



## Pierson's Perceptions

Resiliency is not only a word. It is also a state of mind, an attitude. It is the determination to overcome, no matter how daunting the obstacles. It is also a key ingredient to success.

It has been almost a calendar year since we initially learned of Covid-19 and moved to protect our Tiger family from its insidious spread by moving instruction to a virtual, online format.

Thanks to a recent increase in vaccinations and an adherence to safety protocols on campus, we are starting to see daylight at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel.

We are slowly and cautiously moving toward a full return. An intense snowstorm may have thrown another speed bump in our path, but we are resilient and we will continue to overcome.

This weather event led to the postponement of an incredibly important campus event, the ECU Black Alumni Association's panel discussion "It Takes All of Us – Speak Your Truth."

This particular event is very important because it reminds us that resiliency isn't just about waiting out a pandemic. It is about a lifelong effort to not only overcome obstacles, but to improve the quality of life for all.

At ECU, our stated mission is to "educate and empower students to understand and transform our world." Without resiliency, this is not possible. When I look around our campus, however, I see it everywhere – and that bolsters my faith that we will overcome together.



Dr. Katricia Pierson  
President  
East Central University



### Snowmageddon!

Erica Minden, a junior from Marlow, takes a seat in a snow drift near Koi Ishto Stadium on the ECU campus. A rare winter storm shut down campus operations for seven business days, but students certainly enjoyed it!

## ECU Business students help 'incubate' success in Uganda

Using live poultry as a currency of sorts, East Central University Business students are helping bring purpose and pride to villages halfway around the world.

ECU students are working through the entrepreneurial and philanthropic organization Enactus to finance the purchase of 7,700 chickens for 77 Ugandan villages.

The goal is to provide the tools and support necessary to help promote financial literacy, self-sufficiency and sustainability. For example,



ECU alum Richard Kirabira and a friend providing an update on the program.

a flock of 100 hens can lay over 20,000 eggs per year.

To read the full story, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



DR. SHIRLEY MIXON

## Mixon to chair OKWHE

Dr. Shirley Mixon, East Central University professor and program director, has been named chair of the executive board of the Oklahoma Women in Higher Education (OKWHE), an organization whose goals are to encourage women's leadership in Oklahoma and beyond.

Mixon is the first ECU representative to be appointed to the OKWHE's executive board since the organization's founding in 2007, having first been appointed in 2010. Her three-year term as chair continues through 2024.

To read the full story, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

# TIGER TALES

## ECU English professor participates virtually in Texas poetry event

Dr. Ken Hada, professor of English and Languages at ECU, was selected to participate in the three-day, online "People's Poetry Festival." Hada read from his own work as part of the "Hope" panel on February 27. "I was asked



DR. KEN HADA

to present on the panel which features the poetry of 'Hope,' a theme I really care about," said Hada. "It is always an honor to be asked to present my work, especially to new and diverse audiences."

The People's Poetry Festival originated in

2015 through the collaboration of Texas A&M in Corpus Christi and Del Mar College. The annual festival brings together poets from the local area, regionally and beyond.

## Black History Month event delayed; BAA refocused on crowdfunding

The East Central University Black Alumni Association event scheduled for February 18, was postponed due to inclement weather. The highlight of the event was a panel discussion for Black History Month titled "It Takes All of Us – Speak Your Truth." The ECUBAA will meet later to discuss rescheduling this important event in the near future. In the meantime, the ECUBAA focused on a crowdfunding campaign for scholarships. The ECUBAA was established in 2018 to enhance the college experience of the increasing number of African American students on campus by awarding scholarships to deserving students and providing opportunities for students and alumni of color to socialize and network. To learn more, visit [www.eastcentraluniversitybaa.org](http://www.eastcentraluniversitybaa.org). ECU will notify the public as quickly as possible upon learning of a new event date.

## Students charged with updating Shakespeare

Some 400 years after his death, William Shakespeare is still keeping college students awake at night.

Dr. Joshua Grasso, associate professor of English and

Languages at East Central University, has charged his Shakespeare Seminar students with the task of modernizing the Bard's plays with the end goal of pitching their interpretations to a modern-day theater department or director.

Students have four of Shakespeare's comedies from which to choose – *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Comedy of Errors*. Students are charged with modernizing the play, but not its message.

Students will pitch their final projects on flipgrid.com – an online, video discussion forum – toward the end of the spring semester. Shakespeare fans in the community may enjoy following the process a little more closely at [ecushakespeare.blogspot.com](http://ecushakespeare.blogspot.com). more, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



DR. JOSHUA GRASSO



### Build it, and it will stay

Construction crews are making progress on the new retaining wall along Stadium Drive, just east of Fentem Hall. Time and Mother Nature had conspired over the decades to erode some of the area, but it will be stronger than ever soon!





### Linscheid Library continues proud tradition of outreach through service projects

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, East Central University's Linscheid Library is keeping up efforts to serve area communities beyond book and information needs. It is a proud and prioritized tradition of linking ECU to those who may not otherwise visit the campus on a regular basis.

"Libraries provide a space – whether physical, virtual or mental – that allows others to reach for the stars," said Dana Belcher, library director. "It is Linscheid Library's honor to help others achieve their dreams, and we are fulfilling our mission to collaborate with our communities to provide access to resources and education, empowering users to transform our world."

To learn about the service projects, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).



### Centennial celebration

Above, Alexis Benitez, Lauren Butler and Keaton Hackler of ECU's Rho Beta chapter celebrate Pi Sigma Alpha's centennial. At right is former ECU professor Lou Watkins, who began the local chapter.



### Political Science students celebrate Watkins legacy, Pi Sigma Alpha centennial

East Central University will celebrate the centennial of Pi Sigma Alpha in early March, while also honoring the legacy of pioneering ECU instructor Lou Watkins.

As chair of ECU's Government department, Watkins brought Pi Sigma Alpha to campus in 1988 in the form of the Rho Beta chapter. Since then, 258 members have been inducted into the chapter.

Founded in 1920, Pi Sigma Alpha is the National Political Science Honor Society. Although the society actually turned 100 in 2020, the timing of the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak pre-empted an organized celebration, either in-person or virtually.

As a result, the centennial observation will continue during 2021. An online Zoom celebration is scheduled from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. To attend the event, please email chapter advisor Christine Pappas at [cpappas@ecok.edu](mailto:cpappas@ecok.edu) for the Zoom link or call 580-559-5640 for more information.

To read more about Watkins or the event, visit [www.ecok.edu/news](http://www.ecok.edu/news).

### Advocating for ECU, higher ed

ECU President Katricia Pierson visits with a group of students who are planning to visit the State Capitol for Higher Education Day. Even though the event is virtual this year, Dr. Christine Pappas took her students in advance of the event's date to meet with legislators. Students, from left are Tyson Hammons, of Ringling; Shavon Harrison, of Atoka; and Casen Lauderdale, of Elmore City. The virtual event is set for March 9.



### Honoring Dr. King

ECU faculty and students spent the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday performing civic service to honor the leader's memory. The group read Dr. King's speeches in English and Spanish and collected 30 bags of trash around the Ada community.



Give back at [www.ecok.edu/donate/](http://www.ecok.edu/donate/)



### Senior night for Tiger hoops

February 25 was a special night for a trio of Tigers who were honored as seniors playing in their final regular season home games.

The women's basketball team honored a pair of seniors – Charlea Leonard, of Allen (pictured top left) and Kendall Schulte, of Skiatook (top right). Joining the athletes in the photos are

their families, Head Coach Matt Cole, Director of Athletics Dr. Jeff Williams, and ECU President Dr. Katricia Pierson.

Matt Garriga, of Wylie, Texas, the lone senior from the men's team (pictured at left) was honored by his friends, Dr. Williams, Dr. Pierson, and Head Coach Chris Crutchfield.

## Fan attendance policies set for outdoor sports

- Fan attendance is permitted at baseball/softball/soccer games due to the nature of outdoor competition and the enhanced ability to safely socially distance at outdoor venues.
- Fans in attendance must adhere to ECU Campus, Great American Conference, state and federal guidelines, which specify the wearing of facial coverings (masks) at all times and social distancing.
- Attendance is free for all fans, with seating on a first come, first served basis limited by the capacity of venue seating.
- Fans may sit in bleachers where socially distanced is marked or may sit in self-provid-

- ed chairs as long as socially distanced 6 feet from the fences surrounding the playing area.
- Fans will not be permitted to gather behind home plate/backstop areas nor team areas (dugouts, benches, etc.).
- Fans are asked to refrain from interacting with players on either team at the site of competition prior to, during and following the games.
- Signage will be posted around the venues and announcements made to remind attendees to wear masks and properly distance themselves from anyone outside of their household unit or family cluster.

- No concessions will be available at ECU home outdoor events.
  - Fans are encouraged to follow standard COVID-19 safety guidelines and self-evaluation practices, such as washing and sanitizing hands frequently.
  - If you are ill or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19, please do not attend the games in person.
- Links to the live stats and live video (when available) will be available on the schedule pages for each sport at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com) so you can watch from home.



Follow all sports at [www.ecutigers.com](http://www.ecutigers.com)