East Tennessee State University opened in 1911 as East Tennessee State Normal School, founded on a mission of service to the region, initially with the intent of producing qualified teachers to educate the region's students. And Besse Cooper was true to her alma mater’s mission: After earning her teaching degree from East Tennessee State Normal, she did indeed become a teacher. She married in 1924 and had four children.

“Mrs. Cooper is an example to hold up of a life lived right and well with the building blocks of education for the mind, service through the teaching of others and the value of family,” said ETSU President Dr. Paul E. Stanton, Jr. "We are proud to call her a member of the ETSU family, and we salute her."

As our university marks its Centennial, it is the season to celebrate longevity - and especially a time to salute those who were there during our school's infancy.

So this brings us to Besse Cooper, East Tennessee State Normal School Class of 1916. Mrs. Cooper is the oldest living graduate of our university. We know this because Mrs. Cooper, at age 114, is the oldest living person in the world.

Born Besse Brown on Aug. 26, 1896, in Sullivan County, Mrs. Cooper now lives in Monroe, Ga., where, her family says, she is doing well. According to records maintained by the Gerontology Research Group, which tracks the lives of supercentenarians, or those who have reached age 110, Mrs. Cooper is 26 days older than the world's second-oldest person.

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Solving the Puzzle of Life (HDAL 2350) is a course that is currently being offered to ETSU students as an elective. This course is intended to help students increase their awareness of self, decision-making style, relationship dynamics, behavior change, and lifestyle management. All students benefit from this course as the intent is to enhance the quality of life through increased personal awareness and skill development. Students who are undecided may get a special benefit as all aspects of the course are relevant to the skills that are necessary to select a meaningful major and career.

The course development is based upon developmental theory, defining that in order to make a good choice of major/career one must have a clear sense of identity, good decision-making skills, and knowledge of the world of work. Solving The Puzzle of Life focuses on these elements of growth, and also assists in teaching skills that are essential for success in our society related to positive relationships, diversity, and management of anxiety, depression, and stress.

Earlier research on the course found that 89% of the students who took the class had declared a major within one semester of taking it, effectively moving students toward graduation. Each section of the course is limited to 20 students per section as it requires significant interaction within class; a substantial part of the student’s grade is based upon participation.

The course is being taught by two staff from the Counseling Center with career development expertise and Graduate Assistants currently working on their Master’s Degree in Counseling. We are currently offering 9-10 sections of the course each year and all sections are filling to or close to capacity, so students should sign up for the course as soon as possible to ensure participation.

— Dr. Steve Brown
Director, Counseling Center
Student Spotlight: Gabrielle Billiot

Gabrielle is an active member of the Student Government Association (SGA), being a member of the Junior Senate and being appointed to the Senate this semester. She wants to help make the university an even better institution and positive experience for students. SGA has allowed for a realistic learning experience; Billiot describes the opportunity to learn from other students as eye-opening, as it highlights the importance of understanding differing viewpoints and how to make compromises. Passing legislation in the campus government allows Gabrielle the experience of making decisions in the present and seeing the results.

Billiot is also involved in campus events such as concerts and the annual Homecoming celebration; she is an active member in the Preview and Orientation Leader Organization (POLO). She appreciates college as a chance to grow more socially, and encourages parents to “push your student to get involved, make the most out of college, and live the journey.”

Student Spotlight: Jeff Cogburn

Jeff enjoys being involved in different organizational opportunities and exploring his passion for various subjects. A member of Preview and Orientation Leader Organization (POLO), Jeff is proud to be seen on campus as a leader; he wants students to know that he is someone who can help out. He is the first recipient of The Golden Plunger “Unstoppable” Award in recognition of outstanding service to POLO.

Cogburn is the current Vice President of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity; through his interaction with Greek Life at ETSU he met his significant other and found a good job in the area. He also has a financial scholarship through ETSU Chorus. Jeff appreciates the positive interactions he has with other students and faculty on campus: “I was supposed to come here; I love ETSU because of the way it feels. All the people are nice, and you meet a great friend practically every time you walk to class.”

Jeff understands the distance between parents and first year students can be a difficult and constantly changing adjustment for everyone involved. He suggests parents “stay in contact with your student but be able to let go; understand the college life is going to change parents just as much as it changes students.”

“Understand the college life is going to change parents just as much as it changes students.”
Student Spotlight: Maria Hernandez

Maria has gained national recognition through the Boys and Girls Club, earning the award of Runner-Up Youth of the Year and the Gold Presidential Service Award. She currently travels as a speaker around the country and joins forces with celebrities such as Denzel Washington & Mark Wahlberg while still maintaining an admirable academic record. Hernandez was welcomed to the oval office to discuss the current Hispanic dropout rate with President Barack Obama. Maria is double majoring in Biochemistry and Spanish. Her extracurricular student involvement includes being a Quest Leader and a member of the Spanish Club. Maria’s service-learning position is serving as an English as a Second Language Instructor.

Hernandez appreciates the friendly and helpful staff at ETSU, and enjoys the politeness and positive attitude presented by the students on campus. She is a first generation college student and comes from a very community-centered family, but is encouraged by her parents to “take ownership and do something for myself; by getting a college education I’m going to be able to help my family more.”

Maria Hernandez supports parental involvement for college students: “Don’t be afraid to let your kids go; you’ve brought them this far. Going to college is something parents can share with their student.”

Student Spotlight: Sydney Edwards

Sydney has made an impact on the lives of fellow students through her involvement with various campus organizations. Her positive social experience through the Quest & Preview orientation programs encouraged Sydney to join the Preview and Orientation Leader Organization (POLO) to help new first-year students get involved and connected at ETSU. Edwards is also an involved member of the Black Affairs Association and is a student worker in the Registration Office.

A chemistry major intending to go on to medical school, Sydney has learned to create a balance of fun and studying. She enjoys volunteering, learning new things, going to sporting events and making new friends. Edwards suggests to parents that they “encourage your student to study in public and with other people, form study groups, and get out and meet people… tell your student to live to the fullest; go farther.”
Student Spotlight: Tyler Carpenter

Tyler is recognized state-wide in as the newly elected Associate Director of Administration & Finance for Tennessee Association of Residence Halls (TARH). He assists in planning several large conferences with multiple universities in the state. Carpenter is also currently a Resident Advisor in Centennial Hall.

Tyler is majoring in Public Health. His involvement in student activities includes being a member of the Preview & Orientation Leader Organization (POLO), a Junior Senate member of the Student Government Association (SGA), and last semester was the Vice President of Governor’s Hall Council. Tyler is also associated with Buctainment, the Major Events Committee, and the Wesley Foundation.

Carpenter states that getting to know people is an important part of college, and this comes from students being involved, socializing, and getting connected. He suggests parents encourage their student to live in a residence hall: “You can’t live off campus and get the same experience; there is more of a community feeling on campus because you have a dedicated staff and friendly people.”

Student Spotlight: Jared Leftrick

Jared has been appointed to the Senate as a representative of the Student Government Association (SGA). He has explored controversial issues with fellow students, faculty and staff such as gender-neutral housing, and faculty firearm permits. Jared pushes the university to face the present and future issues head-on and to be actively involved in decision-making.

Leftrick is majoring in Political Science. His additional involvement includes being an Ambassador of the university and a member of the Residence Hall Association. Jared earned the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) Student of the Month award previously, and continues to push strongly for positive campus change.

Jared encourages parents to support their students: “Every student on this campus brings something to the university. Encourage your student to find what’s best for them and their abilities.”
What’s the Buzz at the BCPA?

The Basler Center for Physical Activity (aka the CPA) is buzzing with activity every day of the week this spring semester. With Aquatics, Intramurals, Group Fitness, Non-credit Instruction classes, Outdoor Adventure, and Sport Clubs there are numerous fun and challenging Campus Recreation programs for ETSU students to get involved in.

There are a few areas the Department of Campus Recreation would like to highlight this semester. Intramurals and Aquatics teamed up to offer an Intramural Inner Tube Water Polo league for the first time ever. Not only is it a lot of fun to play, it is incredibly fun to watch. No previous water polo experience necessary.

In the Fall of 2010, the Intramural Centennial Cup was created as a way to highlight the year-long Centennial Celebration at ETSU and give intramural participants the opportunity to participate in a year-long competition. The concept of the IM Centennial Cup is to award each team points for participating in multiple Intramural Sports throughout the Fall and Spring semesters; the Centennial Cup Champion will be awarded to the team in each division that accumulates the most points.

The Group Fitness program is as popular as ever, and due to the demand there is a record-high 62 classes offered every week. From Advanced Pilates to Zumba and dozens of classes in between, it is a great way for students to get (or stay) in shape.

Non-Credit Instruction consists of classes that students can take for a nominal fee, and typically a certification can be obtained, but they are not for college credit. Certification courses this spring include CPR/AED, First Aid, Climbing Wall Instructor, Wilderness First Aid, Red Cross Lifeguarding, and various Group Fitness Instructor courses. Other Non-credit Instruction classes being offered include swim lessons, RAD (rape aggression, defense) classes and beginning kayak instruction.

The Outdoor Adventure program’s spring break trip is taking a small group of ETSU students to Texas and Big Bend National Park for the first time ever. Hiking the scenic mountains and desert valleys, as well as paddling the canyon river will provide these students with an experience of a lifetime. There are also multiple weekend trips offered by the Outdoor Adventure program. Whether your student enjoys backpacking, canoeing, camping, trail service or a mixture of those, a weekend in the great outdoors can benefit them in multiple ways.

Last, but not least, don’t forget the CPA itself. ETSU students can play pick-up basketball, engage in a game of racquetball, swim laps, climb a wall (indoors or out), run on a treadmill, or lift weights to name a few of the recreational facilities and equipment the CPA has to offer. The CPA is the place to catch up with fellow students, faculty and staff, and get in a workout.

— Lynn Nester
Director, Campus Recreation
Many parents and guardians are already aware of the importance that is placed on student involvement during the college years. However, do you really know about all the opportunities your student has for becoming involved? It is drastically important for students to be a part of their campus. By being involved, students receive training in leadership, teamwork, and communication; it truly makes a difference in their overall college experience.

Luckily, ETSU offers a specific office that provides information and resources about student-led organizations. This office is referred to by most university students, staff, and faculty as the SORC (pronounced ‘source’), which stands for Student Organization Resource Center. Our office allows students the luxury of using computers, making signs, having a work space, renting marquees, designing display cases, and much, much more. We are the one-stop-shop for all things student organizations.

We also house many campus organizations such as Buctainment, the student activities board. Students in Buctainment have their hands in planning movies, socials, musical performances, and guest speakers all for university students to experience.

ETSU’s Student Government Association (SGA) is also located in the SORC. On March 21, SGA along with the Diversity Events Planning Committee and other campus organizations are bringing Kevin Hart, a comedian, to perform free of charge for students. On April 17, SGA is also sponsoring our spring concert; country music singer Eric Church will be performing in the Mountain State Health Alliance Memorial Center.

So, next time you hear your student say “I’m bored, there is nothing to do on campus,” make sure you direct them to the SORC and we’ll help them find something they’re interested in.

— Christine McPherson
Graduate Assistant,
Student Organization Resource Center
Financial Aid: Get Ready for Summer & Next Fall/Spring

Students must apply for financial aid each year to be eligible for financial assistance. Counselors are available at the Office of Financial Aid during regular business hours to help students and families understand the grants, loans, scholarships and other options available.

There is also a Step-by-Step Guide on the Office of Financial Aid website; this guide is a student roadmap to successfully navigating the process of applying for aid, verifying that all requirements have been met, viewing and accepting the awards granted.

Additional dates and locations have representatives around campus to inform students about the status of their Student Aid Report (SAR) to ensure all requirements for financial assistance have been met. Financial Aid Counselors will be available at these locations from 10:00am-2:00pm:

Tuesday, 3/15/11
At Einstein’s/Library

Wednesday, 3/23/11
At Governor’s Hall Lobby

Thursday, 3/24/11
At Centennial Hall Lobby

Students are reminded to fill out their 2011-2012 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible by using the guide and counselor resources provided by the ETSU Office of Financial Aid. The priority deadline for all financial aid information is April 15, 2011.

— Margaret Miller
Director, Financial Aid

Contact us:
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Find More Information, Visit Us Online:

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http://www.etsu.edu/100years/

Counseling Center
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Student Government Association
http://www.etsu.edu/sga/

Campus Recreation
http://www.etsu.edu/students/campusrec/

Student Organization Resource Center
http://www.etsu.edu/students/sorc/default.aspx

Office of Financial Aid
http://www.etsu.edu/finaid/