Hart Named Dean Of College of A & S

Dr. Dominick J. Hart has been named dean of EKU’s College of Arts and Sciences after serving as acting dean of the College since 1999.

Hart, who joined the EKU faculty in 1970 and served as chair of the University’s Department of English from 1986 to 1999, was selected after a national search that attracted more than 30 applicants.

“I am grateful for the honor and privilege extended me to serve as dean for the College of Arts and Sciences,” Hart said. “During my time as acting dean, I have come to appreciate the rich pool of talent, both faculty and staff, and the many fine programs with which the College is endowed. Building upon this base, we have the opportunity to construct a truly fine College of Arts and Sciences – one with a sound liberal arts core, a solid array of undergraduate and graduate majors, and recognized programs of excellence, including, especially, teacher education. I look forward to working with all my colleagues to achieve this goal.”

Alumni Weekend Honors Graduates, Professors

Retired Madison County Schools Superintendent Russell (Buddy) Roberts, Classes of 1956 and 1960, will be honored as Outstanding Alumnus at the conclusion of Alumni Weekend festivities April 27-28.

Also at the Alumni Awards and Recognition Banquet Saturday, April 28, five graduates will be inducted into the University’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni: Jennifer Benson Decker, ’78, ’80, Shelbyville, attorney; G. Finley Hamilton, ’70,’75, Ellicott City, Md., commander/conductor, U.S. Army Field Band; H. Douglas House, ’66, Richmond, also a retired superintendent of Madison County Schools; Jack Jackson, ’71, Dayton, Ohio, community relations adviser with Dayton Metropolitan Housing; and Robert E. Sanders, ’69, Covington, attorney.

In addition, Dr. Bobby Barton, professor of exercise and sport science and head athletic trainer, and Dr. Walter Boles, associate professor of technology, will receive the EKU National Alumni Association’s Awards for Teaching Excellence, and Donald Diniz will receive a Service Award.

Roberts served as Madison County School Superintendent from 1972 to 1988. During his tenure, the school system added Madison Southern High School, two middle schools and 55 elementary classrooms and increased the size of the instructional staff. Also, a kindergarten program for all five-year-olds was established and advanced placement classes were added at Madison Central High School, among many other curriculum improvements.

The National Alumni Association’s Awards for Teaching Excellence are based on superior teaching performance and demonstrated concern for students. Faculty members are nominated for the awards by members of the student body. Nominees’ credentials are reviewed by members of Mortar Board, and a list of finalists are presented to the EKU National Alumni Association’s Executive Council for final selection.

Banquet tickets are $20 each and may be reserved by calling the University’s alumni relations office, 622-1260. The event will be held at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 28.

The schedule Friday, April 27 at the Arlington House includes a 6 p.m. faculty/alumni reception, “early bird” alumni dinner at 7:30 and a “Casino Night” from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. Each Casino Night guest is given $2,000 of “Colonel Money,” and winnings can be used to bid at an action for EKU paraphernalia. The cost for the “early bird” dinner is $20 a person, and admission to Casino Night is $10 a person.

Festivities continue Saturday, April 28 at the Keen Johnson Building, where registration and a “Getting Reacquainted Continental Breakfast” begin at 9 a.m. The day also includes an 11:30 a.m. buffet luncheon (cost $11), class meetings and photographs, and recognition of EKU Pioneers, those who graduated from the University at least 50 years ago. Any graduate from 1951 and earlier who would like to be recognized this year as an EKU Pioneer should contact the Alumni Relations office to make reservations. For more information about Alumni Weekend, or to make reservations, call 622-1260 or e-mail alumni.event@eku.edu.

EKU Surpasses State Average Pass Rate on Teacher Exam

EKU students taking the state teacher certification exam for the most recent reporting period passed at a rate higher than the state average.

Of the 260 Eastern seniors who took the PRAXIS exam between the Summer 1999 and Spring 2000 semesters, 246 passed. The 95 percent pass rate eclipses the state average of 94 percent for the same period.

PRAXIS is an Educational Testing Service program that provides tests and other services for use as part of the teacher certification process. The exam, taken by those who have completed the teacher education program, measures students’ basic content knowledge as reflected in the K-12 curriculum used in Kentucky’s public schools.

“There is a campus-wide commitment here to produce a better-prepared pre-service teacher,” said Dr. Mark Wasicisco, dean of EKU’s College of Education. “We have great cooperation among academic colleges and departments, and our graduates benefit directly from this collaboration.”

Dr. Dominick Hart, dean of the University’s College of Arts and Sciences, said the PRAXIS results “help to confirm that our students graduate with a solid grounding in the subjects they will teach. At the same time, faculty and staff of the College of Arts and Sciences work closely and cooperatively with their colleagues in the College of Education to assure that our students also are grounded in the pedagogy they need to teach well. Preparing teachers for the Commonwealh is one of the most important things we do at Eastern, and we do it as a collaborative effort.”

Wasicisco said the results are particularly encouraging given the University’s open-enrollment policy and primary service area that includes some of the most economically disadvantaged counties of the country.

“We take a broad spectrum of students and cherish the fact that’s a part of our mission,” he said.

Since its founding in 1906, Eastern has maintained a strong commitment to the preparation of teachers. Of the nearly 11,000 undergraduate students enrolled at EKU in Spring 1999, approximately 15 percent were enrolled in some stage of the teacher education program. Many of those students return to their home region to teach.

EKU has stepped up efforts to attract more of the best and brightest students into the teaching profession. Future Teacher Day brings about 250 area high school students to the campus twice each year.

In 1998, Congress enacted Title II of the Higher Education Act to address public concerns over the quality of teacher preparation programs nationwide.

Institutions now must report: the pass rate of program completers on the state’s licensure exams, how that rate compares with the average pass rate for the state, the number of students in the program, average number of hours in practice teaching, the faculty-student ration in practice teaching, and if the teacher education unit is approved by the state and whether the state has designated it as low performing. The annual reports will provide comprehensive national data on how well institutions are preparing teachers, what states require of individuals before they are allowed to teach, and how institutions and states are raising their standards for the teaching profession. Title II also authorizes new federal grant programs to improve the recruitment, preparations and support of new teachers.

April 18
Disabilities Awareness Day at EKU!
Tuesday, April 17

Feminism and Teaching
“How Has Feminism Changed Teaching?”

Writing Awards Banquet
The annual English Department Writing Awards Banquet honoring student writers features keynote speaker Sena Jeter Naslund, author of “Ahab’s Wife: Or, The Star-Gazer,” 7 p.m., Straton Cafeteria; call Carrie Cook at 622-3091 to purchase tickets, $12 for general public and $6 for EKU English faculty.

Softball Action
Morehead State at EKU, 4 p.m.

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April 16, 2001

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To Submit Items for Next Issue: Send items to the above location, fax or e-mail address by April 10.

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Announcements

Get Help to Pay New Students
The NOVA Program, a federally funded TRIO Program, still has positions available for the Fall 2001 semester. Learning Assistants and Mentors serve as academically successful role models for incoming freshmen in GSO 100 orientation classes. Applicants must have earned a 3.0 GPA, and must not be overextended with work or other activities. Hiring decisions for the fall are now being made, so apply today! Applications are available in Turley House Room 203. For more information, call Jackie Hayes at 622-1047.

Christian Student Fellowship
Christian Student Fellowship (CSF) will meet Wednesday evenings at the Daniel Boone Statue at 6 p.m. for the remainder of the semester (April 18 and April 25). Call Geniffer Skidmore at 622-1769 for more information.

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Events

Percussion Ensemble Concert
8 p.m., Brock Auditorium.

Wednesday, April 18

“Guns, Germs and Steel”
Pulitzer Prize-winning author Dr. Jared Diamond, 8 p.m., Brock Auditorium, part of Millennium Speaker Series. His lecture will focus on the award-winning book, “Guns, Germs and Steel.”

Wednesday, April 18

Towards Saturday, April 21

EKU Theatre Presents Play
“The Cripple of Inishman,” 8 p.m. nightly, Gifford Theatre, Campbell Building, tickets ($4 for students, $5 adults) available at Gifford Box Office or by calling 622-1325 between noon and 4 p.m. weekdays. Play synopsis: Word arrives on a remote island off the coast of Ireland that a Hollywood director is coming to a neighboring island to make a movie. More than anyone, young Cripple Billy wants to be in the film and not to break away from the bitter tedium of his daily life. Both cruel and kind, wistful and exasperating, the play looks at undying hope in an unraveling world. Note: The play contains language that some may find objectionable.

Thursday, April 19

String Orchestra Concert
8 p.m., Brock Auditorium.

Saturday, April 21

Softball Doubleheader
Southeast Missouri at EKU, 2, 1 p.m.

Sunday, April 22

Art Exhibit Opens
Graduating Art BFA Majors Exhibit, opening reception, 2-4 p.m., Giles Gallery, Campbell Building, Exhibit continues through Friday, May 4. Gallery open Tuesday-Saturday afternoons.

Softball Homestand Continues
SEM0 at EKU, 1 p.m.

Opera Workshop Performance
3 p.m., Gifford Theatre.

EKU Guitar Ensemble
8 p.m., Gifford Theatre.

Monday, April 23

Developmental Education Program
“Developmental Education Studies,” Sue Cain, 9-11 a.m., Walnut Hall, Keen Johnson Building, sponsored by Teaching and Learning Center.

Tuesday, April 24

Meet Ky. Education Commissioner

Vocal Jazz Ensemble
8 p.m., Gifford Theatre.

Thursday, April 26

John Harlan’s Kentucky
“The Best Type of Slaveholders: Myth and Mission in John Harlan’s Kentucky,” Dr. Linda Przybyszewski, 7-30 p.m., Ken霉素 Room, Powell Building.

Enrollment Management Program
“Engaging commuter Students: Redesigning Campuses for the Majority of America’s College Students,” teleconference sponsored by the Office of Enrollment Management, 1-4 p.m., Burrier 100. To register, call 622-3047.

Friday, April 27

Case Methods of Instruction
Program by Debbie Hadon, 9-11 a.m., Faculty Club Lounge, Keen Johnson Building, sponsored by Teaching and Learning Center.

Student Concerto Performance
8 p.m., Gifford Theatre.

Saturday, April 28

Softball Twinbills
Tennessee State at EKU, 2, 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 29

Homestand Continues
Tennessee State at EKU, softball, 1 p.m.

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Browner Speaks Here April 16

Earth Days Events Continue Through Month
Earth Days in the Camberlands continue the next two weeks with public presentations by Carol Browner, former head of the Environmental Protection Agency; George Constantz, biologist, naturalist and author; and Denise Giardina, author and environmental activist; among other programs and activities.

All events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted. The complete schedule of remaining Earth Days follows:

Monday, April 16

Carol Browner
Public Presentation
“Public Health and Environmental Protection: How Far Have We Come and Where Are We Going?”
11:15 a.m., Keen Johnson Ballroom

Carol Browner is former head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Call 622-1644 for more information.

Monday, April 23

George Constantz
Public Presentation
“Hollows, Peepers, and Highlanders: An Appalachian Mountain Ecology”
7 p.m., Ken霉素 Room, Powell Building

Author George Constantz, a biologist and naturalist, works with the Canaan Valley Institute in West Virginia, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Appalachian rivers through science and education.

Tuesday, April 24

Denise Giardina
Public Presentation
“Mountaintop Removal and Our Appalachian Future”
7 p.m., Grand Reading Room, Crabbé Library

Denise Giardina, author and activist, is one of the most popular contemporary writers in Appalachia.

For more information, call 622-1644 or visit www.appalachianstudies.eku.edu/earthdays
EKU Students Assist Martin Countians in Wake of Disaster

They stayed up late at night, sacrificed many weekends, even most of their Spring Break. They spent untold time making the 3-hour-plus jaunt between Richmond and Inez and drove up and down the hollows of Martin County talking with local residents. But the EKU undergraduates who have worked on the University-sponsored Martin County Research Project this semester say the exhausting experience has been eye-opening, uplifting, even life-changing.

The Project was launched last fall to gauge community reaction to one of the worst environmental disasters ever in the southeastern United States. On Oct. 11, 2000, a coal slurry impoundment spill sent over 250 gallons of coal waste into two major creek arteries that feed into the Tug Fork of the Big Sandy River. Residents in the Coldwater Creek area were confronted with a lava-like mixture in their front yards. Many residents were worried that water sources were contaminated; skin rashes became commonplace; reclamation efforts damaged many roads, yards, wells and septic systems; and many now worry about the value of their property and the recovery of the environment. Soon after the spill, sociology professors Dr. Stephanie McSpirit and Sharon Hardesty and social work professor Bob Welch arranged a campus visit by Dr. Duane Gill, from Mississippi State University, a national expert on understanding the consequences of environmental disasters. During his two-day stay, Gill spoke with and lectured to students and consulted with faculty on researching communities hit by disaster and traveled with a team of students and faculty to the spill site. McSpirit soon made plans to develop a special topics field course for the spring semester, and an interdisciplinary team of 22 upper-division undergraduate students expressed their strong willingness to be a part of the Martin County project.

“As a university, we’re here to serve this whole region, and one way we do can do that is by getting our students out and involving them in projects like this,” said Dr. Alan Banks, director of EKU’s Center for Appalachian Studies, which contributed some financial support to the project. “We wanted to do this project with Martin Countians and increase their research capacity so they could better solve their own problems.” Welch said that “accurate, reality-based knowledge is always empowering.” “We wanted to change the focus of how sociology is done,” McSpirit said. “We wanted to make it more public, more applied, more real. And we wanted to provide the community there with information and feedback and we hoped that would lead to more public dialogue” about their environmental and economic concerns. The research team spent weeks interviewing Martin County residents at length and devoted spring break to distributing surveys door-to-door.

“The high response rate is in part because undergraduates were doing the interviewing,” Welch reasoned. “Students gained better access and probably more straightforward responses than a team of professional researchers might have.” Hardesty said the students were able to “connect with people on a human level, and that was beneficial in and of itself.” “The residents knew a lot about the incident,” said Lisa Raymond, a senior sociology major from Winchester. “They just didn’t feel like they could do anything about it. The people I met were wonderful and so accommodating. The experience has been worth all the work that’s gone into it.” The students’ myriad academic majors — sociology, anthropology, social work, geography and psychology — proved invaluable in what Hardesty has termed “place-based education, research and service.” Mapping completed by geography students, for example, was instrumental in randomly selecting homes to visit during the survey phase.

The professors made me a part of the learning process,” she said. “I feel like what I’ve had to say is important, but they’ve taught me in subtle ways.”

Just as the team members come from varied backgrounds, so did numerous University offices cooperate to support the Martin County Research Project: The Center for Appalachian Studies, the Department of Anthropology, Sociology and Social Work, the College of Justice & Safety, the Departments of Biology and Geography, Office of Enrollment Management, the Honors Program, the Office of the Provost and the President’s Office. Dewayne Sims, a junior geography major from London, said the project “brought a real-life perspective to things I had learned in the classroom, a hands-on experience to the theory. The responsibility weighs heavy on my mind because it’s a real-life situation.” Because he enjoyed his interaction with Martin Countians and developed a deeper appreciation for regional culture and issues, Sims has decided to work toward a minor in Appalachian studies.

A similar project is planned for another Eastern Kentucky county during intersession in May. For more information about the class, call 859-622-3070.

Jazz Fest April 21 Features Noted Saxophonist Bob Berg

Grammy-nominated jazz saxophonist Bob Berg will headline EKU’s annual Jazz Fest Saturday, April 21.

The event will attract approximately 200 high school musicians from schools throughout Kentucky for afternoon activities and will conclude with an 8 p.m. public concert by Berg, accompanied by EKU’s Jazz Ensemble, in Brock Auditorium. Admission is $10; tickets will be sold at the door only. Admission is free to all EKU faculty, students and staff with a valid ID.

Berg played three years in the Horace Silvers Band, three years with the Miles Davis Band and later recorded two CDs with Chick Corea’s Acoustic Quartet. He also has performed with Cedar Walton’s classic quartet, Eastern Rebellion, with whom he toured the world extensively and recorded many albums over a five-year period.

More recently, Berg was invited to act as a cultural ambassador by the U.S. Department of State. The Bob Berg Quartet toured the Caribbean Rim in 1992 and a large portion of the former Soviet Union in 1994. In 1993, Berg’s recording, “Back Roads,” was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Jazz Performance.

His latest solo album is the critically acclaimed “Another Standard” and he has just completed a new cooperative project, “The Jazz Times Superband,” featuring Randy Brecker, Joey DeFrancesco and Dennis Chambers.
Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author Here April 18

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jared Diamond will speak at EKU Wednesday, April 18.

Diamond is the author of the groundbreaking “Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies,” which earned the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction in 1998. He will discuss the book at 8 p.m. in Brock Auditorium. The event, part of the 2000-01 Millennium Series at EKU, is free and the public is welcome. The book also was the winner of Great Britain’s Rhone-Poulenc Science Book Prize in 1998 and received the Phi Beta Kappa Book Prize as the best science book of 1997. Diamond was one of 12 scientists to receive the prestigious 1999 National Medal of Science awarded by the National Science Foundation.

“What I’ve set myself the modest task of trying to explain the broad pattern of human history, on all the continents, for the last 15,000 years,” said Diamond, a professor of physiology at UCLA’s School of Medicine. “Why did history take such different courses for peoples of different continents? This problem has fascinated me for a long time, but it’s now ripe for a new synthesis because of recent advances in many fields seemingly remote from history, including molecular biology, plant and animal genetics and biogeography, archaeology and linguistics.

“(The book) reveals the complex reasons Eurasian societies evolved more rapidly than societies living on other continents during the same era (and) challenges the intellectual basis for racism,” Diamond said. “I discovered that history turned out differently for various peoples due to differences in their environments. It had nothing to do with imagined differences in their ‘IQ.”

Diamond also is the author of “The Third Chimpanzee,” which won the Los Angeles Times Book Award for the best science book of 1992 and the Rhone-Poulenc Science Book Prize, and “Why Is Sex Fun? The Evolution of Human Sexuality,” which was published in 26 languages. He also is widely recognized as a founder of conservation biology and has contributed enormously to the preservation of endangered species by identifying what makes some animal populations more vulnerable to extinction than others.

LEARNING ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY – At a Campus Preview Day March 24, Bell County High School senior Justin Gibson talked with Dr. Joyce Wolf, assistant professor of music, about opportunities at EKU.

Bobby Knight Speaks Here April 24

Hall of Fame Basketball Coach Bobby Knight, now at Texas Tech University, will speak at EKU Tuesday, April 24.

Knight will share his insights on “what it takes to be a winner in the game of life” when he speaks at 7 p.m. in Brock Auditorium. Admission is $5 for EKU students, $10 for Eastern faculty and staff and $15 for the general public. Tickets may be obtained at the Billings and Collections Office in the Coates Administration Building. EKU Centerboard is sponsoring the event.

During Knight’s 24-year stint at Indiana University, the Hoosiers compiled a 557-185 record and captured national championships in 1976, 1981 and 1987 and 11 Big Ten titles. Seventeen of his teams posted 20 or more wins and two went undefeated through the regular season.

In 1993, he became the youngest coach ever to reach the 600-win mark. During his coaching tenure at Indiana, all but one of his four-year players completed an academic degree.

Only Knight and retired North Carolina Coach Dean Smith have coached and played on NCAA championship teams – Knight at Ohio State in 1960 and Smith at Kansas in 1952.

Last month, Knight was named head men’s basketball coach at Texas Tech.