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Eastern Michigan University

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Editor's Note

In the Moment

What's the key to a fulfilling life?

I don't have a clue, but I think Charles McGee may. We visited the prolific artist and EMU emeritus faculty member in his Detroit studio in July, hoping to get compelling photographs. We got that and so much more. McGee reminded us what it's like to live in the moment. To be curious. To connect with other human beings. He peppered our photographer with questions about her Nikon, about the way she used an umbrella to bounce light off the wall and soften the flash. He wanted to know about the magazine, about the types of stories we like to pursue.

We were there because we were doing a story about him (p. 14), but he was much more interested in learning about us.

It made us think about how important it is—for our brains and our souls—to be inquisitive. It made us think about how many times we’ve opted for a state of "absent presence" (as in, I’m sitting right next to you but haven’t heard a word you said because I’ve been texting like crazy, or have my head buried in the computer, or don’t want to turn off my iPod).

Our time with him was a reminder to unplug and engage with the world around us.

McGee told us that he got so much out of teaching, and learned so much from his students, that he should have been paying EMU—not the other way around. He followed this with a hearty laugh, but we didn’t believe for a moment that this was merely a joke. He knows the value of human connection.

And, like all great teachers, he delivered that poignant lesson to us. – DG
From the President

We are pleased to welcome students, faculty, staff and alumni for what promises to be another exciting academic year at EMU!

It has been an outstanding summer on campus as faculty and staff continue to focus on relevant, outcome-based programs that engage and prepare students for the rapidly changing employment environment in which we live.

While Eastern is well known as a leading provider of higher education in Michigan for 160 years, our role as a key contributor to the local and state economy and the social fabric of our community is less understood. We have prepared a new Economic and Social Impact report to help provide the University community and those outside of EMU with a full understanding of the vitality of our institution. It provides a comprehensive summary of the important role of Eastern beyond the campus.

Here are some important facts about Eastern Michigan University that you may not have known:

- Eastern’s annual impact on Michigan’s economy was $3.7 billion in 2008—reflecting a return of $42 for each dollar received from the state.
- This annual impact includes $166 million in state tax revenue—equal to $1.87 for each dollar received from the state.
- Eastern’s operating budget and construction spending have an impact on the regional economy of more than $1.5 billion per year.
- Annual expenditures in Washtenaw County of $298 million have an impact of $567 million per year.
- Students spent an estimated $112 million for off-campus expenses in 2008.
- Nearly two-thirds of Eastern’s annual $179 million payroll is earned by employees who live in Washtenaw County.
- Retirees of Eastern living in Michigan earned an estimated $24.8 million in 2008, generating $1.5 million in state taxes.

- Eastern sponsored or hosted more than 2,200 events, programs and activities in 2007-2008 that included more than 900,000 attendees.
- Eastern received more than $4.3 million of external funding for service projects and community-based programming from more than 20 different organizations.
- EMU partnered with more than 800 different organizations to engage in community service activities.
- Ninety-one percent of our 22,000 students come from Michigan and 75 percent of our graduates live in Michigan, contributing to the civic, social and economic growth of the state.

This is just a snapshot of the information contained in the full report, which covers more than 70 pages and can be found at emich.edu/impact.

A walking tour around campus provides a firsthand look at some of the investment we are making. The tallest structure in the area is no longer a classroom building or the nearby water tower. It is the 225-foot construction crane towering over the new $90 million addition/renovation of the Science Complex. Infrastructure improvements on campus over the next few years will total more than $178 million—improving the University for the next generation of students, while at the same time boosting the local economy and putting Michigan citizens to work.

I invite all alumni back to take a look at the excitement on campus. While here, join us for one of our outstanding academic events such as the Graduate Research Fair and Undergraduate Research Symposium during Salute to Excellence Week, an art, music, dance or theatre program, or an athletic event such as football, women’s soccer, volleyball or men’s cross country. I promise you a great day.

Eastern University Matters
Steering through the Economic Storm

Universities are no more immune to the economic recession than other businesses—or families. EMU has been faced with difficult decisions as it strives to keep Education First while coping with ever-tighter budgets. This year’s tuition increase, at 3.82 percent, was the lowest among the state’s 15 public universities, working out to just $10 more per credit hour.

“The economic and financial challenges for students, their families and the state are unprecedented,” said EMU President Susan Martin. “Our students come from Michigan, graduate and stay in Michigan. Particularly in this economic environment, we felt it was essential to keep tuition as low as possible and to increase student financial aid.”

To shield students as much as possible from increased costs, EMU held budget increases to 1.9 percent, instituted a pay freeze for the 100 highest compensated staff members, deferred merit increases for administrative and professional staff, and implemented a voluntary furlough program.

“EMU is committed to increasing the number of college graduates in Michigan through an affordable and accessible education,” Martin said. “This effort would not be possible without sacrifice on the part of our employees.”

Employee sacrifice, however, will not be enough to overcome the challenges that remain, most notably the lack of state funding. Michigan ranks 50th in the nation in higher education funding, and budget cuts are continually looming.

To help offset decreasing state revenues, EMU has looked for creative ways to save money without eroding services to students. Energy savings continue to be one area where even small changes can yield big results. For example, installing a maintenance-free fan drive belt to a Halle Library air-handling fan saved the institution more than $30,000.

The annual cost of in-state tuition and fees for 2009-2010 is $8,377.

Health Corner

Classes scheduled? Check.
Books purchased? Check.
Hand sanitizer ready? Check.

Keeping healthy is foremost on the minds of EMU’s 22,000 students as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continues to monitor the potential for an H1N1 flu virus outbreak. EMU officials are doing their part to be prepared, establishing a health and safety team, creating a web site (emich.edu/uhs/swineflu), distributing hand sanitizer and providing students with a bevy of informational material—including hand, cough and sneeze hygiene tips.
My Inspiration

Phil Simmons
assistant professor, musical theatre

Areas of expertise: musical theatre direction and choreography, acting, audition strategies, and training actors, singers and dancers to be career performers onstage.

Professional highlights: served as dance captain for the Broadway first national tour of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" starring Rip Taylor, and the Broadway first national tour of "Man of LaMancha" starring Tony winner Ron Holgate and Grammy winner Jack Jones. He played Ozzie in the European tour of "On The Town" and had leads in "Evita" and "Singin' in the Rain" in the long-running European tour of The Best of Broadway.

Inspiration: I'm inspired when a performer lets me believe that I have made a personal connection with him—that he is giving me a glimpse of his heart while singing or dancing. Kristin Chenoweth in "Wicked," Sherry Renee Scott in "Aida," Stanley Bojarski or Jay Rogers in "When Pigs Fly." When an actor sweeps me out of the cinema and completely transports me with him, it's the ultimate escapism and voyeurism! More include Katharine Hepburn in "The Lion in Winter," Jimmy Stewart in "Rear Window," Whoopie Goldberg in "The Color Purple," Dustin Hoffman in "Tootsie," or Meryl (Goddess of all Actors) Streep in "Postcards from the Edge" or "The Hours."

Autism's Art

When Jessica Park was diagnosed with autism at 3 years of age in 1961, little was known about the disorder. Even less was known about how to help or educate people struggling with it. Many, however, were observed to have special skills or abilities. In Park's case, her affinity for shape and pattern allowed her to assemble puzzles picture-side down as a child. She eventually became an internationally recognized artist.

Park's paintings, done in acrylic, reflect a keen eye for detail, starting with a sketch made at the actual scene whenever possible. Colors are usually bright and full-bodied. As an artist, she is primarily self-taught. A resident of Williamston, Mass., she has presented her artwork at benefits for autism-related causes nationally, including at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

Park's artwork will be on display at EMU's Halle Library this fall in an exhibit titled, "The Art and Life of Jessica Park." For specific dates and details, visit emich.edu/library.
In Tune with the All-Steinway Initiative

Steinway Artist James Jelasic (BM80) visited EMU in June.

The high-quality sound and craftsmanship of Steinway pianos is widely recognized all over the world. To provide students and faculty with access to these exceptional instruments, Eastern Michigan University's music and dance department launched the All-Steinway School Initiative in 2007. The initiative hopes to raise $2 million to replace and maintain 84 campus pianos.

"As an All-Steinway university we will build prestige, enhance student and faculty recruitment and create a lasting legacy of excellence in music education for future generations," said Dr. David Woike, head of the music department.

Since the initiative began, the department has been able to acquire four new Steinway pianos. One is in the Student Center, where it can be played by students or taken into the banquet rooms for special events. The other three pianos are in the faculty studio and student practice rooms in Alexander Hall.

James Jelasic (BM80), who was recognized as a Steinway Artist last year, has offered to lend a hand in the fundraising effort. As a Steinway Artist, he joins musicians as varied as Van Cliburn, Harry Connick, Jr. and Billy Joel. Steinway & Sons awards this coveted designation based on a rigorous review of a pianist's career, including degrees, performances, recordings and teaching. Steinway Artists have special access to Steinway pianos for performances anywhere in the world.

Jelasic's education at EMU also began with an honor: he won the Dillman scholarship in his first year. A second win the following year cemented his relationship with the University. "It was the first time in EMU history that anyone won that scholarship two years in a row," said Jelasic, who completed a bachelor's degree in piano performance.

At Eastern, Jelasic's talents were nurtured by faculty members such as Emily Lowe, who invited Jelasic to sing a capella with the madrigal singers on their tour of England and Ireland, a first for a freshman. "The EMU faculty really take you under their wing and mother and father you," said Jelasic. By the time he graduated, the once-shy young man had also performed twice with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

"It was obvious to everyone that he had real talent and was going to go places," said Paul Lehman, piano technician with Eastern Michigan's music and dance department. Lehman and Jelasic were fellow music students at EMU in the late 1970s. Jelasic went on to complete a Master of Music degree in accompanying and chamber music from the University of Michigan in 1982. He then studied music in Germany and France before founding a society dance orchestra in Washington, D.C. in 1986. Led by the grand piano, the orchestra specializes in music of the 30s, 40s and 50s. Rockefeller, Kennedys and other well-known figures were frequent guests at the Park Hyatt Melrose Room, where Jelasic's group was the resident dance band for 20 years.

The reputation of Jelasic and his orchestra led to some flattering invitations. In 1996, Jae Nasser, Ford Motor Company's chief executive officer, flew the orchestra to Michigan to perform at the grand reopening of the Detroit Opera House. Closer to home, his group was invited to perform at one of the official balls for President George Bush's second inauguration in 2005.

—Lisa Donovan
With recent movies like "The Hangover," "Wedding Crashers," and "I Love You, Man," it seems Hollywood is fascinated with bachelors. But the attraction is tempered with repulsion: we love to watch crazy single guys having fun, while we wonder if it isn't time they grew up and settled down.

It turns out these mixed feelings about bachelors are nothing new. Eastern Michigan history professor John McCurdy has been researching masculinity and how it was viewed in America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He's published several papers on the subject, and now a book titled "Citizen Bachelors: Manhood and the Creation of the United States" (Cornell University Press, 2009).

People in colonial America, McCurdy reports, were conflicted about single men. While independence and free-spiritedness were admirable qualities, many feared that the bachelors around them were too often drunk, frivolous and sexually reckless. Sound familiar? In the colonies, single men who did not own property paid extra taxes, and were unable to vote. And it was thought that the best cure for a young man's laziness or lack of ambition was to marry.

Today we are far more understanding of the many reasons a man might not get married, but bachelors are still objects of scrutiny—indeed, pity. Single men, say researchers, are more likely than married men to be unemployed; when they have jobs, they earn less. Single men are more likely to be depressed than married men. They are less likely to be religious. They move to new homes more often.

And their numbers are growing. In 1960, about five percent of American adults were unmarried men; today single men make up nearly 20 percent. We don't yet know, however, how an increase in bachelors—and the other ways that family life is being redefined—will affect what it means to be "normal" in America.

In a July 3 op-ed in the New York Times, McCurdy explained that the Founding Fathers' eventual acceptance of bachelors as worthy citizens has had lasting importance for all Americans. It was the first step, he wrote, in establishing a nation in which "personal differences—first marital status, but later sex and race—no longer mattered in determining one's citizenship."

McCurdy's current research continues his exploration of masculinity in early America, especially as it influenced explorers and conquistadors.

Military Friendly

Eastern has long offered a well-regarded military science program whose graduates are commissioned second lieutenants in the U.S. Army, Army Reserve or National Guard. Anyone who has spent time on campus may have seen cadets running, training, and rappelling off the roof of Roosevelt Hall. But what about the other side of the equation—providing education for those who are returning to civilian life after their military service?

Eastern has been making strides toward providing a full range of educational services to veterans of the U.S. military. These efforts recently earned EMU a designation as one of the nation's most "military friendly" universities from G.I. Jobs magazine. The most visible of these efforts is the transition of the Veteran Services Office to a new location in McKenny Hall, with a strong emphasis on helping veterans navigate the labyrinth of paperwork necessary to ensure they have access to the educational benefits they are entitled to receive. Eastern currently enrolls about 300 veterans, and is working to increase that number by actively recruiting veterans and working individually with them on their unique educational needs.

Even students are helping. First Lieutenant Adam Betz founded an EMU campus chapter of Student Veterans of America, which reaches out to vets on campus and connects them with other vets and active-duty members of the military. The group, which has a service, educational and social focus, currently numbers 50 members.
A conversation with Coach Ron English

by Jeff Samoray

Eastern Michigan University football entered an exciting new era last December when officials announced the hiring of head coach Ron English. Known for building strong defensive units, the 41-year-old English was defensive coordinator at the University of Louisville in 2008. He was also a defensive backs coach and defensive coordinator at the University of Michigan from 2003 to 2007. English took time from his preseason practice schedule to speak with Eastern about his coaching philosophy, team goals and personal life.

Eastern: You entertained several coaching opportunities last off-season before accepting the head coach position at Eastern. What made the Eastern job enticing to you?

English: The timing was right—Eastern sent the message that it wants to win, right now. There's a lot of support for the football program, and I came away with a good feeling after meeting with [EMU President] Dr. Martin and [Director of Athletics] Derrick Gragg. Those factors tipped the scales for me.

Eastern: Last season Eastern finished 3-9. What are your short- and long-term plans for rebuilding the program?
**English:** In the short term, we really want to change the culture and teach the kids how to work hard and believe they can win. The harder you work, the more confident you become. And confidence leads to winning. We want to have a team that plays smart and makes few mistakes. I firmly believe that the team that makes the fewest mistakes is the team that wins. Of course, our eventual goal is to be a consistent championship contender. I don’t really have a list of long-term goals. When you achieve your short-term goals, you get closer to becoming a champion.

**Eastern:** One football adage has it that offense puts fans in the stands but defense wins championships. With your strong background as a defensive coordinator, is this something that you believe?

**English:** There’s a lot of truth in that statement, because you can’t just allow the other team to score at will. You have to score points to win championships, but that doesn’t mean that you should play without a defensive mindset.

**Eastern:** What are the characteristics that make up your ideal football player?

**English:** Football is a game based on toughness, so I like having tough players. They must also play with a lot of passion and be focused on achieving goals. Football is just like any other skill or profession—if you put effort and hard work into it, you’ll be successful.

**Eastern:** You have an identical twin brother, Don, who also played football with you at UC-Berkeley. Did you ever try to mess with your players by bringing him to practice to act as your “stand-in” and making them do crazy, off-the-wall drills?

**English:** We tried to do that a couple times, but it never really worked. [laughs] People can easily tell us apart because my brother and I have different personalities.

**Eastern:** You have three young children, Simon, 9; Sidney, 5; and Seth, 3. Would you like to see them become involved in athletics, either as players or coaches?

**English:** Whatever they want to do is great. It doesn’t necessarily have to be in athletics, as long as they have fun doing it.

**Eastern:** Is your wife Sophia a big football fan?

**English:** When we first met, she knew absolutely nothing about football. She still doesn’t know a lot about the game or follow it closely, but she’s very supportive and enjoys athletics.
Ten Places You Should Know about on EMU’s Campus

by Amy Whitesall

Some places at Eastern Michigan are as much a part of the EMU experience as your student number—who hasn’t had a class in Pray-Harrold or noshed with friends at DC1? But other spots you’ve got to find for yourself, and they become special for their own reasons—a great view, a different perspective, the thrill of low-grade rebellion or maybe just the luxury of a little privacy. The best ones, you share. We’ve got 10 to share with you.

1. ROTC Trail
The mile-long paved path that runs from the Convocation Center to Cornell St. is a mainstay in the ROTC’s physical training regimen, not to mention a great place to run, walk, bike or be run over by a grounds crew member driving a Cushman. A well-kept, 8-foot-wide strip of asphalt follows the power line, with tall trees on either side, and steep banks along much of the trail make the trees seem even taller. The ROTC cadets call it the Ninja Trail. Imagine running it in the pre-dawn darkness and you’ll know why.

2. University Park at Sunset
Okay, University Park is pretty inviting at all hours—but it really shines (or maybe reflects) if you walk the asphalt path that passes behind Big Bob’s Lake House at sunset. Check the view to the west, across the ponds, bridge and fountains as the sun drops behind the Student Center.

3. Jones/Goddard courtyard
A narrow entryway, blocked half-heartedly by a section of cyclone fence, leads to this little sycamore-shaded oasis between Jones and Goddard. No one lives there anymore—the halls have been out of residential service for four or five years. But the big trees and almost complete separation from what’s outside give the place a certain secret garden charm. We’re told there’s also a way to the roof from inside the courtyard. But you didn’t hear it from us.

4. Student Center, Room 300
Situated in the southeast corner of the Student Center, the balcony of Room 300 features one of the best panoramic views of campus, from the lakes and First-Year...
Center in the east to Mark Jefferson and the library clock tower in the south. Best served with a splash of fall color.

**Rec IM pool view**
On the fourth floor of the Olds-Robb Recreation building there’s a window that offers a bird’s-eye view of EMU’s 50-meter pool, known as one of the fastest in the state. In 2008 you could have peered down and watched soon-to-be Olympic champion Michael Phelps training here. Phelps swam with Club Wolverine, one of several competitive clubs that use the pool.

**Halle Library, third floor**
Shhh. The best quiet corner in the library is on the west side of the third floor, just beyond the University archives. Big windows face Oakwood and the neighborhood beyond, and in the winter, steam rising from vents at the base of the building adds a little drama to the solitude.

**Convocation Center loading dock**
Huh? Yes, the Convocation Center has the Cadillac of loading docks—four big, clean bays, lots of room, lots of parking and plenty of space to back a semi up flush to the building. It may not mean much to you, but the performers, production managers and road crews who move big events in and out of the building don’t come in through the front door. It’s the building’s backside that makes the first impression. Assistant director for event marketing and promotions Marci Szabo, who’s worked at every major venue in the state, calls it the premier loading dock in Michigan.

**Sherzer Observatory**
Yeah, everyone knows it’s there, but just walking past doesn’t count. On clear Thursday nights during the school year, Physics and Astronomy staff and Astronomy Club members will guide you to the observation deck atop four-story Sherzer Hall. From there you can see the cooling towers of the Fermi II nuclear power plant in Monroe without the aid of a telescope, or look through Sherzer’s 10-inch (diameter) refracting telescope and see the rings or Saturn or the moons of Jupiter (or other cool stuff depending on the season) in stunning detail.

**Porter Building, north face**
Under the right conditions (snowy) the steep slope on the north side of the Porter Building has historically been an excellent place to sled. It’s close to the Commons (formerly the source of fast-sliding cafeteria trays), has a fairly unobstructed swath, and—in case of mishap—is just steps away from Snow Health Center.

**Big Bob’s fireplace**
Unless it’s booked for an event, the Lake House is open to visitors, and in the winter the staff keeps a fire blazing in the fireplace. Add Wi-Fi, comfy chairs and a big-screen TV, and there’s almost no reason ever to leave.
“My Favorite Is Always the Next One” by Rebecca Kavanagh

What will Charles McGee create next? Whatever life shows him.

Charles McGee was reluctant, at first, to stage a retrospective of his life’s work. He is a man who looks forward, not back. When asked which of the 66 paintings, assemblages and sculptures to be displayed this fall on the EMU campus is his favorite, he says, “None of them.”

It’s not that McGee is unhappy with his past efforts. He says instead, “My favorite piece is always the next thing.”

Indeed, the artist seems to top himself at every turn. Over the past six decades, he has created artwork on display in private and public collections across the globe, including those within the permanent installations at the Detroit Institute of Arts, at Detroit’s Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History and on the focal-point wall of the Detroit People Mover’s Broadway Station. So distinguished has been his career that McGee was presented with the inaugural Detroit Emment Artist Award last year by the Kresge Foundation—an honor that came with a $50,000 prize.

“Charles McGee exemplifies what it means to be eminent and what it means to be a Detroiter,” says Rip Rapson, president of the Kresge Foundation. “He is an artist of international renown who in his life and his work is energetic, passionate, always probing and eager to reinvent.”

To his very core, McGee is a student: His Detroit studio is his schoolhouse, his brushes are his books. Even when he was being paid to teach as a member of EMU’s painting faculty for 18 years, McGee says he was the one getting an education.

“I didn’t go to Eastern with the idea that I was the professor,” says McGee. “I went in with my mind open. I learned so much from my students that I should have paid them a salary.”

This receptiveness to new ideas is evident in McGee’s work, says EMU art history Professor Julia R. Myers, curator of Energy: Charles McGee at Eighty-Five. “One of the most interesting aspects of his career is that Charles has not succumbed to the pressure put upon artists to adhere to one signature style,” Myers says. McGee’s technique has spanned from early works in the
1950s and '60s that feature images of African-American life to the abstract during the 1970s to what's come to be known as his mature style from the 1980s on—a return to the figure with paintings, collages and soaring sculptures that explore themes of equality and interconnectedness.

Says Myers, "Through it all, you can see that he has constantly educated himself, always asking, 'What's new in art? What can I learn? How can I make myself better?'"

### Mandated by Nature

At an age when most people are well into retirement, McGee goes to his studio daily, takes an active role in the Detroit community, and teaches one day a week at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center in metro Detroit.

"When you give your life to something over a period of time, it's no longer work," McGee says. "It's a labor of love."

McGee believes he has been mandated by nature to do what he does: "Where nature may have given you the ability to run fast, nature has endowed me with the ability to observe and to create art. I have no choice. I breathe it, I sleep it."

When asked about his transition through the decades from realistic charcoal drawings to avant-garde paintings to neon light sculptures to mixed-media collages, McGee says he has been blessed to have been able to open himself up to new possibilities. "I've given myself over to the idea that life will continue to show me new ways of doing things," he says. "My work metamorphoses because I never stop reaching."

This was true, too, of the 10-year-old Charles McGee, who arrived in Detroit from his grandparents' South Carolina sharecropper farm having never owned a pair of shoes, unable to read or write. It didn't take long for his teachers to single McGee out for his discernible talent, which he developed while creating posters for school events and through classes at the local library.

His formal studies were put on hold through his teen and young adult years while he went to work and later joined the U.S. Marines. But even when sandblasting carburetors or surveying the horror of Nagasaki, Japan, one month after it had been decimated by the U.S. atomic bomb, McGee was receptive to whatever lessons presented themselves.

Upon returning home, he worked in an assembly plant and as a draftsman for the government, but spent nights and weekends at the Society of Arts and Crafts (now the College for Creative Studies), where he attended classes for 10 years.

By the time McGee was 43 years old in 1967, he had become successful enough to quit his day job and make a living doing what he loved. He traveled to Europe for a year of training in Barcelona, Spain, before returning for good to his beloved Detroit.

There, he embraced the city and its art scene. In 1969, he was asked to create a showcase called Seven Black Artists. This pivotal event opened several doors to McGee, who then:

- Established Gallery 7, a collective that provided much-needed exposure for black artists in the early 1970s.
- Started the Charles McGee School of Art, through which gallery artists volunteered their time to teach classes to all ages.
- Was invited by EMU to serve as an artist in residence,
gaining tenure a decade later and finally retiring from full-time teaching in 1987.

"Charles was a great benefit to Eastern during his nearly 20 years here," says exhibit curator Myers. "His connections to the Detroit art scene were beyond compare, and he was extremely devoted to the learning process."

That devotion is what finally compelled McGee to greenlight the forthcoming exhibition. "This show is for the students," he says, "so they can see the possibilities."

Art appreciation, says McGee, is not about emotional edification. "The important thing is to discern and understand what constructs a work of art: line, shape, color, value, texture, content. Then we can sit down and have a conversation about order in our lives."

Ongoing Connections

From its inception, the McGee exhibition has been focused on education. For three years, Myers has involved students in the research of McGee’s life—which included locating more than 250 works of art, most of them in private collections. "When students do something that has a real-world outcome, it makes their studies more meaningful," says Myers.

One such student was Michelle Hartung (BA06, MS08), whose undergraduate degree is in art history and who served as a graduate assistant in the art department for two years. "Students of art can absorb so much from Charles because he has so much to give," Hartung says. "He is always teaching, always making sure people are learning through every experience."

A key part of the exhibition’s scope is its outreach to local children. Tour materials—including hands-on activities—have been developed by visual arts education students led by Dr. Elizabeth Ament. "We chose the theme ‘Interconnection’ to help students relate to McGee’s art," Ament says. "We think they’ll be fascinated by the fact that, no matter where he’s been in his life, Charles McGee has forged a strong connection to his community."

It seems a fitting lesson plan about the patriarch of Detroit’s art scene, a man in his ninth decade who says he is enamored of life. "When I die, I will leave here not having scratched the surface of what there is to know," McGee says. "It makes every breath precious."
Start-Up:
Do You Have What It Takes?

With the economy still in a slump, starting your own business can seem more appealing than ever. How do you know if you have the traits to succeed?

There is a measure of irony in what's happening these days inside the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), housed in EMU's College of Business. Business and economic activity in Michigan might be downright depressing—with the auto industry tanking and the state's unemployment topping a scary 15.4 percent—but business couldn't be brisker inside the College's Center for Entrepreneurship.

"We're seeing a huge influx of folks right now," says Wendy Thomas (MBA08), associate regional director for the Michigan SBTDC, Region 8 office, and an EMU Master of Business Administration alumna.

"Across industries, it is very difficult to find work. We're seeing a lot of displaced workers, those with particular skill sets, looking to find a way to continue on with their services. The auto industry has dried up, and they are now looking at other markets."

EMU alumnus Bob Sullivan (BBA86), an entrepreneurial success story, observes: "Then people are one step from being out of a job, they often look at being an entrepreneur as the next stage in their career. This environment has really forced a lot of people to decide, 'now is the time to try it because I don't have any other options.'"

For these searching individuals, starting a small business or consulting firm may offer the break of light in a dark sky. It is the job of people like Thomas to help them decide whether they are entrepreneurial material. In other words, do they have what it takes?

The decision to take that plunge is riskier today than in good times. Accepting a corporate buyout and opening up shop is one thing when the economy is healthy, but there's more at stake when it's not. "Do I start a business with that severance package or continue to support my family? The risks are far greater now for those who don't have an old job to go back to," Thomas observes.

Self-analysis is key to deciding whether what you want to do meshes with what it takes to get it done. "The most successful are probably the A-type personalities in the room, who are not afraid to take chances," Thomas says. Self-directed, committed, passionate, able to lead and motivate others—these are all adjectives that apply to entrepreneurs, business experts say.

The Center for Entrepreneurship has many services for people who want to push ahead. Using volunteer professionals and staff, they help clients examine their strengths and weaknesses, study market research, size up the competition, devise a strong business plan and, perhaps most importantly, look at financing options.

"There is a great push right with entrepreneurship now, at the state and local level, recognizing that small business is going to spur the economy," Thomas said.

No matter how bad things are, an economic turnaround will be fueled in large part by small businesses," says Leonard Sholtis, a lecturer in the College's Department of Management who teaches entrepreneur classes. "They are the majority employer. I've read as high as 90 percent of
people employed today work for small businesses.”

And these businesses are created by people who have “an idea that nobody else has.” In his classes, Sholts uses real-world examples of entrepreneurs who have found a new way to provide a service or product. For example, as the operator of a family-owned beauty supply business, Sholtis once crossed paths with the woman who invented “sponge-ables” while trying to solve her seven-year-old’s aversion to bath time. By putting glycerin soap inside a duck-shaped sponge, she got her son to clean up. Her business took off.

It is estimated that 80 to 85 percent of the technologies that Americans will use in the next 30 years have not been invented yet, Sholtis says. Today the Internet and cell phones are ubiquitous, but Boomers can attest to life without them. “Somebody had the idea for a car to run on corn; it can generate a whole new industry.”

Besides finding a special product or service, experience and knowledge that will impress customers are essential to owning a small business today, Sholtis says. Customers can see right through operators who don’t know what they’re talking about.

Another characteristic: “You must be a workaholic. A business becomes like a child. You just can’t leave it.”

Interest in starting a business drew a high turnout last spring to the opening of a downtown Ypsilanti incubator for up to 16 small businesses, he notes. Nearly all were leased by the grand opening. The incubator is a project of Ann Arbor Spark, designed to encourage business growth, and EMU.

Sholtis agrees there is great collaboration among business groups, educational institutions and the government today for steering workers toward small business development. Michigan’s “No Worker Left Behind” helps with retraining costs, but a major obstacle to entrepreneurs is available financing. Traditional bank financing has stalled, and it’s even tough to get loans from the Small Business Administration, he says, because the federal agency uses banks to guarantee those loans.

That leaves would-be entrepreneurs relying on their own money, support from family and friends, or, as he’s seen, people returning to school to get some additional knowledge before striking out.

Bob Sullivan, CEO of The Wireless Source based in Bloomfield Hills, started his cell phone recycling business nearly 10 years ago in another time of economic turmoil. He was working for Telesource Services in Pontiac when he offered to buy the company’s cell phone recycling division. What happened next gave new meaning to the term “fire sale.”

The night he received approval to buy the division, a fire overwhelmed the business, destroying inventory, equipment and the workplace for 100 employees. It forced Sullivan to look at how he would redesign operations for even greater efficiencies. This ability to solve problems in new, creative ways is essential for the entrepreneur.

“There’s always opportunity in chaos, and there’s no doubt there’s lots of chaos in the marketplace right now.”

There are more spin-off companies being created by workers who are down-sized or “right-sized” from larger corporations. Smaller businesses can be more agile and adjust quickly to changes and shifts in markets than larger firms.

“If you work hard, your chances of success are better than your chances of failure,” Sullivan says.

Philanthropist Robert Skandalaris, the founder of Auburn Hills-based Quantum Ventures of Michigan and one of the University’s biggest success stories, couldn’t find a job when he decided to pursue a master of accounting degree at EMU in 1974. “There were no jobs in 1974,” says Skandalaris, who founded his company in 2002 after working for years at a top public accounting firm. Quantum specializes in the acquisition and development of middle-market firms.

In some ways, today’s challenging economy could be a good time to start a business, he says, but only if one assumes the market will bounce back. “You’ve got to decide if you are someone who can take the ups and downs and the risk in starting a business.” Skandalaris, along with his family, founded the Center for Entrepreneurship at Washington University. Frequently asked to identify the essential rules for entrepreneurs, he lists these:

• “Ninety percent of all businesses fail. Stay true to what you know.” Too many people mistakenly go after the hot, new thing, and not the service or product they know how to deliver.

• The ability to react quickly to change is a necessity. Not every outcome can be predicted. Adjustments to surprises are a must.

• “You shouldn’t start a business if you are not willing to lose real dollars.” Don’t invest money you can’t afford to lose.

• Would-be entrepreneurs need to find mentors who are willing to advise them. Most people cannot read their own strengths and weaknesses.
A teaching program with EMU connections is delivering big things for some of our smallest learners. Phonic Soup—a program for teaching phonemic awareness and reading skills—doesn't just help young children with their oral language pronunciation, reading and writing skills, but also helps improve their self-esteem. "It teaches them competence and confidence, both of which build on each other, allowing them to move forward," said Phonic Soup co-creator Steve Starll (BS79, MA79). He has been a speech language pathologist (SLP) for 30 years.
Phonic Soup is a language-based, multi-sensory approach to the teaching of phonics skills. It's designed to teach letter recognition and sound-symbol association, sound blending, segmenting, and beginning spelling skills to preschool through first-grade students.

Starll developed Phonic Soup in the early 1990s, in collaboration with fellow SLP Sally Proehl (MA 77) and with Beau Roy, a certified school psychologist. Starll and Proehl were SLPs at Gibraltar's Chapman Elementary School, working with children with impairments in a pre-primary classroom.

“We decided that we had to do something to make information more concrete, because they were not getting the abstract. We started creating different lessons, trying to use association and categorization to help the children's memory so they could retain information,” said Starll. “We used visual imagery with letters embedded in the pictures so the students could remember what the letters looked like. Even though they didn’t know the letters’ names, they could still read and write.”

It soon became apparent that students using the program were performing at the same level as their mainstreamed peers—or higher. Other teachers in Gibraltar requested the program for all students. Today, Phonic Soup, patented in 1994, has been implemented at schools across the nation.

The elementary years are prime time for acquiring your reading and writing skills,” said Ann Langford (BS 78, MA 79), an SLP in the Pinckney Community Schools. “If you have a language problem or an articulation problem, it will impact your ability to read and write. How do you learn the sound/symbol relationship that you need for reading and sounding out words if you look at the letter and you say a sound that's different from what other people say? That's one of the most common single sound articulation errors.”

According to Starll, Phonic Soup stands out from other phonic programs because it’s concrete, particularly the association between the stimulus object and the sound. For instance, Starll used a picture of popcorn called “popping popcorn and its ‘P’ sound.” Starll demonstrated the “P” sound for emphasis, pointing out the association between the stimulus object and the sound.

“It’s because of the stimulus object, such as a picture or a toy, that children understand a vocabulary word or a phoneme instantly. This association is especially effective for many cognitively impaired children.

“That association makes a difference,” Starll said. “Another value in using toys is high interest. High interest is a key in any program’s success, especially in the early ages. We start the kids in speech pathology before age 2. In preschool through first grade, if there’s high interest, you’re going to have children listening. And if they’re listening, they’re learning.”

SLPs are always stimulating children to make different sounds, sometimes parts of language and sometimes simple sounds that might appear random to a casual listener.

“From 18-20 months, you can literally present the picture of the object and say the sound, and kids will start imitating that sound. Once they start imitating sounds and you build up that sound repertoire, you get more words from the children,” Starll said. “We know from the work of speech therapists that you can teach students one sound at a time or you can teach them to say a lot of different sounds. You end up with more words when you do the latter. Research shows that by the time they’re 4, the type of reader they’re going to be has already been established. We need to intervene early and get that sound system in there.”

Much of a child’s writing ability is based on oral language pronunciation. If children aren’t pronouncing a word correctly, they aren’t writing it correctly.

“When you have that sound system in place, you’re able to see a symbol and know a sound. When adults see a word, we don’t have to go ‘buh-a-d’ to know it’s ‘bad.’ Young children, when they see a letter, know the sound immediately, instantaneously—and that leads to reading,” said Starll. “As children gain competence with some of the sounds, they become more confident. As they grow more confident, they become even more competent, and it just keeps going.”

For further information, go to phonic soup.com.
Finding the Perfect Fit

"Maria" is a pretty little girl, a little wobbly on her prosthetic leg, and it's hard to tell how much she hears, or at least how much she's actually listening. That's the way it is with children, but especially with those who aren't sure how they'll fit in on playgrounds full of children with two healthy legs.

About 10 years old, Maria is just concluding her appointment at Swanson Orthotic & Prosthetic Research Center in Toledo. Her parents stand to the right. In front of her are Ben Hammond, one of the clinic's licensed prosthetists— or the little girl's "leg doctor"— and his wife, Crystal, who happens to be here to visit.

Perhaps no two people on earth can better understand what Maria faces—and help her meet the challenge.

"I promise you, it will be easier when you're older, as long as you work hard now," Crystal Hammond says, her mini-skirt revealing her own prosthetic leg. "Right now you have to think about every single step you take." But pretty soon, Crystal adds,
the little girl will only have to think about every tenth step, and
then, one day, none at all.

Ben Hammond, who in 2007 earned EMU's Graduate
Certificate in Prosthetics, listens, nods and explains to the girl
and her parents that the prosthetic is adjusted perfectly for the
child's body now—a must to prevent pain and infection. But
she is growing, and will need adjustments.

A
s he looks from parents to child, something in Ben's face
reveals not just his confident knowledge, but a certain
empathy—and fidelity. As one of four certified and li-
censed prosthetists at the clinic, he will be here when the girl
comes back, and if she has problems, he will solve them.

This scene nicely sums up the Hammonds themselves. The
couple married two years ago—two years after Crystal, born
with spina bifida, finally decided to amputate the leg that from
birth had caused her more than 25 surgeries, constant pain,
infection and disability. Ben Hammond supported her decision
do so—like, really supported her.

"He never left the hospital," Crystal Hammond, 28, says a
few minutes after the little girl and her family—Ben's final pa-
tients of the day—leave. Crystal, who writes proposals for a
nearby electrical engineering firm, often volunteers at the clinic,
especially its community activities that bring together ampu-
tees and their families.

"He stayed every single night, showering in
the community shower," Crystal continues
about her own surgery. "We weren't even en-
gaged then."

In a sense, they were. Both knew pretty much
at first sight they were destined to be together.
They met in 2003 through a mutual friend at

Crystal had told friends she never
would date someone who listened to
country music, had red hair, watched
sports, wore jerseys or hunted.
Somehow, those objections melted as
soon as she met Ben.

Bowling Green State University, where both
were students and where Crystal later earned a
degree in English literature and Ben earned a
bachelor's degree in athletic training.

"I had a four-inch lift on my shoes," Crystal
says, "and I would just drag my foot behind."

"I thought she was beautiful," Ben, 27, recalls. "I don't
remember thinking about her leg."

Crystal had told friends she never would date someone who
listened to country music, had red hair, watched sports, wore
jerseys or hunted. Somehow, those objections melted as soon
as she met Ben. "I told my friend, 'I met the man I'm going to
marry," Crystal says.

Instant chemistry aside, the attraction for Crystal included
Ben's indifference about her disfigured leg, and she has not lost
her deep appreciation for this quality. "To me, it wouldn't have
mattered if he was purple," she says, "The fact that he didn't see
this—all my life, all people saw was this. He made me feel beau-
tiful."

For the record, Crystal is beautiful—and now, she's beauti-
ful as she listens to country music, watches football and
hunts. She recently nailed her first wild turkey using her father's
12-gauge. "It's in the freezer," she says.

What's great about their story, though, is that Crystal ended
up helping Ben as much as the reverse. When they met, Ben had
been studying and working in sports medicine—one reason
imperfect body machines drew little notice from him. But after
they had been dating for a while, he saw how much Crystal suf-
fered. "She was always sore, uncomfortable, and then it got to
the point where she could barely function," Ben says. "We went
through all these doctors, and none ever gave us an answer as far as correcting the limb, or helping her to function better.”

One day, they went to St. Vincent Hospital and Medical Center in Toledo and met with a doctor who broached the “A” word. He talked about how, after amputating Crystal’s leg below the knee, he could surgically reroute Crystal’s nerves, enabling her with good prosthetics to live a normal life in most ways.

Crystal made the most difficult decision of her life, and then she and Ben talked to a prosthetist. That’s when Ben “walked on air.”

“Her knee, he could surgically reroute Crystal’s nerves, enabling her with good prosthetics to live a normal life in most ways.”

She and Ben talked to a prosthetist. That's when Ben said, "I walked out of the prosthetist's and I was walking on air."

"He said, 'This is what I want to do with my life,'" Crystal recalls.

Is the Prosthetic Working?

When Frank Fedel joined Eastern Michigan University’s orthotics and prosthetics master’s degree program in 2003, he was surprised by the lack of hard data that could show whether a prosthetic worked the way it was meant to.

“I wanted to see something that said, ‘OK, we’re making a difference,’” said Fedel, an exercise science lecturer at EMU. “I come from a medical background where we needed to document that we had an outcome—an EKG score that was more normal, a lower heart rate. I thought we in O&P needed to move toward a more objective, outcomes-based performance model.”

Fedel joined forces with a team of engineers from College Park Industries, a company in Fraser that makes prosthetic feet, to co-invent and develop the Intelligent Prosthetic Endoskeletal Component System (iPecs), a device that sheds new light on the forces of everyday life on amputees and their prosthetics. The first crude version was cobbled together and tested in a lab at EMU. An iPecs device analyzes gait, revealing twisting, direction of force and other parameters to help clinicians and researchers refine the way a prosthetic limb fits and performs.

Initially, iPecs will be a research tool, Fedel said. But, ultimately, he’d like to see it become as commonplace as heart rate monitors are to cardiac patients or blood sugar monitors are to diabetics. Using the device would help those with prosthetics detect and head off potential problems as they get back to normal activities.

Though iPecs is being developed to use with prosthetic feet, Fedel said the device has potential in other fields, too.

“One of the design criteria was to make it as flexible as possible,” Fedel said. “Now we can really see what’s going on all the time. The road starts with research.”

— Amy Whitesall

Crystal went online and found a new program in Ypsilanti, Michigan—at Eastern Michigan University. It was, no pun intended, a perfect fit.

“The opportunity they provided allowed me to work and take classes at night,” Ben says. “And the teachers had a tremendous ability to be flexible. They’d say, ‘You can come in on the weekend; I’ll stay late and help you out.’ They went to such efforts to make sure the students were prepared for the working field.”

That’s evident at the Swanson Center, where Ben is one of few staffers who are not amputees. He proudly shows off the full-service clinic, where staff not only fit patients for prosthetics, they make the devices from scratch. He shows large work rooms full of equipment where plaster is mixed and poured into molds for “test socket” prosthetics, and where machines can produce the perfect size for every patient, often after minute adjustments Ben identifies using his knowledge of human biology. It’s a mixture of science and art, he says.

Ben felt prepared for all of this. "From Eastern’s program, I felt like I was able to come in here and be on the same page with what Vern Swanson wanted me to do." This and his marriage to Crystal (Ben has fitted and made all three of her prosthetic legs) have helped him gain credibility with his patients. He saw how well Crystal’s own amputation went, and how pain-free she has been ever since.

"Crystal did not know what it was like to be able-bodied, so she’s functioning on a much higher level than she ever thought she could,” he says. Clearly, in the right situation, with the right prosthetics, amputation rocks.

Crystal did have some reservations. “What if I woke up one day and said, ‘I hate being an amputee?’” she says. "But that’s never happened. There’s an incredible relief when the pain’s gone.”

Today, the Hammonds volunteer often at EMU, and Ben invites students to the clinic for study. Ben passed his certification tests from Ohio’s State Board of Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics in January and received his license in May. In August, Crystal secretly decided to throw him a party—to celebrate not just his license but all he had done for her. She told him she was planning another family member’s surprise birthday party. For days, Ben, oblivious, helped cook and get ready for some 100 guests.

Crystal fooled him big time. When he walked into the party and everyone yelled, “Surprise!” Ben was flabbergasted. He turned toward his beaming wife and whispered, "What is this?" And she replied, "It’s for you."
Innocence Abroad

An Alumna Finds Herself in a Lost Incan City

by Jeff Samoray
Jacqueline Rubasky thought she nearly had it all.

As a successful account director in the late 1990s at a high-profile Chicago marketing firm, Rubasky helped promote brands and create ad campaigns for some of the world’s most successful companies. Her client list from that period reads like a Who’s Who of American consumerism: Kraft Foods, Target, Microsoft, Frito-Lay, Toys "R" Us, Visa and McDonald’s, to name a few. She consulted with Major League Baseball on the creation of the Colorado Rockies and Arizona Fall League. She helped develop a product licensing agreement between Lego and Lucas Films. She earned a healthy salary and was quickly climbing the corporate ladder.

“My career goals at that time were just like everyone else’s at the agency—to acquire the next promotion and salary upgrade,” says Rubasky, a magna cum laude graduate from Eastern Michigan University Honors College who earned a bachelor's degree in marketing in 1989. “I already had a nice office looking up Michigan Avenue, but I wanted the corner office with the large glass windows that came with the senior vice president job.”

But after two years of managing an overflowing appointment calendar packed with 80-hour work weeks, Rubasky had enough. Beyond burnout, she began questioning whether she felt truly connected with her career.

“I was always driven to take charge and be an innovator,” Rubasky says. “But my agency experience left me numb. I wondered, ‘How can I be an innovator if I didn’t feel like one inside?’”

Rubasky left the firm to align herself with causes and companies focused on health and environmental sustainability. Now living in Santa Barbara, Calif., she’s chief marketing officer for a management consulting firm and firmly dedicated to what she calls “conscientious capitalism”—promoting products that enrich and sustain the planet. She also serves as strategic advisor for Aquamantra Natural Spring Water. In March, the company launched a 100 percent biodegradable and recyclable plastic bottle.

Sometimes finding yourself requires stepping back to take the long view. For Rubasky, that meant traveling 3,000 miles to Peru’s Urubamba Valley. An innocent encounter with a young Peruvian villager near the ancient Incan city of Machu Picchu became a pivotal moment in Rubasky’s journey toward self-discovery.

The Journey Within

Near the end of her time in Chicago, Rubasky hired a business coach for professional development. With the coach’s guidance, Rubasky sifted through her client experiences and questioned every aspect of her job.

“One of the great things about agency work is the opportunity to get a broad view of a variety of companies,” Rubasky says. “One I really enjoyed working with was Lego. It’s family-owned and has transparency, authenticity, a great product and a deep heart for children.

“Working with Lego reminds me of a book one of my Honors College professors at Eastern recommended, ‘A Passion for Excellence’ by Tom Peters. The book gives a behind-the-scenes look at some very successful companies and what makes them distinct. I remember being enraptured with the book—it definitely helped steer me toward an advertising career. Companies that are emotionally available to their customers and employees, like Lego and those Peters describes, are the ones that appeal to me.”

Rubasky also reflected on some earlier experiences and how they shaped her feelings about her career.

“My mother was very much into health food stores and natural medicine,” Rubasky says. “She bought natural cereals for her children. When I was in first grade I begged her to buy a sugar-coated cereal marketed at kids. She caved in and bought the cereal, but I didn’t like it at all. I tossed the cereal outside, and the birds didn’t even eat it. I remember writing an essay in school about the cereal and how it wasn’t healthy. Even then, I felt I was breaking away from the norm. I kept that experience tucked inside for many years.”

After leaving the agency, Rubasky took some time off to be with her husband, automotive control systems architect Scott Kochan. The couple traveled extensively, including a visit in 1998 to Peru with some friends. Hiking through the Urubamba Valley and the clouds among the Peruvian Andes to the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu was Rubasky’s most illuminating experience yet.
"We took a tour of the area with a little village boy as our guide," Rubasky says. "He was fascinated with American tourists and led us through some phenomenal areas, like an ancient waterworks. At one point we came through a row of cornstalks. The boy suddenly stopped, knelt down and began padding the dirt. We thought maybe he was digging up something valuable, like old coins. All he was doing was padding the dirt around a cornstalk to help keep it upright. He did this without any forethought—all he cared about at that moment was protecting that cornstalk. We were completely floored by this simple, selfless action.

"That experience felt like a sudden cold shower. I decided at that moment I wanted to be more like that little boy, someone true and authentic with a strong sense of community. I didn’t want to work my life away without passion or creativity. I wanted to fully integrate my life with my career."

Rubasky became a Sierra Club member and helped found the Westland Homeowners Committee for Environmental Conservation and Smart Growth, a non-profit dedicated to wetland preservation. The couple relocated to California and founded ControlWorks, a clean-tech automotive control systems company that's developing alternative fuels. Rubasky learned more about the benefits of organic farming and joined a boutique consulting firm that advises socially driven brands.

"I love working with LOHAS [Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability] brands," Rubasky says. "Seventh Generation, for example, is committed to health and sustainability. Organic Pastures is a progressive, family-owned dairy in California that's working to change pasteurization laws. Whole Foods Market is like a partner and friend to their consumers. The ‘green’ movement has inspired a lot of fresh thinking."

Rubasky's trip to Peru was the springboard for her most important journey—the quest for self-discovery and contentment. Her encounter with the young Peruvian tour guide continues to inspire her.

"People are powerful creators—we don’t have to follow an inherited or prescribed path," Rubasky says. "Each of us can create our personal brand and make it whatever we want it to be. Take the time to harvest your creativity and passion, align yourself with who you really are, and you'll find fulfillment."
The Last Class

You can go home again. That was evident when more than 30 members of Roosevelt High School’s Class of 1969—the last class to graduate from Eastern’s laboratory school—toured their alma mater as part of their 40th reunion.

“That was our playground, our house, our home. We knew every nook and cranny of that place,” says Kathy Gilden Bidelman (5875). ““During the school was an incredible experience.”

A laboratory school—established to provide teaching experience—was part of the campus for 116 years, first in old Pierce Hall and then, beginning in 1925, in what is now Roosevelt Hall.
1960s

Louis Williams (BA63) was inducted as a research fellow at the Institute for Public Relations at the Institute's annual Distinguished Lecture and Awards Dinner in New York City Nov. 5.

Marge Sharlow (BS65, MA70) has been elected 2009-2010 president of the Michigan District Exchange Clubs. The National Exchange Club, with 800 member clubs in the United States and Puerto Rico, is a service organization dedicated to community service, Americanism, youth and the prevention of child abuse.

John Clay (BS69, MS73, MA75, SPA81) was inducted into the Milan 1960s-1970s Hall of Fame in October. He excelled in baseball and basketball as a student at the school. He is currently the principal of Hutchings Elementary School in Howell Public Schools.

1970s

Bill Lozon (BS70) was named vice president of Global Guardall Sales by Lenel Systems International.

Maria Niemiec-Martel (BS70, MS78) was recently named Midwest District Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

Ethel Cook (BA71) is the author of "My Heart Knows," a memoir of her early years on her family's cotton farm in Tennessee.

Terry Rock (BS71) has retired after 38 years at Delta College, 20 of them as the head of the marketing and public relations department.

Warren White (BS71) is retiring after 38 years as principal of Classical High School in Lynn, Mass. Classical is in the Lynn School District.

Walter Burt (MED72) has been named to the board of directors of the Midwest Regional Educational Laboratories program. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the program helps educators and policymakers apply scientifically valid research to their decision making.

Mable Jones (BS72) is the new director of public affairs for AAA Michigan.

John Fernbaugh (MS72) is the interim principal of Mason Middle School, in the Mason City School District.

Henry McQueen (MA72) was named executive director of the Ypsilanti Public Schools Foundation in December.

Richard Pappas (BBA73) is the new president of Davenport University.

John Rasmovich (BS73, MA79) has retired from Clio High School after 35 years in the Clio Area School District.

Kelley Rouse (BA74) starred in a one-woman show called "O'Keefe/Sunset of an Artist" portraying artist Georgia O'Keefe, a central figure in the American Modern Art movement.

Doc Fletcher (BBA76) is the author of "Michigan Rivers Less Paddled." This is his second book exploring canoeing and kayaking in the state.

Janet Rathke (BS77, MA80) teaches in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at the Michigan State University Extension in Chippewa County.

Lula Charleston (BS78) is the author of "Boomshakalaka Punch," a collection of 13 inspirational stories.

Richard Robb (BA79) received the 2009 Distinguished Service Award for his volunteer efforts and community involvement in the Ypsilanti area.

1980s

Barry LaRue (BS80) is the new chairman of the Riverside Arts Center board of directors.

Michele Tasca (BS81) has earned board certification through the American Academy of Healthcare Interior Designers (AAIID).

Edna Middleton (BS82) is the owner of Rose Cottage in Chelsea, specializing in home decor and gift items.

Barry Scanlan (BS83, MA92) is a teaching and learning specialist in the Anoka-Hennepin School District in Minneapolis, focusing on equity in education.

Deno Bokas (BBA84) is chief accounting officer of Energy Recovery Inc., a provider of ultra-high-efficiency technology for seawater desalination.

Sue Carnell (MA84) was recently appointed to the Grand Valley State University Board of Control by Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Lynn LaPointe (MA84) is co-owner of Nahnee Nibbles pet food store in Wayne, specializing in wholesome and natural meals for pets.

Ted Mickevicius (BS84) was appointed director of business development for reserve component forces by the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS) North America.

George Mills Jr. (BS84) has been appointed director of the Provider Compliance Group, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Michael Kasevich (BS85) is the author of "The Last Paradise: A Novel," set during the Jim Crow era in Galveston, Texas.

Joyce Jenercareux (BBA86) has been named executive vice president of the Detroit Media Partnership.

Tim Clue (MA87) is co-author with Spike Manton of the play "Leaving Iowa," which has been produced several times, including at Chelsea's Purple Rose Theatre and in the Adirondack Theatre Festival in Glens Falls, N.Y.

Paul Reeves (MA87) is the new superintendent of the East Jackson Community School District.

Cathy Rehbein (BFA87, MA93) recently took first place in the 1812 Bicentennial Art Show sponsored by the Monroe Art League. Cathy is an art teacher at Jefferson High School in Jefferson Schools.

Dale Moore (BS88) earned a doctorate in educational leadership from Central Michigan University in December 2008.

Jim Murray (BS88) has been appointed director of Dearborn's Department of Public Works.

Tony Pecoraro (BS88) is the new executive director of the Birmingham YMCA.

Tell Us Your News

All Class Notes submissions should include name, address, city/state/ZIP, e-mail address and telephone number. Please list the degree earned and the year you graduated.

Mail to: Eastern Michigan University, Office for Alumni Relations, 1349 S. Huron St., Suite 2, Ypsilanti, MI 48197 or use our online submission form at emich.edu/alumni/association/classnotes.

Photos and information may be used as space permits. Digital images must be high resolution (300 dpi). Due to internal deadlines, there may be a delay of up to two issues from the time items are submitted.
Depot Town, a Favorite Stop

EMU alumnus named Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation

Few people in the United States know more about railroads, highways, transportation—or their politics, funding, planning, research and environmental impact—than Eugene Conti (BA71). He has spent 30 years serving in high-level transportation positions, and on national councils, boards and committees addressing these concerns.

This year, Conti reaped a fit reward for his expertise when N.C. Gov. Beverly Perdue appointed him Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. This appointment put him in league with former colleague Rodney Slater (BS77), who served as former President Bill Clinton's Secretary of Transportation. Both men are proof that EMU is producing national leaders in transportation.

His work, Conti says, reaches far beyond cars and concrete. "It's all about being able to develop solutions that improve the quality of life for our citizens. Transportation is a fundamental aspect of that, and it is a privilege to be a part of it."

Conti, 62, was not quite 25 years old when he found himself living in Ypsilanti in the late 1960s working at the University of Michigan Hospital. He was three semesters short of his bachelor's degree. He had previously attended George Washington University and Franconia College in New Hampshire. He had majored in sociology and anthropology, and wanted to finish what he had started.

"EMU offered a great opportunity and great value," he says, so he enrolled and earned his degree three semesters later, in 1971. "I've never regretted the choice. We lived in Depot Town, which has grown into a wonderful section of Ypsilanti."

During his EMU days, Conti especially remembers Dr. Allen Ehrlich, one of the founders of EMU's anthropology program, who was "a true mentor in helping me finish and pursue a graduate degree." Conti went on to earn a master's degree in policy sciences and public affairs and a doctorate in anthropology, both from Duke University, in the 1970s.

What do anthropology, sociology and public affairs have to do with highways and railroads? Plenty, Conti says. "These degrees are related directly through human behavior: anthropology to understand culture and motivation, and public policy to understand how to make a positive difference in people's lives."

After working for a large engineering and construction corporation, Conti moved into public service in the 1990s, when he served first as the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, and then as Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy at the U.S. Department of Transportation under Bill Clinton.

It was in this role that he served as a principal advisor to Slater. Conti offered his fellow alum expertise on infrastructure, finance, transportation safety, environmental impacts, economic growth, technology and strategic planning.

"Rodney was a wonderful leader and a tremendous person," Conti says. "He often was quoted as saying, 'Transportation is more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It's about people.' That sentiment is one that we share."

Conti, who is married with four children and two grandchildren, once accompanied President Clinton to Ypsilanti, where the two shared lunch at—where else?—Depot Town.

In 2001, Conti found his way to Raleigh, N.C., and joined the State Department of Transportation. Today, Secretary Conti has plenty on his plate, overseeing highways, railroads, aviation, ferries, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. His priorities, he says, include removing opportunities for the appearance of favoritism in awarding projects; finding innovative financing for new projects; expanding the use of transit and rail, and, as he says, "maintaining environmental stewardship as we continue to build more infrastructure to support our economic prosperity."

One way to enhance prosperity speaking of transportation, is to buy local. — as in Detroit. Conti has remained loyal to his adopted collegiate metro area. He and his wife both drive Fords.

—Sheryl James
Michelle Aldridge Yurcak (BS88, MBA00) was elected to the "Michigan Meetings and Events Magazine" 2009 Hall of Fame as Best Meeting Professional of the Year.

Barrie Barber (BS89), a staff writer for the "Saginaw News," received an award from the Michigan Press Association for sustained coverage of the Amber Alert in 2008.

Veronica Davids (BS89) and her husband Tom Davids have published "Wrestling the ABCs," an illustrated rhyming ABC book about the sport of wrestling.

1990s

David Minks (BS90), a Salvation Army captain, was recently assigned to the Corps Community Center in Evansville, Ind.

Todd Belcik (BS91) is serving a three-year term on the board of directors of the American Society of Echocardiography, a cardiovascular imaging society of cardiologists, sonographers and nurses.

Thomas Sorosiak (MA91) received the Cross of the Order of Merit award from the Federal Republic of Germany for his work with Atlantik-Brücke, a German-American education organization.

Micki Berg (BS92, MA99, SPA08) is the new principal of Ruth McGregor Elementary School in Sand Creek Community Schools.

Robyn Weiss (BA94) received the associate in insurance services designation from the Insurance Institute of America in September.

Joseph Hurshe (BS95) is the new chief operating officer of Vista Health System of Lake County.

James Plikerd (BBA95) is a sales manager for DENSO Sales California. He is responsible for the upper Midwest, which includes Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky.

David Wanko (BS95) is the director of marketing and recruitment for the EMU aviation flight technology program/Eagle Flight Center.

Ryan Day (BS96) earned a master of science degree in leadership from Nova Southeastern University in October.

Debra Collins Lindh (BS96) is the inventor of the Messy Face™ bib. The growing line includes reversible bibs with conical necklines, shoulder flaps, catch pockets, and soak proof lining that protects children's clothes while they eat.

Tracy Marrin (MS96) is a new director with Wright Griffin David and Co. PLLC.

Keith Kramer (BS97) is the 2009 recipient of the General George S. Patton Jr. Master Tactician Award, given June 12 at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College's Intermediate Level Education graduation ceremony.

Amalie Nash (BS98, MA03) is the news director for annarbor.com, which was launched in July 2009.

Tyrone Scott (BS98) was promoted to senior information technology specialist-North American Production and Operations for Marathon Oil Company in Houston, Texas.

Shirley Byrd (MA99) was recently named the Electronic Systems Foundation's 2008 Teacher of the Year. She is a technology/graphics teacher at John Glenn High School in the Wayne-Westland Community School District.

Tony Marvaso (BBA99) recently joined Schafer Agencies Inc. of Carleton, as an insurance agent.

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## Chapter listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter name</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>E-mail/Web</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>949.729.8008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender ²Master of Science in Human Resources and Organizational Development

Michael Adams (BS01) joined the Grand Rapids law firm Kelly G. Lambert II as an associate, practicing criminal, family and immigration law.

Cory Anderson (BBA01, MA06) was recently hired as the director of membership services for Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Alyssa Thompson (BS01) was honored by Culpepper County Public Schools for her work as a collaborating teacher at Royd T. Binns Middle School. She was also selected as the middle school’s Teacher of the Year.

Michael Walock (BS01) earned a master’s degree in physics from the University of Alabama.

Shaunda Jimmermson Mankowski (BS02, MA05) was selected as Outstanding New Advisor by the National Academic Advising Association. She is a career and academic advisor at the Advising Resource Center at Oakland University.

Nathan Schneider (BS03) earned a master's degree in medical physics from the University of Cincinnati.

Rudolph Alvarado (MA04) is the author of "The Untold Story of Joe Hernandez: The Voice of Santa", which won the 2009 Tony Ryan Book Award. Hernandez, a leading sports figure during the Great Depression, was the caller at Santa Anita Park for almost 40 years.

Madhavi Jammalamadaka (MS04) is a senior programmer at Invescor, Ltd., based in Farmington Hills. Madhavi works with the development team to maintain, upgrade and integrate software packages.

Christopher Holdwick (BS05) is the owner of Holdwick Event Photography LLC in Westland.

Kiyoshi Shelton (BS05), a rapper, poet and songwriter, recently released his album "The Talent Show."

Carissa Simmons (BS005) received a master's degree as a certified nurse midwife from Wayne State University.

Demetrius Smith (BS05) is a paralegal/legal assistant at Assets International LLC, based in Southfield.

Tara Keller (BS08) was recognized at Johnston County Schools' "You Survived and Thrived" reception on April 30 for an exceptional first year as a science teacher at North Johnston High School in Kenly, N.C.
Taking charge of Eastern Michigan University's student government adds an extra layer of confidence and skill to those who accept the challenge. The five former presidents highlighted here are just a few of the many who have gone on to successful, rewarding careers.

**Dave Bianco (BA66)**  
**Founder of Elderhostel**

Long before hitting his 50s, Dave Bianco realized there was a place for students in that age group on university campuses. That realization led to the birth of the Elderhostel concept—providing unique learning experiences on college campuses for adults 55 and over. "I wanted to get at ageism—the idea that older adults are all used up. There's actually a vigorous adult population that's interested in quality education and getting together with their cohorts," said Bianco, who earned a degree in history before completing a master's degree in Far Eastern studies at Boston University and beginning a career in college administration.

With his friend Marty Knowlton, Bianco organized the first Elderhostel in 1975 as a summer program at the University of New Hampshire, where he was director of residential life. Adults stayed in dorms and chose from a variety of courses taught by UNH faculty. "Demand for the programs increased exponentially and soon moved to other campuses," said Bianco.

Elderhostel is now an international organization, offering over 8,000 learning adventures a year in more than 90 countries. Older adults can experience everything from visiting the villages where Monet lived to exploring American music on a Mississippi River paddle boat.

After some years with Elderhostel, Bianco went on to manage an island and a cricket club before moving to California. There, he reconnected with Elderhostel and ran the West Coast programs for 10 years before retiring in 2004.

Bianco credits his term as EMU student government president with helping him develop leadership skills. "It helped me understand the complexities of leadership," he said, "as well as the ins and outs of working with people who don't see the world the same way I do."

---

**Leonard Posey (BBA76)**  
**Human Resources Consultant**

In an era when racial inequities were more prevalent on college campuses across the country, Leonard Posey took a chance and ran for student government president in 1975. He won, becoming the first African American student to hold that office in Eastern Michigan University's history.

"It was a huge deal. It wouldn't have happened without white students being comfortable with me and my platform," said Posey. In three years as a student senator,
Posey had worked closely with students and the administration on many issues, including racial and gender discrimination.

"I learned to work effectively in a diverse environment before that concept became popular," said Posey, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from EMU in 1976. "I was able to translate lessons and experiences at EMU to my time on boards and in my professional life."

Posey applied those lessons as he began his career in human resources. Within 10 years, he became the first African American to attain the position of vice president and director of human resources at Community National Bank of Pontiac. He reached the same position at First Independence National Bank before being recruited to a related career.

Now, Posey manages a three-state region as a consultant with Lee Hecht Harrison, a global human resources consulting firm in New Jersey. The company specializes in career transitioning, leadership consulting and workforce solutions. In the current economic downturn, Posey is especially busy assisting people who have been laid off.

"People come in devastated by job loss and I watch them work through it, persevere and come out of it with a job," said Posey. "It's probably the most rewarding thing I've ever done."

Posey has also worked community service into his busy schedule, serving on the boards of several school districts as well as the Urban League.

**Dawn Schumann Northrup (BBA86) • Project Manager, Strategic Demand and Development**

Fresh out of college, Dawn Schumann Northrup had the good fortune to land a job at Valassis Communications, a global marketing company based in Livonia, Mich. Since she joined the company in 1986, Valassis has been honored as a great employer by many organizations, including * Fortune * magazine, which has included the firm on its list of "100 Best Places to Work For in America" for ten years.

"I've had a lot of opportunities to grow and get diverse experience in marketing and communications," said Northrup, who earned a bachelor of business administration degree in marketing from EMU in 1986. "I've seen the company's revenue grow six-fold since I've been here. It's now a $2 billion company and I'm excited to be part of it."

Northrup began as a marketing analyst, but eventually felt drawn to projects with the communications team. Now, as project manager for strategic demand and development, she writes scripts, speeches and other communication for the company's senior executives.

"It is very rewarding to see how your words can be used to improve employee morale, client understanding of our products, or shareholders' valuation of our company," said Northrup.

Northrup's 1984-85 term as student government president helped set the stage for working with Valassis executives. Tackling issues such as campus safety and student input into EMU's budget brought her into frequent contact with university officials. Northrup and her team worked to get funding for a campus apartment shuttle and wheelchair accessible elevators and ramps. They were also successful in getting a student voice in budget discussions.

"I got the chance to practice skills in collaboration and strong, clear communication, both written and verbal. It gave me the confidence to work with people at all levels," said Northrup. "Getting involved in student government prepared me for my life and work after Eastern."
Alaina Campbell (BS89) • Lobbyist

For Alaina Campbell, getting up the nerve to join student government quelled her shyness and crystallized her career plans. After a year as student senator, the girl who had been too shy to speak in public during high school gave numerous campaign speeches in the race for president. Against a field of five men, she squeaked out a win by 30 votes.

"To go from too shy to student government president— that’s what college is all about," said Campbell. "You’re able to expand and try different things.”

Campbell’s 1987-88 term as president also opened her eyes to a career in politics. After dealing with tuition increases and other campus issues, she became president of the Michigan Collegiate Coalition, a nonprofit group she organized with a friend to lobby on behalf of college students.

“I formed MCC because students didn’t have anyone representing them in Lansing," said Campbell. "They needed a voice.”

In 1989, Campbell completed a bachelor’s degree in political science at Eastern Michigan University and launched her career in earnest. She went to Washington, D.C., for six months to help the U.S. Student Association organize a national rally. Then she returned to Michigan to work on legislative issues, first for MCC and then the Michigan Council for Disability Concerns. After organizing an annual conference for People with Disabilities, she caught the entrepreneurial bug and ran her own conference and event planning company for three years.

Now, she enjoys the flexibility of being a Creative Memories consultant, but her interest in politics has not diminished. She stays on top of issues that are important to her and frequently writes to her legislators to make sure they know how she feels. "It’s sad today that not enough people understand politics and get involved," she said.

Kylie Crawford TenBrook (BA02) • Lawyer

Like so many students, Kylie Crawford TenBrook found her career choice changed and shaped by her experiences at Eastern Michigan University. In her case, involvement in student government and a part-time job at a local lawyer’s office tipped the scale in favor of a career in law.

“I knew from my experiences at EMU that I liked working with people and that I liked speaking to crowds and solving problems,” said TenBrook, who earned a bachelor’s degree in communication from Eastern Michigan in 2002. “I was lucky enough to get a full scholarship to law school at the University of Toledo, so I figured it was worth a try.”

After graduating from EMU, TenBrook spent the summer in Washington, D.C., working for Public Campaign, a nonprofit lobbying group. There, she and fellow EMU student Tracy Sturdivant (BA00) promoted publicly funded elections.

In 2005, TenBrook completed law school and clerked for federal district judge Joseph Farnan in Delaware before moving to Arizona.

Today, as a lawyer with the firm of Ford & Harrison in Phoenix, TenBrook specializes in labor and employment law. Most of her cases deal with trade secrets, non-competition claims, and wage and hour claims. “I love the type of law that I practice,” said TenBrook. “There’s a lot of drama in the workplace because people are very emotionally tied to what they do.”

TenBrook recognizes the positive influence her 2000-01 term as student government president has had on her career. “It gave me a lot of experience in public speaking, writing and interacting with people—all the things I do in my job now,” she said. “It was very fundamental and grounding for my future.”
In Memoriam

Doris E. Earl (34) Rochester Hills, March 4
Jean Oiler Scott (BA35, MA63), Ypsilanti, May 2
Frank A. Evano (37) Fenton, June 4
Crezen A. Scholl (38) Muskegon, April 10
William J. Mackin (BA63), Flint, Feb. 23
Robert J. Hartwig (BS40), Marquette, March 31
Alberta M. Phillips (BS41), Fort Gratiot, March 29
Nila E. Craig (42) Reading, Pa., April 5
Grace S. Rutherford (BA63), Lansing, March 27
William P. Golden (68) Milford, March 10
Jim Haggart (SPA68), Broomfield, Colo., April 18
Larry H. Brown (MA69), Phoenix, Ariz., Jan. 25
Paul A. Jaeger (69) Royal Oak, April 24
Dennis Toffolo (BBA69), Oxford, May 1
Evelyn J. Boyd (MS70), Novi, March 26
Joan Burke (70), Ann Arbor, Feb. 28
Maxine McClary (MA70), Ypsilanti, June 6
Mary L. Lappala (MA72), Howell, March 1
David Pureyfory (BS72, MA77), Ypsilanti, March 4
Adrian Quinn (BS72), Heritage Hills, N.Y., March 1
Frances A. Willis (MA72), Gadsden, Ala., April 4
Lynda R. Everett (BS74), Fort Worth, Texas, Sept. 29
Jody M. Glatz (BS74), Ann Arbor, April 9
Kenneth C. Ballou Jr. (MA75), Lewiston, March 17
Voncella L. Marsh (BS75), Ann Arbor, March 15
Marjorie Doherty (MS76), Marquette, June 18
Phyliss L. Dunham (BS77), Dallas, Texas, Jan. 28
Charlotte A. Forbes (MA79), Brigham, Mass., March 28
Catherine V. Kemling (BS79), Ypsilanti, March 3
Rose M. Wieber (BA77), Traverse City, March 15
Frank C. Grimes (BS80), Thomasville, Ga., March 4
Bethel Wilson (BS81), Rochester Hills, March 15
Dennis E. Hardy (BS82), Monroe, May 5
Walter R. Kemnitz Sr. (MA83), Canton, Jan. 1
Patricia A. Whale (BSN86), Lebanon, Ind., March 21
Suzette M. Slezak (BS88), Dearborn, Nov. 12
John A. Krzewinski (BS90), Ann Arbor, March 29
Greg Prendergast (MA191), Imlay City, March 26
Michael J. Wahl (MLS92), Cheboygan, Jan. 7
Luella J. Tomberg (MA93), Hancock, May 23
Elizabeth J. Boyd (BS94, MA01), Coldwater, June 2
Mary E. Leon (BS94), Ann Arbor, April 20
Rejene Lewis (BS94), Jackson, June 1
Eric Hudy (BS97), Evart, June 1
Carol L. Sanda (BSN98), Ann Arbor, April 13
James Manor (BS04), Las Vegas, Nev., May 7
Justin E. Liedel (BS06), Austin, Texas, May 1

Faculty in Memoriam

Marjorie S. Bleakley, Oklahoma City, Okla., who taught art education at EMU, died Feb. 10.
Barbara Blige, Ypsilanti, who was a professor of anthropology at EMU, died March 2.
Marie Della, Buffalo, N.Y., who was a psychology professor at EMU, died March 1.
Winton Kloosterman, who was a professor in the guidance and counseling department at EMU, died June 10.
John W. O'Banner Jr., Ann Arbor, who worked at the EMU physical plant, died Feb. 20.
Shirley Oestrike, Ypsilanti, who was a secretary at EMU, died June 28.
Carroll A. Osborn, Ypsilanti, who was an EMU industrial education professor, died April 27.
Pauline Poling, Ypsilanti, who retired in 1986 as an executive secretary after 26 years at EMU, died March 24.
Carl Snyder, who taught in the EMU economics department, died May 22.

Wear in the World

Annette Sabo Johnson (MA94) of Olathe, Kansas, was one of 11 international studies educators from across the United States selected by Columbia University to participate in a work-study tour of China and South Korea. The 2005 Alumna Achievement Award recipient and former member of EMU’s Alumni Association Board of Directors wore her EMU colors at the Great Wall of China.

Do you have a picture of yourself wearing or displaying EMU gear in a faraway or unusual location? If so, e-mail the image to e-alumni@emich.edu. Images must be at least 300 dpi. Or, use regular mail and send your photo to Eastern, 15 Welch Hall, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Be sure to include a description of the photo and the location/occasion, and provide your first and last name, degree and graduation year.
TOP LEFT: Historic Preservation Alumni Chapter members toured Detroit by river as part of the department's 30th anniversary celebration.

TOP RIGHT: Scott Fleszar (BBA95), Brie Defever (BBA07), Aaron LaDue (BBA06) and Ashle Hall (BBA08) participated in the 14th Annual Accounting Alumni Chapter Golf Outing at Eagle Crest.

ABOVE LEFT: Donna Bobcean (BA94), Den Hezaert (Office of Government Relations), Mark Lee (BBA92) and Kelly Victor-Burke (BS86) met with Rep. Fred Durhal, Jr. (6th District) during the 5th Annual EMU Day in Lansing.

ABOVE RIGHT: EMU Black Alumni Chapter members Shameca Owens, Rochelle McClendon (BS92) and Natasha Broader-Smith (BS94) joined MSU and UM alumni on Detroit’s Belle Isle for an annual summer picnic.

ABOVE LEFT: The Kensington Valley Alumni Chapter hosted the 24th Annual “Best of Best” Golf Open at Eagle Crest Golf Club. Pictured are Chad Halash (BBA84), Chad Halash, A. Flamme and Dennis Flamme (BBA03).

ABOVE RIGHT: Lakesha Morris (BS04) and Tenisha Fancey (BS04) joined more than 180 alumni, friends and EMU Black Alumni Chapter members at the froostertill in Detroit.
TOP: Robert Brunnell, Lauren Allmayer (BA09), Lindsey Scaler (BA06), Taylor Hayden and John Feldkamp (BS07) helped build a compost bin for the Eastern community garden during a Graduates of the Last Decade event.

ABOVE LEFT: Brad Schm dt (BA09), Craig Petersmark (ES91), Head Football Coach For English and Chris Parenti (ES92) were among the record number of alumni and friends who attended the Football Alumni Golf Outing held at Eagle Crest Golf Club. ABO'VE RIG-IT: Chicago Alumni Chapter members Chris Krone (BA03) and Casey Jordan (BS07) joined nearly 30 EMU alumni at U.S. Cellular Field to watch the Detroit Tigers take on the Chicago White Sox.
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for helping Eastern
make a difference in
the lives of so many.

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Missing Eastern? There's Always Facebook

I don't know Deborah, but Facebook will be darned if I don't. Almost weekly, there it is with the badger of a school bully: A memo (at this point, let’s call it a demand) telling me that Deborah and I know each other from our days at Eastern Michigan University. A big school. With lots of people. And I know Deborah so-and-so?

Maybe we braced ourselves together while riding the Pray-Harrold elevator. Or was she the one who zipped in and stole that parking spot from me outside the structure? In that case, I really don't want to know her. Ever.

Connecting classmates—ones you either miss, or never want to speak to again (but who friended you anyway), or heck, ones you don't know—is what Facebook does better than the Tweeting and MySpace-ing of other social networking sites. When it launched, before I could become friends with Madonna, that's all it did. Now, via EMU alumni-launched groups, you can know what I'm doing 24/7 (current status: "Writing about Facebook while chomping on baby carrots") and we can go gaga over the Backstreet Boys together (OK, you're alone in that one), or relive those days in marching band or flute studio.

Pages and pages of reunion-type groups and silly, watch-for-the-zombies-on-campus cliques give current students and graduates the chance to share stories, photos and jokes with people they knew. Or didn’t. Or wish they didn’t.

Does your fondest speech class memory involve gay sheep? For a group of retired Eagles, it does—along with teen-gaered TV show "The OC," cheerleading-is-a-sport debates and Disney. So they formed a Facebook group. Another modest-sized gaggle is made up of the local celebrities who made the cover of... the 06-07 student planner. "We’re kind of a big deal; people know us," the group’s description goes.

A group called 10th Floor Pittman Hall at EMU from 93-94 has only two members, while another whopping group, with more than 800 members, connects friends who de-stressed at local hangouts Theo’s and the Wooden Nickel.

On this group’s pages people swap stories and, in one case, recall getting busted for underage drinking. They remember the former staff, or meeting their spouses, or discovering the taco bar—yum. I’d consider joining this group just for the stories, although I didn’t frequent either place, and my fondest Nickel moment ranks as one of the biggest karaoke cliches: Performing Garth Brooks’ “I Got Friends in Low Places” with a few buddies.

Facebook offers more than just flashbacks. What about the ridiculous what-ifs? One alumni group gives a rah-rah for a new professor—none other than Indiana Jones. Others claim that Chuck Norris attended EMU, earning a doctorate in Butt Kicking. There’s "EMU Zombie Watch"—a group spreading the awareness of, yeah, you guessed it—and "I Hate People Who Wear Other Schools’ Apparel."

But "Josh and Randy’s Den of Debauchery" might just be Facebook Group King, with its goofy guy-in-glasses-and-pouty-lips picture and an even goofier description. Dig deeper, and these former students who call themselves the "Godfather of All That Is Sexy" and "Beef Slinger of 1,000 Nations" send a charming love message: "This is a group created for the sole purpose of celebrating the people around us." Who can argue with that? We’re one big flock of birds at Eastern. Some here, some gone. Some Backstreet Boys lovers, most not. Facebook is like glue, keeping us together even if life doesn’t.

As quirky as some of these groups are, they give us a reason to remember the best class we had. How we met that really cute someone at the Wooden Nickel. How Justin Timberlake might have brought sexy back, but Josh and Randy are keeping it alive at EMU.

Maybe I did know Deborah. She could have sat behind me during one of my classes at Eastern, kindly letting me borrow a No. 2 pencil to bubble in a test Scantron. We weren’t pals then, but maybe I should be kinder to Facebook for giving us a second chance.

—Chris Azzopardi
Take Five with Eric Brown

Alumni Association President

Being a president can be a high-pressured position, but not for Eric Brown (BS03), who’s been leading the EMU Alumni Association since March. “I don’t sweat the small stuff,” says Brown. That’s probably because he doesn’t have time to. The 2003 graduate, who lives in Canton, also works for a health insurance company. To him, it’s the big picture, like the future of the University, that matters.

**Eastern:** What are your hopes for EMU?

**Brown:** My greatest vision is just to get all the students, alumni, professors, administration, regents and supporters of the University on the same page in moving the University forward. I would definitely like to see more students staying on campus. I would like to see stronger support for the athletic programs. I would like to see the current president in place for many years to come, because one of the things we need most to move forward is some stability.

**Eastern:** How is EMU different now from when you began here in the ’80s?

**Brown:** When I got here in 1984, it was much more vibrant with regard to student involvement and student pride. One of the most important things at a university, particularly a university the size of Eastern Michigan, is student pride. It goes a long way.

**Eastern:** Why do you think the pride has diminished over the years?

**Brown:** Certainly some people need to commute, but a lot of students are missing out on some of the on-campus experience. Going to college should not be just about getting an education. You hope to meet people from diverse areas of the state, the country and the world. People don’t experience that if they don’t spend time on campus outside of class.

**Eastern:** With your involvement in the healthcare industry and a health administration degree from EMU, how conscious are you of your own well-being?

**Brown:** I am very conscious of my own health. I stay active by exercising and playing sports, and I try to eat right. Without a doubt, working for a health insurance provider helps me to stay focused on my own health, but it also enables me to let others know how important maintaining a healthy lifestyle is.

**Eastern:** What are your fondest memories of being a student at EMU?

**Brown:** My best memories are all about the friendships that I made that have become long lasting. Those friendships and relationships are not only with my peers, but with the faculty, staff and administration as well. I have enjoyed my EMU experience and would not trade it in for anything in the world.
Saturday, October 3 — Homecoming Day Highlights

**Eagles' Landing Fan Zone:** 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Oestrike Stadium. You'll find live entertainment, food & beverages, Fan Zone activities, special offers from our sponsors, and much more in this fan-friendly area! Game ticket required for entry. INFO: 734.487.5642

**EMU Alumni "Go Green" Tailgate:** 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., west side of Rynearson Stadium. Enjoy food, music, fun activities for children and EMU giveaway items. Proceeds benefit the EMU Alumni Association Scholarship Fund. All alumni and friends are welcome. INFO: 734.487.0250

**EMU vs. Temple Homecoming Football Game:** 1 p.m., Rynearson Stadium. Cheer the Eagles to victory over the Owls. EMU welcomes back and honors the 1959 football team and the class of 1959 during the pregame show. TICKETS: 734.487.2282

Visit emich.edu/homecoming for a full schedule of events
"In Closing"

"Palace – Vietnam"

"This picture was taken in June 2008 when I went back to Vietnam for the summer. The hallway of the former royal palace in The Imperial Citadel caught my attention with its architectural beauty as well as its peaceful silence." Hue was the capital of Vietnam during the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945), and The Citadel was heavily damaged during the Vietnam War.

photograph by Van Pham
International student from Vietnam and a junior studying international business