frontcourt.

Ice in their veins: clutch free throws seal the victory

With the game hanging in the balance in the final minute, victory came down to free-throw execution. Eastern Michigan proved up to the challenge, shooting 79.3% from the foul line as a team.

In the dramatic closing sequence, with Coastal Carolina pressing aggressively to regain the lead, the Eagles demonstrated nerves of steel. Eastern Michigan converted six consecutive free throws over the final 23 seconds of regulation to maintain a narrow cushion and stifle Coastal Carolina's final comeback attempt, securing the 71–70 final score.

Eagles play Ford Field in MACtion rivalry against CMU



EMU football player No. 15 Amareon Blue searches for an open lane for the quarterback to throw to him in the game against Central Michigan University at Ford Field on Nov. 4. *Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo*



EMU fans yell and hold up signs to cheer on their team. EMU fell to Central Michigan University at Ford Field, 35-7. *Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo*



EMU football players, No. 5 Harold Mack and No. 3 Benson Prosper, celebrate the first touchdown of the game against Central Michigan University at Ford Field on Nov. 4. *Bradan Copeland / The Eastern Echo*

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales:

Nov. 8 - 14

Ruby Brannon
Sports Editor

Women's basketball at Robert Morris University

The Tale: On Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 6 p.m. at UPMC Events Center, Eastern Michigan hits the road for an early non-conference clash against Robert Morris University. Voted sixth in the Mid-American Conference Preseason Coaches Poll, the Eagles feature sophomore standout Peyton Hill, the reigning MAC Freshman of the Year and Preseason All-MAC Second Team selection. EMU aims to replicate last season's 64-54 victory over the Colonials.

The Tip: Controlling defensive rebounds against RMU's crashing guards will limit second-chance points and silence the home crowd at the UPMC Events Center.

Men's basketball vs. Great Lakes Christian College

The Tale: On Nov. 11, Eastern Michigan tips off its home regular-season schedule against Great Lakes Christian College for Military Appreciation Night on Veterans Day. Playing at home, the Eagles look to build early home-court momentum and give fans an energetic show.

The Tip: Arrive early to pack the George Gervin GameAbove Center for the regular-season home opener. Bringing loud, high-energy fan support from the opening tip-off creates an electric home-court atmosphere that fuels the Eagles' defensive intensity, disrupts opponent communication, and sets a winning tone for the entire season in Ypsilanti.

Cross Country at NCAA Great Lakes Regional

The Tale: Both EMU cross country squads head to East Lansing for the postseason NCAA Great Lakes Regional on Friday, Nov. 13 at Forest Akers East. The women's program holds a distinguished championship legacy, highlighted by a fifth-place Great Lakes Regional finish that led to a program-best ninth-place national finish at the NCAA Championships in 2016.

The Tip: Execute a disciplined pack-running strategy over the opening 3K (women) and 5K (men). Staying attached as a tight 1-to-5 scoring pack on the Forest Akers course while conserving energy for a final-kilometer surge will minimize team split times and optimize team scoring against elite regional competition.

Women's Swimming & Diving Home Meet

The Tale: The Eagles return to the Calvin Jones Natatorium in Ypsilanti for a late-afternoon home dual meet Friday, Nov. 13 at the Calvin Jones Natatorium. Grounded in EMU's long history of aquatic excellence, this home meet gives veterans and rising talent a crucial mid-season platform to refine race pacing and relay execution in front of the home crowd.

The Tip: Head out to Calvin Jones Natatorium and pack the balcony to cheer on the Eagles at home. Swimming and diving meets thrive on deck energy. Loud, continuous cheering for every heat anchor and synchronized support during key diving attempts gives the team a decisive home-pool advantage.

Volleyball at Bowling Green

The Tale: Friday, Nov. 13, EMU travels to Bowling Green's Stroh Center for a historic MAC rivalry battle against Bowling Green. With middle blocker Azra Eri ranking among MAC leaders in blocks per set (1.10) and setter Lina Govoni directing the offense (6.19 assists/set), EMU looks to capture a key road victory.

The Tip: Leverage Azra Eri at the net to slow down Bowling Green's primary pin attackers, while using Lina Govoni's setting distribution to isolate outside hitter Nattie Slusher. Clean first-touch serve reception will allow EMU to run quick middle-slide attacks and avoid predictable out-of-system high balls.

EMU Regents approve semester timeline changes, union contracts, more



State Sen. Jeff Irwin addresses EMU Board of Regents at Oct 15 meeting. *Lauren Holloway / The Eastern Echo*

Lauren Holloway
News Reporter

On Thursday, Oct. 15, Eastern Michigan University's Board of Regents had its first meeting of the fall semester. The Educational Policies Committee, Athletic Affairs Committee, Student Affairs Committee and Finance and Investment Committee all met before the regular board meeting.

Educational Policies Committee

The Educational Policies Committee Section 15 and 16 were discussed and explained. Section 15 combines the bachelors of social work and masters of social work into one degree.

Dean of the College of Health and Human Services Jennifer Kellman Fritz said it would save students more than $6,000 and utilize transfer opportunities.

"It's a good pathway to get them right into the workforce," Fritz said.

Section 15 was approved by the board during the regular meeting.

Section 16 concerns two changes to the 2027 academic calendar. The first of these changes would move winter commencement from April 27 to May 1 after final exams have concluded. This would make fewer transcript corrections and degree conferral disputes.

The second change to the calendar would be removing the week of fall break for the year 2027 and beyond. This would prevent the semester from stretching into December.

Upon voting for Section 16, Regent Jessie K.W. Kimbrough made a motion to table Section 16 so that regents could learn more about it and possible implications before making a decision. Regent Kimbrough's motion was not seconded; Section 16 was approved, but she abstained from the vote.

Five faculty members were recommended to receive emeritus status. Cheryl M. Cassidy, Crissie Frye, Brenda Riemer, Wade Tornquist and Yichun Xie were all awarded emeritus status.

Financial and Investment Affairs Committee

The Plante Moran consulting group presented its audit of EMU's finances. There was a $15.1 million decrease in operating revenue in the past fiscal year. In 2026, Eastern brought in $252.3 million in operating revenue compared to $269.9 million brought in by other universities in 2025.

Expenses in 2026 remained the same to 2025 at $388.7 million, compared to $434.4 million in expenses from other universities in 2025.

Ten staff members were recommended to receive emeritus status: Rhonda Butts, Meg Castro, David Evoy, Julie Heighes, Debra Koch, Kristen Krug-Shaffer, Paul Lehman, Yolande Patterson, Deedra Springgay and Crystal Walrath. During the regular board meeting, all ten were awarded emeritus status.

Section 19 requested that the board approve $53.8 million in awards, grants and general fund scholarships for the 2027-28 fiscal year. This request is smaller than last year, and tuition will increase by 2.5% for undergrads and a 3% for graduate students. Section 19 was approved at the regular board meeting.

New Business

The recently negotiated collective agreement between the university and the Chapter of the EMU Police Officers Association of Michigan bargaining unit was approved by the regents. This agreement applies to 15 police officers and lasts for three years.

The regents approved the negotiated collective bargaining agreement between the university and the EMU Association of University Professors bargaining unit. The agreement applies to 500 faculty members and lasts for three years.

The recently negotiated collective bargaining agreement between the university and the EMU American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees bargaining unit was approved. The agreement applies to 97 maintenance and food service workers and will last for three years and three months.

The Women's Golf Team was officially recognized for reaching the final four of the NCAA Championships and tying for third in NCAA Match Play. It was resolved that the Board of Regents congratulate the team and Head Coach Josh Brewer for the best women's team finish in EMU history.

State Sen. Jeff Irwin, District 15, was recognized for his efforts in environmental stewardship, including advancing legislation to reduce pollution and expand renewable energy. It was resolved that the board express its appreciation for Irwin's commitment to public service and dedication to the people of Washtenaw County.

"I'm here for a great future for the state of Michigan," said Irwin, who attended the meeting.

EMU alumna Jasmine Jones who earned the bronze medal for the two-woman bobsled competition for Team USA at the 2026 Winter Olympics was recognized by the board for her achievements.

Jones is the ninth student-athlete from Eastern to earn an Olympic medal. It was resolved that the Regents formally congratulate Jones on her accomplishments.

The last tab of the new business was open communication. The first presenter was Septembra McQuarters, mother of a former student was dismissed from the university. McQuarters said that upon reaching out to the school, no explanation was given as to why her daughter was dismissed, and she asked the regents to provide their reasoning.

The second presenter was Thomas Waltz, professor of psychology. Waltz said the American Psychological Association had created three new seats on the Michigan board, and he wants the Regents to advocate for EMU alumni and faculty to serve on the APA board.

For more information about any of the topics covered in the meeting, readers can visit the Oct. 15 webpage on the Board of Regents website.

EMU sees vice president departure, 2 new appointments

Lilly Kujawski
Editor-in-Chief

Eastern Michigan University has recently seen some changes to leadership in the school's executive office.

Vice president of enrollment leaves for new job

Former Vice President of Enrollment Management Katie Condon-Martin has left EMU, confirmed to The Echo by Condon-Martin and Brandy Barker, vice president of brand experience. Condon-Martin, who assumed her role at EMU in May, 2023, has accepted a position at the University of Minnesota. There, she will serve as associate vice provost for enrollment management. Condon-Martin confirmed to The Echo that her last day at EMU was Oct. 30. Condon-Martin will begin her new job on Dec. 7, said a written statement from the University of Minnesota's Executive Vice President and Provost Gretchen Writter.

"Katie will provide strategic direction and operational leadership for undergraduate recruitment, admissions, the four-year scholarship program, transfer enrollment and financial aid, while helping advance a coordinated approach to graduate and professional enrollment," Writter said in the statement.

Kelly appoints 2 new vice presidents

On Oct. 16, Kelly announced two executive leadership changes. David Behen, an EMU alumnus, was appointed as vice president for administration and chief operating officer. In this capacity, Behen will oversee financial strategy, the physical assets of the university, technology and systems, and broad administrative functions, said a written statement from Kelly.

Behen previously served as vice president and chief information officer for La-Z-Boy. Before that, he served as a cabinet member for Gov. Rick Snyder as director of the department of technology, management and budget, and chief information officer for the State of Michigan.

"A central priority will be aligning resource allocation with enrollment growth and student success," Kelly said in the statement, describing Behen's role at EMU. "Working closely with academic affairs, enrollment management, and student affairs, David will help strengthen financial modeling and scenario planning, improve the timeliness and usefulness of financial information, and direct resources toward opportunities with clear institutional value. David will also lead enterprise modernization and digital transformation across divisions."

Behen begins his position at EMU on Nov. 9.

On Oct. 19, Jason Meriwether began his role of vice president for growth and data analytics at EMU, a newly created position at the university. The statement from Kelly said that all functions related to enrollment management, internal research and data will report to Meriwether.

Meriwether is the author of "Prioritizing Enrollment Management: Effective Practices and Strategies for Student Success & Completion" and previously served as vice president of enrollment at Sam Houston State University. During his time at Sam Houston State, the school saw an 8.7% increase in first-time freshmen for fall of 2026, totaling 3,567 students, the largest freshman class in the university's history, Kelly said. When Kelly was appointed president at EMU, he brought Meriwether on as a consultant.

"Two other central charges from the Board of Regents upon my appointment were elevating enrollment and advancing student success. While we have made significant improvements in our enrollment, recruitment, and retention scaffold, we have not achieved improved results," Kelly said in the statement. "It is critical that we turn that trajectory and improve this element of our institution and I do not believe we are in the position to wait and see how the efforts we have made will play out. Transformation of this component of our institution will require new approaches, standards of excellence, and a much richer use of data analytics and predictive modeling to improve recruitment, retention, and graduation."

Additional changes

At the EMU Board of Regents meeting on Oct. 15, Kelly removed interim status from Chief Student Affairs Officer Dwight Hamiliton's title, making him vice president for student affairs.

Current Vice President and Secretary to the Board of Regents Vicki Reaume will move into an expanded role, Kelly said in a written statement. In her new role as vice president for board relations and governance, Reaume will also drive "key, cross-functional initiatives related to the intersection of the Board of Regents and University Advancement, as well as a host of community engagement functions that will allow EMU to be more present in the communities we serve," Kelly said.

World Cup

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"It was very eventful. It was very energetic. A lot of high energy and I just had a lot of fun," she said. "I absolutely hate penalties. So I started internally panicking about the penalties; really, to help myself stay calm, is I just focus on the ball and then when I hear the whistle, I just act. So there's really no secret to it."

Secret or not, Cooper's goalkeeping led the way to a World Cup victory for Egypt and the $250 prize.

On the men's side, Team Palestine came away with the victory and the $700 cash prize after fending off a variety of teams that included Division 1 soccer players, professional players and semi-professional players.

The captain of the Palestinian team, Center Back Emmanuel Guedes, thought the tournament would be a great way to get his old teammates back together.

"We won nationals last year as a club team at Detroit City Football Club Downriver, and I just thought it was a good activity," he said. "After we finished that tournament, I wanted to get them back together. We wanted to play a tournament and we played hard and we ended up coming up with the wins."

Guedes and his club team won the U.S. Youth Soccer 2026 President's Cup in the U19 division before everyone went their separate ways. Now, Guedes plays for the University of Michigan-Dearborn team at the NAIA level, but brought his team back together for another tournament victory.

Guedes also shared his thoughts on the tournament.

"The atmosphere was amazing. The atmosphere when there was a penalty shootout for the semifinals was the best PK shootout I've seen in my life," he said.

The penalty shootout in the semifinals didn't involve Team Palestine but instead Algeria and Spain, so Guedes and his squad got to sit back and enjoy without the pressure of performing in the shootout.

Spain's team was made up of the Lawrence Tech soccer team, but was unable to get past Algeria in the shootout.

In the final round, Palestine made quick work of the Algerian team and found themselves crowned Eastern Michigan's men's world cup champions to go along with Egypt as the champions on the women's side.

After the tournament was completed, Middle East North African Student Association treasurer Noura Abella discussed the tournament and its future.

"The tournament went really well. I really liked the turnout. We had a lot more teams than we expected to come," she said. "Everybody wanted to do it for a good cause. Part of the money went to charity and the other part went to the winning teams. The games went as smoothly as they possibly could."

With so many players and teams in a small space, there was some difficulty getting the games started. Stoppages in play due to penalties also complicated games because it gave everyone a chance to complain to the referee.

Abella also talked about the potential of having the tournament in the future.

"Because of the turnout, we had a lot of teams that we had to unfortunately refund because of the time constraint," she said. "In the future, inshallah, we're looking towards having a lot more time and with more time we can have more teams and essentially, you know, be more organized. But this is the first one that we had and we do, inshallah, look forward to having a lot more of these."



Team Ethiopia faces Team Algeria in a penalty shootout. *Jeffrey Ellingsworth / The Eastern Echo*

In addition, Abella discussed why the Middle East North African Student Association chose to host the world cup tournament and how it all came together.

"So we hosted the soccer tournament because after all of our events we asked people that are at the events what events they'd like to put on, and the soccer tournament was one of the most requested ones," she said. "So we just decided to finally pull it together with really big thanks to the Eastern Michigan University men's club soccer team because they helped us put all of

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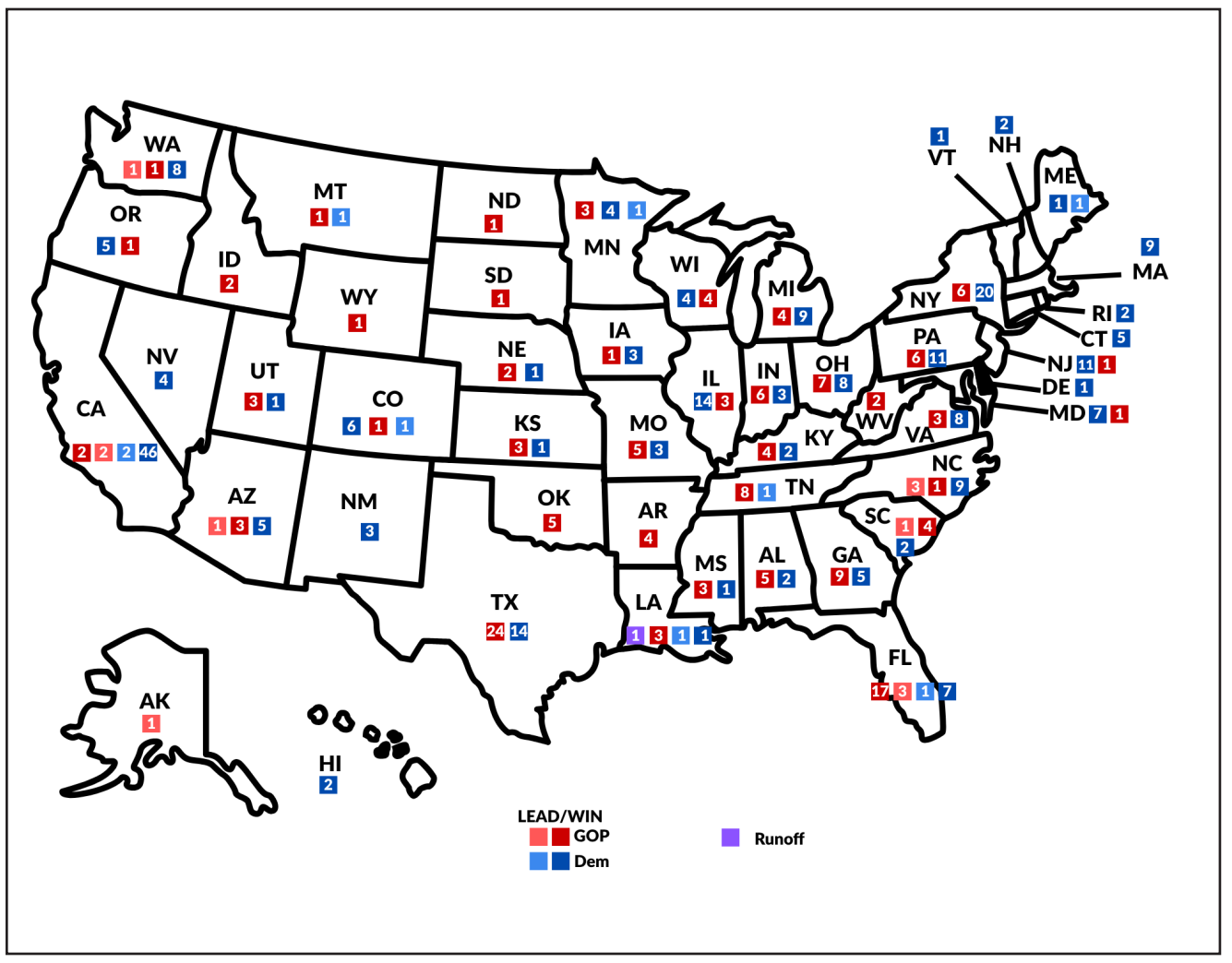
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Democrats win majority in the United States House of Representatives. *Chart by Zeinab Agbaria and Myla Spiedel*

Congress

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Q: What does this tell us about how voters are feeling right now?

A: I think it's really clear that the voters are incredibly dissatisfied with the status quo. I think that this is very clearly a rebuke of a lot of the things that happened under the Trump administration, whether it's the rise in the cost of living more broadly, the rise in gas prices — especially in the past 6 months to a year. I think, not only is there just disapproval of economic conditions, other things, such as ICE, seem to have kind of died down relative to the economic conditions as a main concern. I think it also speaks to their inability to really kind of provide an alternative. I think their view was basically just like: well, just trust us, and things will actually get better," or just pretending that these issues don't exist at all.

Q: What could this mean for the 2028 election?

A: [It has] a lot of far sweeping implications. It's going to make it harder on Trump … in terms of building out whatever his agenda remains to be. Then in terms of nominating the successor, I think that a Republican successor is going to be someone who would still need his support for the primary. But in the general, that is clearly going to be a killer, especially when he's not on the ballot himself, for the Democrats. This really, I think, expands their bench. You have a lot of Democrats who are now proven winners in states that you wouldn't expect before, whether these states might even vote for a Democratic president is certainly possible. And we're seeing states that have been red for a long time — Kansas, Texas. Texas is in play for a presidential race that completely changes the electoral college map. It makes it extraordinarily difficult for a Republican to win if Texas [votes Democrat] for 2028 as well.

Jeffrey Bernstein

Q: What does this election's blue wave mean for the future of our country?

A: Well, I mean, it's for me, a policy standpoint. You continue to have a president who, in many ways, has been governing alone, working through executive orders, working through in many ways, non-legislative means. So, you're not likely to see a tremendous change in the short-term, obviously things like the budget have to go through Congress, and the Democrats are going to be far more empowered than they were to deal with those issues. It's going to be really different when it comes to any presidential appointments that would have to happen. The Senate obviously approves cabinet officials, ambassadors and judges. Trump obviously no longer has a friendly senate to work with, so I think a lot of what has been done, has been done with executive orders. That's not likely to change, but in terms of appointments, and some other things, I think you're going to see a very big difference. On matters like that, this White House is going to have to figure out how to deal with a Congress controlled by the opposite party, and controlled by a pretty large number of members of the opposite party. This is not a small house majority, or a small senate majority; he's dealing with a significantly sized opposition in Congress.

Q: What can we infer from sudden change in candidate victories in states like Texas?

A: It took a significant confluence of factors in an economy that is struggling. In a situation where so many of the economic wounds that we have right now are clearly self-inflicted by the Republican party — the war in Iran, for instance, and what it has done to the price of oil, or tariffs, and what that has done to the cost of living, it's often very hard to pinpoint blame. When the economy goes south in this case, I think it was easier than most, so I think you had that.

I think you have a president who, while in his sixth year of the presidency, is wrapping up about his 11th year or so of really being the day-in-day-out, dominant story in American politics. And I think that act wears thin after a while. So, I think you've got that going on as well. He's obviously quite unpopular. I mentioned the economy struggling, and you have a unique combination of some very, very strong democratic candidates. U.S. Senate-Elect James Talarico of Texas comes to mind as one example, U.S. Senate-Elect Adam Hamilton of Kansas comes together as another, and some very remarkably weak Republican candidates. If Trump keeps his hands off Texas, and John Cornyn gets the Republican nomination, I don't think Talarico wins. If Ralph Norman had gotten the nomination for the Republicans in South Carolina, I think he wins. So, I think you're seeing a whole massive confluence of factors coming together in one wild night

Q: What does this tell us about how voters are feeling right now?

A: I think worried, in some cases. I think economic worries really weigh heavily on voters. I think that the opposition to Trump is a fairly intense opposition. There are voters who are just really not happy with the current party, not happy with, as I said, where the economy is going. I think you're picking up that mood, and I think you are picking up a mood where many people who might not have been inclined to vote Democrat — many states that, I mean, you couldn't imagine voting Democrats — this confluence of factors really, really drove that. Kansas hasn't elected a Democrat to the Senate since 1932. This is weird.

Q: What could this mean for the 2028 presidential election?

A: Democrats won the Senate election in North Carolina by close to 20 points tonight. There is a very real possibility that North Carolina could be blue. Democrats have swept the upper Midwest: Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin. It widens the map. I think it makes a path to 270 electoral votes look a little bit easier for the Democrats. I think it gets a lot of people thinking maybe I'm the person who should be running.

On the Republican side, where I think loyalty to Donald Trump had been considered a very clear positive, and almost prerequisite for moving ahead, I think this might change the equation a little bit. Tonight was a significant defeat for Donald Trump — for a candidate who's really had some significant triumphs — tonight was a significant defeat. I don't know, going forward, how this plays out, but candidates who have built their brand on being loyal backers of Donald Trump may have suffered at least a temporary hit based on the results tonight.

Q: How could this blue wave impact higher education?

A: I would imagine you're going to see the blue wave impacting education, mostly at the state and local level. You have more states now that have Democratic governments. Governors and state legislatures that have turned over Democrat have typically been more supportive of higher education. In terms of funding for higher education, when you have unified Democratic control in states — or even just no longer having unified Republican control — I think that can have a significant impact. And I also imagine many states have begun to pass legislation that really cuts at issues of academic freedom, cuts at issues of giving professors the ability to teach the way they think their courses should be taught. I'm referring to things like SB1 in Ohio, and obviously many other similar laws. Having more Democratic state control could mean repealing, weakening or doing other things to those kinds of laws that I don't think have been very good for higher

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Opinion

The WellNest Watch

Exploring Washtenaw County's Cannabis in Practice series



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.*

Cannabis remains one of the most used federally illegal drugs in the United States, with nearly 20% of people reporting at least one-time use in 2021, reported the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2025.

Usage is expected to rise, particularly following new federal regulations reclassifying state-licensed medical marijuana and FDA-approved cannabis products from Schedule I to Schedule III, showed a report from Congress following the reclassification. Additionally, a 6-year prospective study of young adults aged 18 to 26 in California found a significantly lower perceived risk of cannabis use compared to all forms of tobacco.

Over the summer, the Washtenaw County Health Department hosted its 8th annual Cannabis in Practice Series from July 22-28. The three-day virtual seminar aimed to inform the community about the health effects of cannabis on frontline workers, youth mental health programs designed to prevent cannabis use and the role of cannabis in chronic pain management.

Systematically testing the evidence on marijuana: Cannabis health effects for the frontline clinician

Dr. Devin Kansagara opened by outlining the history of U.S. cannabis use, tracing its trajectory from early 1900s migration, President Nixon's War on Drugs, and California's 1996 medical marijuana legalization to recreational legalization in Colorado and Oregon. He emphasized the role of healthcare providers in asking nonjudgmental questions about patient use, addressing concerns and tailoring evidence to individual care.

Kansagara highlighted the shift from recreational to adult use terminology, driven largely by non-medical use among patients in pain. This language reframing respects adult autonomy and aligns cannabis consumption with alcohol and tobacco by reducing social stigma.

Furthermore, emerging evidence indicates that regular cannabis use during adolescence and young adulthood can negatively affect brain development; notably, a 2024 Canadian study found that starting cannabis during adolescence carries an 11-fold risk of developing psychosis.

Kansagara also reviewed research linking cannabis use to adverse neonatal outcomes — such as preterm birth, small for gestational age, and perinatal mortality — while acknowledging the proven benefits of FDA-approved cannabinoids (e.g., Nabiximols, Epidiolex, Dronabinol and Nabilone) for spasticity in multiple sclerosis, epilepsy and chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting.

Bringing a mental health lens to youth cannabis use prevention

Cori Hammond emphasized the necessity of a collaborative strategy to address youth mental health and cannabis use. While overall cannabis and tobacco use among adolescents has declined, Hammond highlighted that vulnerable groups remain at risk due to youth-targeted marketing, such as storefronts and snack-like edible packaging that lower the perception of harm.

National Institute on Drug Abuse noted in a 2022 study that a major concern is the steady rise in tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) potency relative to cannabidiol (CBD). Smoked marijuana products can contain around 35% THC, exposing young users to high doses that increase the risk of addiction and psychosis, the institute reported.

Hammond also noted the strong intersection of co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders, pointing out that nearly half of adolescents with mental health challenges also experience substance-related issues, often stemming from attempts to self-medicate for unmanaged stress or trauma. Because mental health conditions typically present before substance use disorders, early intervention offers a critical window for trauma-informed, non-judgmental support that empowers youth and connects them to care.

Thoughtfully approaching cannabis for chronic pain

Dr. Kevin Boehnke addressed the evolving legal landscape surrounding cannabis and its broader societal implications, including federal scheduling changes for medical cannabis and Michigan's specific regulations — the 2008 Medical Marihuana Act and current adult-use laws. He noted a marked increase in medical cannabis license patients over the last decade, which his research pointed out was due to chronic pain.

Boehnke addressed the major cannabinoids in cannabis — THC and CBD — and the entourage effect, where THC, CBD and minor cannabinoids work synergistically to enhance therapeutic or psychoactive outcomes compared to isolated compounds.

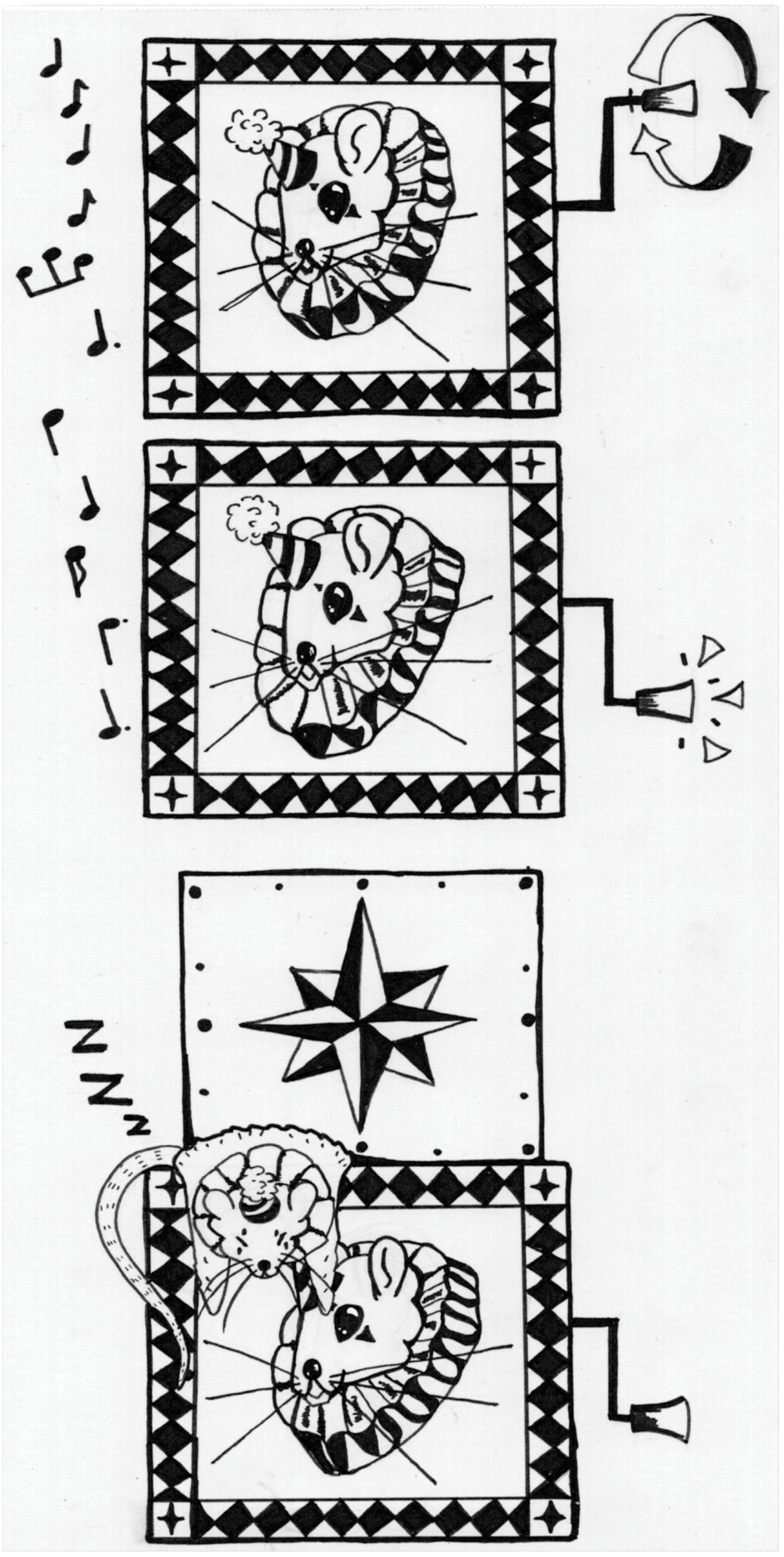
After discussing short- and long-term health risks, Boehnke pointed to a critical communication gap driven by legal complexities, stigma and minimal medical training, noting that only 8% of surveyed physicians feel knowledgeable about medical cannabis. To bridge this divide, he proposed a pragmatic harm-reduction model centered on patient-provider collaboration, systematic symptom tracking and a start low, go slow dosing strategy prioritizing CBD-dominant products to maximize therapeutic benefit while minimizing adverse effects.

Key takeaways

This series provides significant insights into cannabis use for adolescents, youth, adults and pregnant women. The current rescheduling changes have economic implications for licensed vendors and a potential increase in use among vulnerable groups, especially with new marketing tactics, co-occurring mental health challenges and limited access to trauma-informed support.

This training enables health practitioners to use evidence-based guidance and collaborative harm-reduction strategies to manage patients with chronic pain.

Five More Minutes | Jamie Owens



The Big Red Button.. | Katelyn Hollis



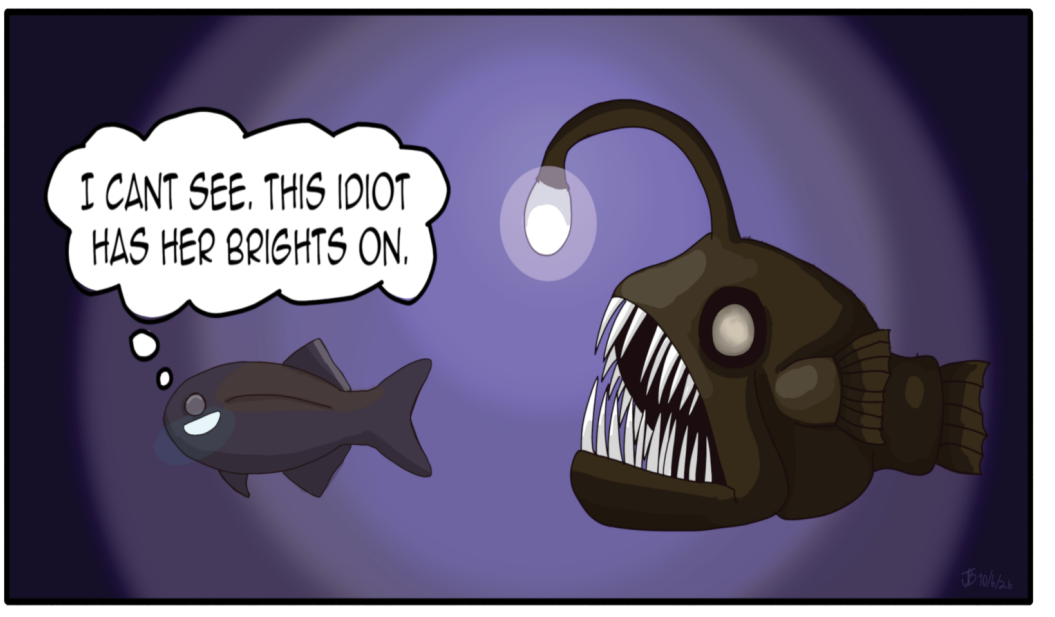
A Special Hello from Authoria! | Isaiah Sanders



Very Important Info | Katelyn Hollis



The Lights | Julia Bartlett



Scan to read more comics!

Ypsilanti hits the polls



During the Eastern Votes and Engage@EMU Election Watch Party on Nov. 3, at the Eastern Michigan University Student Center, both community members and students celebrate Democrats having control of the House. *Courtney Prielipp / The Eastern Echo*



Washtenaw County Democratic Party members, including former Ypsilanti City Mayor Beth Bashert, right, react to the midterm election update as the preliminary counts point towards Democrat Abdul El-Sayed taking the lead in Washtenaw County at a watch party at Vinny's Bar & Grill, Nov. 3. *Maddy Makin / The Eastern Echo*



Former Ypsilanti mayors, Amanda Edmonds, left, and Beth Bashert, middle, sit with newly re-elected Mayor Nicole Brown at Vinny's Bar & Grill for an election watch party on Tuesday, Nov. 3. *Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo*



Voters wait in line to make their voice heard on Election Day at the Eastern Michigan University Honors College polling location Nov. 3. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*



Poll worker Mary Seelhorst directs voters to the proper voting location to vote for their ward and precinct at the EMU Honors College voting site Tuesday, Nov. 3. *Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo*



Poll worker Marlie Hooper poses with "I Voted" stickers and a ballot folder at the Honors College voting site on Tuesday, Nov. 3. *Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo*



EMU student Katie George shows off an "I Voted" sticker at the EMU Honors College voting site Tuesday, Nov. 3. *Lee Hammock / The Eastern Echo*



Joe Garris and Sadaf Ali discuss the election at the Eastern Votes and Engage@EMU Election Watch Party in the Eastern Michigan University Student Center on Nov. 3. *Kaleb Stanley / The Eastern Echo*