



CPE REPORT

Eastern Kentucky University News for the Council on Postsecondary Education



EKU HOSTS RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEWLY RENOVATED KEENE HALL AND NEW PEDWAY

Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) announced the completion of a new pedway and the renovation of Keene Hall with a ribbon cutting on Aug. 7, 2024, marking a significant milestone in creating a safer campus that improves the student experience.

"These projects exemplify our priorities at Eastern Kentucky University," said EKU President David McFaddin. "Every decision we make is driven by one guiding principle: enhancing the student experience."

EKU SGA President Will Lampert said, "The opening of these two monumental structures quite literally bridges a gap. The new pedway will connect nearly 600 students in Keene Hall to the wider campus community."

The newly renovated Keene Hall houses 582 students. Originally built in 1969, the residence hall underwent extensive renovations to improve the living experience of its residents after being closed since the winter of 2019. Keene Hall reached capacity in record time when registration opened.

The pedway, crossing the Eastern Bypass, was constructed in response to student requests and connects the central campus to the south side campus. The south side of campus houses

some of EKU's facilities for top programs and events, including the Stratton Building and the College of Justice, Safety and Military Science, the Business and Technology Center and the EKU Center for the Arts.

"Safety is a focal point of all projects occurring on campus," said Bryan Makinen, chief campus operations officer. "Students, faculty, staff and community members can now safely cross one of the busiest roads in Madison County."

The ribbon cutting celebrated not only the completion of the projects but also the partnership between EKU and the City of Richmond.

"As EKU has grown, so has the need for a more pedestrian-friendly campus. The new Eastern Bypass pedway will enhance safety while improving the travel experience for our Richmond community," said the Mayor of Richmond, Robert Blythe. "We are proud to have our city's name prominently displayed on this new pedway, highlighting the strong relationship between Richmond and EKU."

Additional improvements to EKU's campus are currently underway, including the renovation of Alumni Coliseum.

EKU JOINS PARTNERSHIP TO ADDRESS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGES IN CENTRAL APPALACHIA

Eastern Kentucky University has entered a partnership with six universities to address healthcare workforce challenges, foster economic development and promote regional prosperity in central Appalachia. Called the Regional Public Colleges and Universities (RPCU) Central Appalachia Health Consortium, the project is part of the Appalachian Regional Commission's Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE).

The consortium will explore a variety of strategies for working together and impacting health and economic outcomes in central Appalachia. The goals of the initiative include strategies such as articulation agreements, local pipeline development, cross-institution internships, in-state tuition arrangements, elective options, streamlined applications and preferred admissions.

This project encompasses 235 counties in six states: Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina.

In addition to contributing to planning activities, EKU's role includes leveraging health science programs to promote health career programs within EKU and across consortium partners.

Key health career programs at EKU include nursing, health administration and public health. Additional programs of interest at EKU include occupational therapy, social work, speech pathology, nutrition, medical laboratory science and counseling. EKU is also pursuing the addition of a College of Osteopathic Medicine.

As for the consortium, "EKU's contributions will include the development of an EKU advisory committee to inform the planning committee," said Dr. Michelyn Bhandari, EKU's project director for the consortium.

For the one-year planning period that starts July 1, 2024, EKU was funded \$20,167 for its partnership role in the consortium.



EKU AND BECHTEL PARSONS BLUE GRASS ANNOUNCE VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP

In an ongoing commitment to veterans and their families, Eastern Kentucky University has added a significant milestone. An endowed scholarship has been created for veterans or their family members attending EKU, thanks to a \$100,000 gift announced from the Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass Joint Venture (BPGJV).

"It is well known that Eastern Kentucky University offers exceptional education for veterans and their families, as evidenced by our No. 2 national ranking among Military Friendly® Schools and No. 1 ranking for Best for Vets in Kentucky," said EKU President David McFaddin. "This contribution will establish a legacy, preserving our partnership and strengthening the support we can offer our military and veteran community.

Joe Curcio, BPGJV project manager said, "This scholarship reflects our support for veterans or their family members to assist them as they pursue higher levels of education. This is a gift to benefit them and EKU well into the future."

Curcio noted Bechtel Parsons has supported the EKU Office of Military and Veteran Affairs (OMVA) for more than 15 years.

The OMVA provides a centralized office with dedicated staff who are equipped to advocate for students. Veterans, military members and their families account for 10% of the entire student body, making it the largest affinity student population on EKU's campus. EKU provides veterans with resources to succeed, through OMVA and programs such as the Veterans Education and Transition Support (VETS) Center, VETS|Ready Opportunity Portal, and Kit Carson Commons Scholar House.

