



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY



October 16, 2019

Fall break fun: Bands of America event

The highlight of my fall break was having the opportunity to attend the Bands of America event this past Saturday. Thousands of guests were on our campus to watch over 30 bands from eight states compete. I appreciate the leadership of the Johnson City/Jonesborough/Washington County Chamber of Commerce for making this possible, and I want to convey my appreciation to faculty and staff from the Department of Music, Facilities Management, Student Life and Enrollment, and other units for all they did to support this event.



Brian Noland
@ETSUPrez



It's an amazing day on the @ETSU campus with @BANDSOFAMERICA.



3:26 PM · Oct 12, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

Announcement of ETSU Elevates initiative

Last week I announced our new ETSU Elevates initiative that will bring our communities together to explore ways we can improve our region. Through ETSU Elevates, \$90,000 will be awarded to fund various service projects across the region. If you are involved in an activity or project that is making our communities better, or you have an idea about a project, we want to hear from you. ETSU Elevates offers an opportunity to engage all members of the region, not just members of the ETSU community. Service grants of \$5,000 each are available to teams that submit their ideas to create a healthy, thriving region with opportunities for all. Anyone is eligible, as long as the project team includes at least one member of the ETSU community (faculty, staff, students, organizations, departments, colleges). All applicants will have an equal shot at an opportunity to pitch their service project ideas in front of a live audience that will vote and choose which projects receive funding. Learn more by visiting the [ETSU Elevates website](#).



ETSU Connects: New learning and networking opportunity

This month I have the honor of launching a new program that will help build connections among employees while also providing a forum where they can hear important updates and learn about new initiatives. The program, called ETSU Connects, will hold its first gathering on Thursday, Oct. 24, at 11 a.m. in the Millennium Center Ballroom. Each ETSU Connects session will focus on a theme. For the month of October, an interactive round-table discussion on campus communication practices is planned. ETSU Connects is an opportunity for you to provide input as we discuss ways to improve the flow of information to employees. Those who participate will also have an opportunity to suggest future ETSU Connects themes and help guide this program forward. [Click here](#) to register for the Oct. 24 event.

Update on current budget

As preparations for 2020-21 budget hearing are underway, we now have information available regarding the level of funding that will be returned to colleges and units through the distribution of 2018-19 fallout dollars. For the second consecutive year since it was implemented, our decentralized budget model continues to yield positive outcomes across campus. I want to commend members of the campus community for their stewardship efforts, the strategic investments that were made, and for the wise management and oversight of their budgets.

Fall Commencement speakers announced

In less than two months, we will gather with hundreds of family members, friends and loved ones to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2019 during Commencement Exercises on Saturday, Dec. 14. We anticipate this to be one of the largest December graduating classes. I am pleased to announce that two beloved faculty members have accepted my invitation to serve as keynote speakers that day. Dr. Lori Meier, a faculty member from the Clemmer College who won the 2019 Distinguished Faculty Award for Teaching, will be the featured speaker during the 10 a.m. ceremony. Later that afternoon, Pat Cronin from the Department of Theatre and Dance will address the graduates at the 3 p.m. ceremony. Pat recently announced his plans to retire at the conclusion of this semester.

Holiday Lights Celebration

One of my favorite events of the fall semester is our annual Holiday Lights Celebration. This year, the event will be held on Wednesday, November 13, at Alumni Plaza. Please join me, SGA President Aamir Shaikh and Bucky as we kick off the holiday season and turn on the ETSU holiday lights. Enjoy music, hot chocolate and cookies from 5:45-6:30 p.m.

Festival of Ideas 2020

The 2020 spring semester will welcome the return of the highly successful Festival of Ideas which debuted this past January. Led by Dr. Bert C. Bach, the planning committee has secured several outstanding speakers for the 2020 forum Feb. 10-14. The presenters will include:

- Melissa Fitzgerald, a television star from *The West Wing* who currently is involved initiatives promoting justice for veterans;
- Mandy Harvey, an American jazz and pop singer and songwriter who overcame being profoundly deaf to become a contestant on *America's Got Talent*;
- Jon Meacham, a Pulitzer-prize winning presidential biographer and historian and author of *Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music That Made the Nation*; and
- Mike Wiley, a playwright, director and actor who will present his one-man show, *Breach of Peace*, which is based on true accounts of surviving participants of the Freedom Riders and others involved in the early struggle for African-American equality.

In addition, a panel discussion led by Josh Smith at WJHL TV-11 and featuring Nathan Farnor, Joy Fulkerson, Dr. Stephen Hendrix and Dr. Jodi Polaha will focus on the topic of voting. More information about the 2020 Festival of Ideas will be released soon.



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