

YPSILANTI, Mich., Oct. 1, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Eastern Michigan University has taken another step in its commitment to helping its students succeed, with plans to award more than \$43.8 million in financial aid in 2014-15.

The EMU Board of Regents approved the financial aid package of scholarships, awards and grants proposal at its meeting Oct 1.

The financial aid proposal represents a more than \$4.6 million increase (11.8 percent) over the 2013-14 financial aid budget of \$39.2 million.

During the past seven years, Eastern Michigan has increased its student financial aid by 100 percent (including the 11.8 percent proposal for FY15), reflecting its mission to help Michigan students and their families in a challenging economic environment.

The increase in financial aid accompanies record growth in freshman enrollment at Eastern. The University this fall welcomed its largest ever freshman class, of 2,872 students, a growth of 277 first-time freshmen from the previous year's total of 2,595.

Many of these new students qualified for scholarships and need-based aid for the first time, while many other academically achieving students maintained their awards. The University has moved from 2,100 first-time freshmen in fall 2011 to 2,872 over the last two years, while the entering class ACT composite score has risen nearly one full point, to 22.0.

And not only are more students enrolling at Eastern, more are graduating as well. A record number of 2,376 students graduated last spring, an increase of more than 27 percent since 2007.

The increased enrollment combined with an improved academic profile results in more financial aid awards.

"Our financial aid commitment underscores the strong belief by the University and the Board of Regents in supporting our students and helping them reach their academic and career goals," said Francine Parker, chair of the EMU Board of Regents.

President Susan Martin said, "Our continued increases in financial aid at Eastern keep college affordable for our students and families, who work so hard to pay for their education. As we build the incoming class of 2014, our focus is on attracting, retaining and graduating excellent and involved students."

The \$43.8 million approved financial aid budget includes \$30.9 million for scholarships, awards and grants; \$7.4 million for athletic grants-in-aid; \$500,000 for federal and state matches; and \$5 million for graduate aid.

For more about financial aid at EMU, visit <http://www.emich.edu/finaid/>

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