



PHOTO. 4B

Take a look at a gallery in the Bradbury Art Museum!

Multicultural center holds Black History Month poster competition Winners to be announced at the start of Black History Month

SAM SCOTT

NEWS WRITER

With Black History Month approaching, the Multicultural Center is hosting a poster contest to kick off the celebration.

The poster contest is the kick-off to the 2021 Black History Month celebrations at A-State. Hosted by the Multicultural Center's Black History Month Committee, the contest will have students designing a digital poster to highlight the theme for this year: Black activism.

"The poster contest is about showcasing Black activism and basically the poster consists of acts of activism throughout the years," Eric Sappington said, ambassador

for the Multicultural Center.

The theme, "Black Activism: Then, Now, and the Future", gives reference to many protests and demonstrations held in 2020. It gives reference more specifically to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and many other African-Americans who died due to police brutality.

Sappington laid out the importance of this theme.

"It's very important because it gives people the opportunity to research a little and learn about what our ancestors fought for," Sappington said.

The rules of the contest are simple: only one entry per person, group or organization. Entries will be judged based on originality, visual impact, creative skills and faithfulness



Photo by: Hannah Risker | Photo Editor

The theme of the poster competition is Black activism. Marches like the one at A-State above were common in 2020. Any entry using vulgar language or imagery will not be accepted. Any submission that does not align with the theme will be disqualified. Winners will be announced

on Feb. 1, the first day of Black History Month, during the virtual BHM Kick-Off video. First prize will receive a \$200 Visa gift card, with second prize receiving a \$100 card, and the third winner receiving a \$50 card.

The winners' poster will be auctioned off, with proceeds going to local Jonesboro radio station KLEK-FM. This is a key organization for this upcoming month, as KLEK-FM is a local, nonprofit black-owned business.

For the rest of February, the Multicultural Center will hold many more virtual events, including lectures, an auction with KLEK-FM, and the Living Legends Breakfast, which showcases what A-State alumni and former faculty members have achieved.

With this event kicking off Black History Month, many students of all backgrounds can get involved in learning about the foundation many African-Americans have built throughout the decades.

"You get to be creative and learn some black history while you do it," Sappington said. "Look at events that are being held and tune in. Also, don't let the month of February be the only time you study Black history."

Students can learn more about the events coming up on the school's website or on the Multicultural Center's Instagram page. The Multicultural Center is located on the third floor of the Student Union.

Food pantry keeps operating successfully amid pandemic

HANNAH TAYLOR

NEWS WRITER

COVID-19 has caused many organizations to put serving the community on hold, but the A-State Food Pantry has gone above and beyond to ensure that students and faculty continue receiving the help they need.

In order to follow social distancing guidelines and prevent the spread of the virus, the food pantry now prepackaged food that recipients can drive up and obtain all while staying in their car.

"We just ask that you show your Arkansas State ID and stay in your car, and then we will bring out however many bags of food depending on the size of your family," Food Pantry



PHOTO COURTESY OF VOLUNTEER A-STATE

Food Pantry Co-Chair Sydney Stauffer (far right) said the Food Pantry now brings out food to people's cars due to COVID-19 precautions.

Co-Chair Sydney Stauffer said.

In order to serve any living situation they offer both a

full kitchen or microwave only option to accommodate everyone. Anyone may utilize the

service during the hours they are open on Monday and Thursday from 2-6 p.m., as long as they

present a valid A-State ID.

During the fall semester of 2020 the food pantry

served many people, especially during the holiday season.

"For Thanksgiving we had a successful turnout of serving 82 people in the span two days," Stauffer said. "Right before winter break we made over 70 boxes that had a month's worth of food that we were able to supply to students and faculty."

The food pantry opened back up for the 2021 school year Jan. 14, and is already back to work serving the community.

If you are interested in volunteering at the food pantry you can contact them at pantry@astate.edu, or through the Leadership Center at 870-972-2055.

They also accept food and monetary donations, that you may drop off during their hours of service.

Marybeth Byrd continues to write music and waits for the right opportunity

KAMRYN NELSON

NEWS WRITER

In 2019, Arkansas resident and A-State student, Marybeth Byrd was on season 17 of "The Voice".

A little over a year has gone by since her singing debut and Byrd is an online A-State student studying Strategic Communications. She still loves music and wants to pursue a career in the industry.

"College is honestly a back up plan," Byrd said. "I want to pursue music for the rest of my life and make a living that way. I want to write, make, and create my own music and do shows just as soon as this pandemic

is over. But just in case music doesn't work, I have my degree to fall back on. I just love music so much. It's so important to me. I want to share my gift with others. To inspire people and uplift them is what I want to do for the rest of my life."

Life changing experience

Byrd said the "The Voice" exposed her to a completely different environment. Byrd had to transition from a small Arkansas public school to the bright lights of the show.

Byrd missed a lot of landmark events from her senior year of high school.

"I had to miss my senior prom," Byrd said. "As well as Christmas and Thanksgiving. One day before I flew out for

the show my grandfather passed away and we had to push his funeral back until I was done in California. That took a huge toll on me and my family."

Byrd performed "Go Rest High on That Mountain" on the show and the audience could truly see her emotion that night in her performance as she dedicated it to her late grandfather. While on "The Voice" Byrd matured as she was away from home for a long period of time.

"The show made me grow as a person," Byrd said. "Because I missed all those things and was

away for so long, it made me a lot more of an independent person. It built character."

Byrd made it to the semifinals of the show and although she didn't win, she did learn a lot from the experience.

"I'm so grateful for the experience," Byrd said. "Being in the top 8 was an honor. Even though I didn't technically win the show I won so much more. I gained friends for a lifetime. They are the most amazing people. I've gained years' worth of music knowledge and experiences most people will never get."

Through this journey Byrd has not lost her faith. It's what makes her who she is.

"Success is defined differently by everyone," Byrd said. "I'm just going at my own pace doing my own thing. I'm giving it all to God. I pray about my career all of the time. I'm just being who He, God, wants me to be."

Making Music

Byrd has stayed busy during the pandemic making music and just like many people, she's had to adjust to the new normal COVID-19 has forced.

"Even though being in quarantine has been hard, it is honestly crazy how much music I have actually written," Byrd said. "I have a whole portfolio waiting. Even though we can't

go out and do things, I dove into a lot of feelings. Being locked up and everything going on in the world has been such an inspiration to me. With me being an online student, having my boyfriend leave has been pretty hard. This is all new, so I've written quite a bit."

Byrd said she has talked to some producers already but some of them seemed off.

"They wanted money upfront, it was all weird," Byrd said. "I prayed about it and God just told me no. My heart wasn't in it for them. But, as of now, I do have a few opportunities. I've been thinking and praying a lot of these, heck I have my music ready whenever the time is."