

# EKU Report

Eastern Kentucky University News for the Council on Postsecondary Education

November 2011



## EKU Center for the Arts Hosts Gubernatorial Debate

The ECU Center for the Arts hosted a Kentucky gubernatorial debate on Oct. 11. From left are moderator Bill Bryant of WKYT-TV, and candidates Gov. Steve Beshear, Lexington attorney Gatewood Galbraith and State Sen. David Williams. The event was sponsored by the Kentucky Broadcasters Association and the League of Women Voters.

## Effort to Honor Soldiers Reaches 50 States

A nationwide effort that originated at ECU to honor American service men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan now encompasses all 50 states.

On Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11, campus and community volunteers at more than 140 college and universities, including ECU, will read the names of the 6,200-plus casualties of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), now called Operation New Dawn.

Each campus participating in Remembrance Day National Roll Call will organize its own reading of names and will observe a simultaneous nationwide minute of silence at 2 p.m. EST. A ceremony will begin at ECU at 1:30 p.m.

The Remembrance Day National Roll Call is sponsored nationally by the Veterans Knowledge Community of NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. NASPA is a 12,000-member association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. The Veterans Knowledge Community (VKC) mission is to advocate for best practices to help student veterans transition to college and succeed.

At ECU, the reading of the names, in chronological order, will begin at 6 a.m. between the Powell Building and the campus bookstore and continue into the early afternoon. At 10:30 a.m., an ROTC contracting ceremony will be held at adjacent Memorial Plaza, followed at 11 a.m. by a memorial service for ROTC alumni. The main ceremony at 1:30 p.m. will be on the north end of the Powell Building.

## STEM-H Institute Focuses on Critical Fields, Advances College Readiness

EKU has established a STEM-H Institute to enhance teaching and learning in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and health at all educational levels by focusing on outreach, teaching, professional development and research.

"These are the fields that guide our future economic growth as a region, state and nation," said Dr. Jaleh Rezaie, associate dean of Graduate Education and Research and interim executive director of ECU's STEM-H Institute. "Unfortunately, the pipeline that begins at pre-kindergarten and extends to STEM-H related jobs is shrinking. By focusing on outreach, teaching, professional development and research with the goal of increasing the number of students who are interested and prepared to enroll in the STEM-H fields and assisting them to complete their degrees and enter the workforce, ECU will be fulfilling its mission of student success and regional stewardship."

The institute also complies with Kentucky Senate Bill 1 (2009) as it relates to college readiness.

The first task of the institute will be to work with and support ECU's Mathematics Transitions Initiative, which was developed by a faculty team in the University's Department of Mathematics and Statistics. For the past three years, the team has facilitated "transition to college" mathematics courses to help school districts throughout the region prepare their students for college coursework and reduce the need for remediation. The ECU team's work has resulted in a significantly reduced need for developmental college courses and, consequently, a cost savings for many ECU students and families. Ultimately, it is expected to result in improved retention and graduation rates.

"The knowledge gained from this initiative and the relationships developed with the K-12 schools will serve as a foundation for the Institute's initiatives for outreach, teaching, professional development and research in the other STEM-H fields," said Rezaie.



Front row, from left: Gary Abney, chair, EKU Board of Regents; State Rep. Rita Smart; Mark Brown, Secretary, Kentucky Labor Cabinet; Dr. Charles Hickox, dean, EKU Continuing Education and Outreach; Tammy Cole, system director for non-credit programs, EKU Continuing Education and Outreach; Kimberlee Perry, director of education and training, Ky. Department of Workplace Standards. Back row, from left: Kathy Murphy, training specialist, OSHA Training Institute Education Center; Josh Dahl, training, OSHA Training Institute Education Center; Will Drake, administrator, OSHA Training Institute Education Center; Danny Vernon, branch manager, education and training, Department of Workplace Standards; Bill Carey, construction partnership administrator, Department of Workplace Standards, education and training; and State Sen. Jared Carpenter.

## OSHA Institute at EKU Partners with Ky. Labor Cabinet

The Kentucky Labor Cabinet's Department of Workplace Standards and EKU's OSHA Training Institute Education Center (OTIEC) have entered into a partnership that will advance their common goal of workplace safety.

At the conclusion of a recent news conference on the Richmond campus, Cabinet and University officials joined to sign the agreement, which calls for the partners to:

- sustain an open communications policy in a manner that encourages respect and understanding.
- share knowledge of the best work practices that improve job site safety and health performance.
- cooperate in the development and continuous improvement of safety training programs for the workplace and Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health personnel.
- promote the recognition for excellence in workplace safety.

Kentucky Labor Cabinet Secretary Mark Brown said Kentucky "is well-known for having a very productive workforce. What we're working for is having one of the safest workplaces in the nation."

## Justice & Safety Dean Featured in Newsweek

"I can't always remember their names, but in my nightmares I can see their faces."

That's how Dr. Allen Ault, now dean of EKU's College of Justice & Safety, describes in Newsweek magazine his oversight of five executions when he served as the commissioner of the Georgia Department of Corrections from 1992 to 1995.

The recent execution of Georgia inmate Troy Davis thrust Ault into the national spotlight. He was interviewed live on MS-NBC from his home and has been quoted in numerous other national media outlets.

The Oct. 3 issue of Newsweek contained a column penned by Ault entitled "In My Nightmares I Can See Their Faces: Ordering Death in Georgia," in which he argues that the United States "should be like every other civilized country in the Western world and abolish the death penalty," even though he doesn't believe any of those five executions were mistaken.

Ault brought his 30-plus years of experience to EKU in 2003. Previously, he had served as commissioner of state Departments of Corrections in Georgia, Colorado and Mississippi, was a warden of a maximum-security prison, and for 11 years was president of a national criminal justice consulting firm.



## Program Assists Children with Autism, Their Families

A series of grants from the WHAS Crusade for Children has enabled EKU to enhance a program designed to assist children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and their families.

The University recently received \$4,068.75 from the Crusade, the third consecutive year the Louisville station has assisted the ASD program, which was begun many years prior to the grants.

One evening a week throughout much of each spring semester, faculty and students from the EKU departments of Psychology and Occupational Therapy lead social skills groups for 10-15 children with ASD in the University's Psychology Clinic while simultaneously the children's parents (and, in some cases, siblings) are meeting with Psychology faculty and graduate students. In addition, each fall faculty and student leaders work with school groups in the community.

Most of the children served by the EKU program are of elementary school age, and some of the families drive as much as two hours to visit the Richmond campus. Services are provided at a modest cost on an ability-to-pay basis.

## EKU Partners with Minger Foundation to Enhance Fire Safety

The first phase of an innovative national community service project aimed at improving fire awareness and safety was launched at EKU on Sept. 26.

Gail Minger, founder of the Michael H. Minger Foundation, EKU President Doug Whitlock and other officials were on hand to kick off "Help Save A Life, Get on the Truck," which pairs EKU students with Richmond Fire Department officers to engage the campus and community in projects that will enhance safety.

Minger, who lost her son, Michael, in a 1998 arson fire in a residence hall at Murray State University, sees the project as a way to "make a difference by working to minimize risks and save lives. We felt this was the perfect place" for the launch, and "we are pleased to join with EKU on this very important life-saving educational initiative."

The project is funded by a Department of Homeland Security Fire Prevention and Safety Grant.