



## **ECSU: THE YEAR IN REVIEW**

**Washington Monthly's #1 ranking of Elizabeth City State University in the 2014 edition of their College Guide is welcomed news. This marks the third consecutive year ECSU has been ranked first among baccalaureate colleges by Washington Monthly. Their editors give high marks to colleges and universities that contribute to society, enroll students from low-income families, and help them to graduate while not charging a fortune to attend. In the wake of discussions regarding the relevancy of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and particularly this HBCU, this ranking is good news.**

**For 123 years, Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) has been a key stakeholder in the northeastern region of the state. ECSU continues to be a beacon of hope for those wanting access to education and an enhanced opportunity for a better future. The fact that a majority of ECSU graduates remain in this region and contribute as outstanding citizens in education, business, science, and the arts confirms our relevance.**

**During the 2013 – 14 School-Year, ECSU faced and weathered a series of perfect storms, one falling incredibly on the heels of the preceding one. ECSU's remarkable resilience and resolve are clearly evidenced by many notable achievements and milestones despite seemingly insurmountable challenges.**

**Last year, notwithstanding legislatively-mandated budget reductions and enrollment declines, resulting in the discontinuation of four programs, the consolidation of schools, and a reduction in workforce, ECSU still graduated its largest class ever (542 students) and garnered national acclaim for its academic prowess, for its “contributions to the public good,” and for faculty and student achievement.**

**A review of ECSU's response to recent challenges, its status and legacy of success, and its stellar achievements in the face of those challenges bodes well for its future.**

## **SAFETY**

**Elizabeth City State University is now as safe as any university in the state. As a result of safety initiatives undertaken on campus this year, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), our accrediting body, has**

**invited ECSU to present its work as a “case study” on how to make campus safety improvements at its annual conference in December 2014.**

**Safety measures undertaken during the 2013-2014 school year include:**

- Appointing three experienced officers for the Campus Police – a Police Chief and two Captains;**
- Appointing an Interim Clery Coordinator;**
- Approving a Clery Compliance Committee and establishing Clery liaisons for each department on campus to ensure Clery Act compliance;**
- Creating a Clery Act training module for all Campus Security Authorities;**
- Implementing individualized and campus-wide mandatory Clery training for all faculty and staff members;**
- Creating a Campus Safety Webpage;**
- Establishing a Student Rights, Responsibilities and Complaints webpage;**
- Updating the Campus Police webpage;**

- **Placing a Daily Crime and Fire Log on the Campus Police webpage;**
- **Creating or updating four policies related to campus safety -- Emergency Response and Evacuation Notification Policy, Timely Warning Policy, Missing Student Policy, and Sexual Assault Policy;**
- **Evaluating and updating the university's emergency notification system (PIER) that alerts students of imminent dangers;**
- **Establishing stronger relationships with local law enforcement through Memorandum of Understanding agreements; and**
- **Publishing a new Annual Safety and Fire Security Report.**

**With our new Clery infrastructure, we have emerged stronger and more compliant with all campus safety regulations and requirements under the Clery Act.**

## **ENROLLMENT**

**As a result of declining enrollment, the university has renewed its emphasis on recruitment and retention. We are working collaboratively with our educational partners, including high schools and community colleges. We have forged new relationships with the US Coast Guard and other military branches of service to serve the educational needs of the armed services.**

**On August 1, 2014, we opened a Veterans Center on campus. Our Office of Transfer Advising and Resources (OTAS), designed to assist and support transfer students as they transition to ECSU, was opened earlier this year.**

**The offices of admissions, retention, and financial aid have been reorganized under the Department of Enrollment Management and Retention. Steps have been taken to fully engage the university community in an aggressive recruitment endeavor designed to increase our visibility to prospective students, to enhance our enrollment operations, and to improve customer service and the admission process. These initiatives will be led by the recently hired Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. We plan to**

**integrate technology throughout our recruitment and enrollment services units.**

**Efforts were launched to more fully engage alumni and alumni chapters and to utilize social media for recruiting. Alumni recruitment receptions are now being held in key markets to coincide with admissions recruitment efforts. The goal of each alumni chapter is to recruit at least 10 students.**

**Further, to stabilize and build enrollment, ECSU is refocusing on priorities that respond to market needs. For example, we have taken steps to revamp our Aviation Science program by developing a 5 year strategic plan for the program, restructuring the curriculum to increase 4 year graduation rate, establishing an Aviation Advisory Board to advise on curriculum and industry needs, offering concurrent ground school and flight training to improve FAA certification attainment, and hiring two flight instructors.**

## **RIGHTSIZING PLAN**

**In fall 2011 and again in fall 2013, more stringent minimum admissions requirements went into effect. These new standards, initiated by the UNC Board of Governors,**

**caused a multi-year decline in ECSU's enrollment. Many "underserved" students that we otherwise could have accepted to our university no longer met the new admissions standards. As a result, ECSU faced a significant reduction in its state appropriation and tuition revenue, leaving the university with a \$5.0 million budget gap.**

**To address the budget gap, ECSU launched a comprehensive "rightsizing" initiative, designed to refine our portfolio of academic programs and adjust our overall level of spending to fit the size of its current enrollment. Several guiding principles helped shape ECSU's rightsizing plan.**

**First, we committed to rebuilding and stabilizing our enrollment by refining the core academic mission. Refinement of the academic mission includes development of three areas of strategic importance to the region: integrating technology with education, improving human health and wellness, and promoting natural and aviation sciences.**

**Second, the leadership team acknowledged that the rightsizing effort needed to produce a balanced budget that provided some of the resources required to strengthen**



**critical campus operations such as Campus Police, Clery Act compliance, and Enrollment Management.**

**Finally, ECSU's rightsizing preserved departmental maintenance and operations budgets (i.e., non-personnel budgets) that cover items such as supplies, materials, training, etc. After consecutive years of budget cuts to this area, data suggests that ECSU's departmental operating budgets are needed to be maintained or enhanced.**

**With the preceding guiding principles in mind, we balanced our FY 2014-15 operating budget by implementing the following strategic measures:**

- Our academic program mix was adjusted (with some programs discontinued) to better meet market demands;**
- A campus-wide reorganization was completed that will improve organizational effectiveness and communication;**
- Similarly positioned administrative functions were consolidated to reduce overlap and inefficient redundancy;**

- **Adjustments to overall staffing levels were made to promote academic and operational efficiency**

**In the end, as a result of our rightsizing efforts, ECSU saved almost \$5.0 million, reduced its cost to produce a degree and improved its overall operational efficiency. More importantly, we have repositioned ourselves to become a more focused, efficient and effective institution, better able to respond to market needs of the students and the larger community.**

## **THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY**

### **STUDENT SUCCESS**

**ECSU faculty members are involved in teaching, scholarly activity, and service that enhance the academic experience of our students well beyond the confines of the campus. Student success is our top priority. We are committed to academic excellence and to the caring, personal attention we give to our students. Since each student is unique, we strive to maximize that unique potential.**

**We want each student to be totally immersed in the learning process so they will be prepared to lead in a competitive, global, and an increasingly interdependent society. As we continue to implement the rightsizing plan, we are confident that the university and its students will be ready to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.**

**ECSU continues to offer students strong academic programs as well as many opportunities to supplement their classroom experience with hands-on academic opportunities. Every spring the university hosts “Research Week” when students from all academic programs present their research projects in a conference setting. These research projects have been guided by a professor in the field over the academic year giving each student individualized attention. Many students go on to publish their work. Additionally, there are numerous opportunities for international study such as, the Elizabeth City State University Minority Health International Research Training (E-MHIRT) Program which provides opportunity for 10 minority students (with GPAs of 3.0 and above and majoring in the natural and socio/behavioral sciences) to spend 10**

**summer weeks participating in research training in Southern African Universities under the tutelage of prominent research scientists.**

## **FORCE FOR GROWTH**

**ECSU is a force for growth in Northeastern North Carolina, bringing education, cultural events, jobs, and grants to one of the most historically underdeveloped, geographically challenging, and economically disadvantaged regions in the state.**

**ECSU is the third largest employer in the region. And its economic impact on the Elizabeth City Community is \$118 million in output sales, \$83 million in value added (gross regional product), and \$59 million in labor income.**

## **AFFORDABLE**

**ECSU has the lowest tuition among UNC system schools. We represent one of the best values in education. And because many of our students come from northeastern North Carolina, and remain in the region to work upon graduation, we want to help ensure that those in our region who want to pursue higher education can not only tap into**

**our resources, but also afford to make their educational goals a reality.**

## **FAMILY ATMOSPHERE**

**ECSU is also the smallest university in the UNC system. But our size allows us to provide a family atmosphere, a personal touch – a caring, student-centered learning environment with mentoring, great internships, leadership, and research opportunities.**

## **THE CAMPUS**

**Over the past four years, new campus construction included (1) a new three-story residence hall (2012); (2) a 52,500 square feet state-of-the-art pharmacy complex with a Drug Information Center, classroom, laboratories, IV simulation and compounding labs and faculty research labs; and (3) a state-of-the-art School of Education and Psychology building, equipped with smart boards, white boards, document cameras, and LCD monitors. This facility houses a Praxis Study Lab, a Computer Lab for student use, and it contains a global education Center which enables us**

**to teach classes from our campus and transmit video to any adequately prepared site in the world.**

## **OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**We have outstanding educational programs, including majors in Teacher Education, Pharmaceutical Science, and Aviation. Currently, we offer 37 baccalaureate degrees and four master level degrees. In addition, ECSU offers a mix of liberal arts, business, and STEM academic programs. Many of our academic programs hold national accreditations – e.g., Business and Economics, Social Work, and Education.**

### **Aviation Science:**

**If you are interested in Aviation Science and have dreams of flying as a career, ECSU is a great place to start your education and to earn a bachelor's degree to go along with your classroom and actual flying experience. ECSU offers the only four-year collegiate aviation education program in the State of North Carolina. Using two ECSU planes – Air Viking 1 & 2 -- and partnering with the local US Coast Guard air traffic controllers, ECSU students can**

**graduate with real hours at the controls of a licensed plane flying in real airspace.**

## **Teacher Education**

**ECSU was created as a ‘normal school’, responsible for educating teachers, and ECSU still produces teachers for North Carolina and elsewhere. Today, we provide 64.06% of the elementary and 38.46% of the secondary teachers for our geographic area. Most of the teachers we produce stay to teach in this region. 33% percent of our students are first generation students and come from Pasquotank and the surrounding counties. And 59.4 % come from the 21 counties in Northeastern NC.**

## **2013-14 NOTABLES**

**The *US News and World Report* 2014 edition of best colleges ranked ECSU #1 among Top Public Schools (Regional Colleges/South), up from its #3 ranking in 2013.**

**For the third year in a row, ECSU has been ranked No. 1 among 350 baccalaureate colleges and universities**

**nationwide in one of *Washington Monthly's* college rankings.**

**ECSU ranked third among public HBCU green initiatives in an April 2014 survey that analyzed efforts institutions had taken to effectively manage energy.**

**In May 2014, U.S. News and World Report ranked ECSU #6 among HBCUs for its 79.8% freshmen retention rates.**

**This year, a previously unnamed Antarctic Bay was named The Elizabeth City State University Bay as a result of the work of five of our students, working at our Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research (CERSER).**

**Currently, ECSU CERSER researchers are using ground-penetrating radar (GPR) in an archaeological search for Lost Colony artifacts.**

**In addition, this year ECSU:**

- Received a clean financial audit for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row.**



- **Received grants totaling \$11,512,544.69 from various agencies.**
- **Received a \$500,000.00 private gift to endow an Aviation science professorship and scholarships in Education.**
- **Received \$150,000 from The Thurgood Marshall College Fund to provide scholarships for eligible students who are in their junior or senior year and need financial support to graduate.**
- **Established an E-Mentoring Program to aid students in the transition into college life and to give students access to professional networks for future career development.**
- **Opened a new finance lab, complete with market displays, designed to support our Investments and Commercial Bank Management Course.**
- **Partnered with Follett Higher Education Group, which now operates the newly remodeled Campus Store that boasts nearly 2,000 square feet of retail space and offers an expanded selection of Viking merchandise and gifts.**
- **Streamlined and automated ECSU's Travel Requisition process by integrating it with SciQuest, becoming the**

**first school in the UNC System to accomplish this, and being asked to train other UNC System schools on our process.**

- **Became a Weather Ready Nation Ambassador in July 2014 and can now partner with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to help improve the nation's readiness, responsiveness, and overall resilience against extreme weather, water, and climate events.**
- **Hosted the 54th annual Intercollegiate Music Association (IMA) conference (February 12, 2014).**

**Student, faculty, and Administration accolades this year include:**

- **Akeadra Bell, an ECSU junior chemistry major with a 4.0 GPA, received a \$25,000 UNCF Merck Undergraduate Fellowship Award in June 2014. She was one of 15 applicants selected, nationally, based on GPA, demonstrated interest in scientific education and a career in scientific research or engineering, and ability to perform in a laboratory or engineering environment.**
- **In July 2014, Kathryn Gigler was appointed Director of the ECSU Women's Center, which works to prevent and raise awareness of sexual violence.**

- **In August, 2014, the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism announced that ECSU's 2014 graduate, Valarie Edwards, has been given a full scholarship in the amount of \$135,000 to cover the entire cost of her journalism study.**
- **Senior Donyai Moffatt won the Toyota Green Initiative contest and received a one year lease on a Toyota Prius and a \$2,500.00 scholarship in August, 2014.**
- **Linda Hayden, Director of ECSU's Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research, recently was interviewed by The HistoryMakers, the nation's largest African-American video oral history collection, and that interview will be part of a project newly acquired by the Library of Congress.**

**As a result of the tireless work of our leadership team and the support of the entire university community, ECSU experienced many wonderful “happenings” during the 2013 – 14 School Year which contributed directly to student intellectual growth and knowledge, to student social consciousness and political growth, and to student well-being and success.**

**ECSU is alive and well. We will continue to thrive. The things that are so good about this University – the things we proudly celebrate – are the things we can build upon.**