

# CPE REPORT

Eastern Kentucky University News for the Council on Postsecondary Education



EKU President Michael Benson addresses faculty and staff at this year's fall convocation.

(EKU Communications & Marketing/Stacey Sizemore)

## “GROWTH HAPPENS HERE”

It was the theme for the faculty and staff fall convocation at EKU, but no one had to attend the annual event to know the truth behind those words on the Richmond campus. The signs are evident everywhere you look:

- ▶ continued construction of the second phase of the University's New Science Building. When joined to the first phase, the facility will be the largest of its type in the Commonwealth when it opens in January 2018.
- ▶ two new residence halls slated to open in Fall 2017.
- ▶ a new dining hall scheduled for completion in late 2017.
- ▶ a Scholar House, a residential facility for single parents, set to open in the summer of 2017. The facility is funded primarily by the Kentucky Housing Corporation and will be managed by Kentucky River Foothills.
- ▶ a new pedestrian gateway, Turner Gate, and adjacent Carloftis Gardens near the intersection of Lancaster Avenue and Barnes Mill Road.
- ▶ improvements to baseball and softball facilities.

Add to that plans to build a parking garage, renovate the Powell Student Union, build a new recreation center, construct a pedestrian bridge across the Eastern By-Pass near Keene Hall and Alumni Coliseum, and more.

Similar progress is occurring on other fronts:

- ▶ a newly opened Student Success Center.
- ▶ steady improvement in retention and graduation rates.
- ▶ a record fund-raising year.
- ▶ the division of the College of Arts and Sciences into the College of Science and the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS).
- ▶ a new Quality Enhancement Plan focused on motivating students to come to class prepared for deeper learning, developing their critical reading skills to promote critical thinking and independent learning, and teaching them to read with purpose.

## PRIVATE SUPPORT AT ALL-TIME HIGH

In the midst of the most ambitious campus revitalization initiative in the institution's history, EKU recently concluded a record year for private support.

The University finished the fiscal year that concluded June 30 with \$8.9 million in gifts and commitments, a nearly 100 percent increase over the previous year. Included in the total were \$4.4 million in cash and in-kind gifts, a 10 percent increase; and \$4.5 million in new multi-year pledges and deferred gift commitments.

Notable gifts included a \$1 million pledge from Ron and Sherrie Lou Noel to support faculty and student research as well as an expansion of the University's athletics strength and conditioning center, a \$1 million pledge from Maribeth and Louis Berman to support a combination of academic and student-focused initiatives, a \$500,000 gift from Paul and Deborah Chellgren to endow the Chellgren Success Series at EKU's new Student Success Center, and an anonymous \$1 million bequest for undergraduate student scholarships.

## EKU AGAIN NAMED BY CHRONICLE A “GREAT COLLEGE TO WORK FOR”

EKU is a “Great College to Work For,” according to The Chronicle of Higher Education.

In its 2016 “Great Colleges to Work For” edition, The Chronicle honors EKU among 68 four-year colleges and universities nationwide.

EKU was recognized specifically in the Work/Life Balance and Supervisor/Department Chair Relationship categories.

It marked the fifth time in eight years that Eastern has been named among “Great Colleges to Work For.”

“Eastern Kentucky University is once again honored to be among those institutions recognized by The Chronicle of Higher Education as one of the best colleges to work for in the country,” EKU President Michael Benson said.



Craig and Madonna Turner cut the ribbon at dedication ceremonies for The Turner Gate, as members of his family look on. At right is Dr. Tom Martin, president of the EKU International Alumni Association. At left is Maribeth McBride Berman, chair of the EKU Foundation.

## BOARD CHAIR'S GIFT FUNDS TURNER GATE

Passing motorists may note the enhanced curb appeal along the western periphery of the EKU campus.

But, for future generations of Eastern students, beginning with this fall's freshman class, The Turner Gate will come to symbolize the life-changing significance of their Eastern Experience.

The University's newest landmark, formally dedicated in ceremonies in August, is distinguished by four simple but profound words – Wisdom and Knowledge on one side facing the street, Purpose and Passion on the other – that describe what students come seeking and what they acquire during their studies to use for the betterment of society.

"These four words epitomize how Eastern can properly prepare our students and also instill in each of them the desire to attain greatness in their life endeavors," said Craig Turner, chair of EKU Board of Regents, who with wife Madonna donated the funds for the manufacturing and installation of the gateway. "Our goal is to continue to raise the bar for our students to excel here like no other place. These gates symbolize a new beginning as you enter, and a bright future as you exit."

Both Turners graduated from EKU in 1975 and have long thought that new students, parents and visitors had trouble finding an "entrance" to the Richmond campus. "There was no defining feature other than a small Eastern Kentucky University sign," Mr. Turner said. "As we returned to campus over the years, we often talked about the need for an entrance to campus that could also be a gathering place for students to celebrate special occasions or events."

## FORMER STANDOUT COMPETES IN OLYMPICS



Former EKU All-American Ole Hesselbjerg represented Denmark in the preliminary round of the men's 3,000-meter steeplechase at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Hesselbjerg, the University's second Summer Olympian, did not advance to the final; however, he finished 31<sup>st</sup> out of 45 total competitors with a time of 8:40.08. He entered the event ranked 44<sup>th</sup> out of 45 steeplechasers.

He was also a multiple-time Academic All-American and he graduated from EKU in May of 2015 with a degree in physics.

## ARAMARK TO CONSTRUCT NEW DINING HALL

EKU and Aramark Educational Services LLC have reached a \$37 million agreement by which the food services vendor will finance and construct a dining facility on the Richmond campus and provide food services for the campus for the next 15 years.

The three-story, 55,000-square-foot facility will be built on the site now occupied by Case Hall and Annex, scheduled for razing this summer. Construction is expected to begin this fall and be substantially complete in December 2017. A recently enacted student fee will finance renovations to the nearby Powell Building, current home of dining facilities, for use as a student union facility.

The contract stipulates that Aramark will dedicate \$32,350,000 to the Case demolition and subsequent dining hall construction, \$2.2 million to a Steak 'n Shake and Starbucks in the newly renovated Powell Building, and \$2.45 million to dining "refreshes" to other existing campus locations, concessions and convenience kiosks. Additional returns to the University include annual brand refresh funding (\$3 million over the term of the agreement), annual repair and maintenance (\$2.8 million), annual catering fund totaling \$525,000, and an annual scholarship fund totaling \$300,000.

"This agreement with Aramark, coupled with our P-3 housing projects, represent investments from private partnerships of \$112 million," President Michael Benson noted. "These entities are confident in the direction EKU is heading and in the financial stability of the University despite the challenges we face in terms of state funding."

