



# CPE REPORT

Eastern Kentucky University News for the Council on Postsecondary Education



## COLONEL FAMILY GROWS WITH INCREASING ENROLLMENT

This semester, Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) welcomed its largest freshman class in many years. More than 50% of incoming freshmen at EKU are the first in their families to pursue a college degree; more than 30% are from EKU's service region; and more than 95% were offered some form of financial aid. In addition to incoming freshmen, EKU expects more than 1,000 transfer students this fall.

"We are excited to see a record increase in student enrollment for the Fall 2023 class," said EKU President David McFaddin. "Our significant enrollment growth is a direct result of investments in our students. Free books through EKU BookSmart and events through the Exceptional Eastern Experience make EKU the campus where students want to be."

Campus was bustling with excitement and activity at the arrival of EKU's class of 2027. On Move-In Day, freshmen were greeted at Alumni Coliseum where they checked in and received their free books through EKU BookSmart.

"It was pretty much effortless; everybody was around to help," said freshman Luke Thornsbury. "It was a welcoming feeling. It felt like everyone was just wanting to help you and wanting you to feel like you were where you wanted to be."

EKU's traditional Big E Welcome included five days of events designed to get students acquainted with campus and their classmates. Freshmen walked through the Turner Gates on Thursday evening for the Welcome Walk, symbolizing the start of their Eastern Experience.

"In the transition to campus, on both the academic side and the social side, it's important that we get students connected," said Dr. Dannie Moore, vice president for student affairs. "We're creating an exceptional experience for students but also creating a place where everyone feels like they belong."

EKU's innovative investments into students continue to grow enrollment. EKU offers programs focused on keeping students first like EKU BookSmart, E3 and increased support services aimed at helping students achieve success.





## EKU NAMED TO PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY 2023 TRANSFER HONOR ROLL LIST

The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Transfer Honor Roll recognizes 208 colleges and universities for the dynamic pathways created to support community college transfer students. This year, Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) was named to the 2023 list.

“EKU has a holistic approach to recruiting transfer students,” said Heather Davis, EKU’s director of transfer services. “We work hard to ensure that students’ journeys are honored from where they started to now.”

Student Jessica Sarty found a clear path to achieving her goals by transferring to EKU.

“College was never something I thought was in the cards for me,” Sarty said. “Most of my family received their GED equivalent and focused on working to survive instead. I followed the same footsteps and quit school at 15 to work full time at a restaurant so we wouldn’t lose our apartment.” Sarty, originally from Connecticut, moved to Kentucky in 2019 after becoming a single parent. She graduated from Elizabethtown Community and Technical College with an associate degree in applied human sciences, and she is now pursuing a psychology degree through EKU.

“Being the first in my family to ever graduate, or even go to college, was such a huge accomplishment, and I’m so proud to be able to show my children that anything is possible if you just believe in yourself,” Sarty said.

EKU offers transfer pathways through several community colleges that allow students to seamlessly transfer credits toward a bachelor’s degree.

## EKU SOCIAL WORK TEAM WINS CATALYST AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) faculty and staff have once again claimed a Catalyst Award from Anthology, a provider of education solutions. The 2023 Catalyst Award for Community Engagement was awarded to EKU Social Work Associate Professor Pam Black, Professor Caroline Reid, Ph.D., and Instructional Designer Mary Henson in recognition of their work on the undergraduate social work practicum experience. The award honors institutions using Anthology solutions to foster connections between school districts, institutions, educators, students and families to improve student achievement and create a supportive learning environment.

In EKU’s undergraduate social work practicum, students are guided through the experience online in a collaborative effort of the campus community, student community and professional community. Evaluations from agency staff indicated 97% of students were ready to begin social work practice following the practicum.

“I’m so proud of the EKU team for their exceptional teamwork, dedication and commitment to improve our students’ online learning experience,” said Assistant Professor Stephanie Saulnier, social work department chair. “It’s fitting that our most recent Catalyst Award recognizes community engagement, which is a hallmark of EKU’s social work programs.”

The Catalyst Awards recognize and honor innovation and excellence within Anthology’s global community, where millions of educators and learners work every day to redefine what is possible when leveraging technology. “We’re pleased to honor this year’s Catalyst Award winners for their commitment to improving the educational experience for all learners through EdTech and sharing these insights with the broader community,” said Jim Milton, chairman and chief executive officer at Anthology.

In addition to social work, EKU offers engaging academic programs in a variety of high-demand fields, online and on campus.

