

ADMISSIONS, CONTINUED

One part of the rationale behind this new admissions criteria is that both the ACT and SAT could be potential barriers to access. “These tests historically are noted, not only for placement, scholarship, but they also create barriers to access to higher education,” Lockhart said. “Specifically it impacts disproportionately individuals that are considered minorities and individuals

from lower socioeconomic status. Oftentimes these individuals don’t have access to multiple attempts of taking the test, significant amount of tutoring and supplemental courses to prepare for the ACT. Oftentimes it creates a barrier.” According to the presentation, results have shown that the more times a student gets to take the ACT, the more likely their test score goes up. However, many of these low

income and minority students can only take the test one time. In Arkansas in 2020, the average composite score of students who only took the ACT once was 16.3 but for students who took the test multiple times, the average jumped to a 21.2. That being said about the ACT, Lockhart presented that the best predictor to graduate from college is actually high school GPA and not the ACT. “Minority students and

individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds don’t have the fortune to test multiple times so that barrier creates a problem for them to be admitted to a college where their GPA shows that based on the trend at A-State, this student can be successful and graduate,” Lockhart said. In terms of getting the new admissions criteria approved, A-State operates under a shared governance system.

This means that various groups are presented with the information including SGA, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Chairs Council, Deans Council and Executive Council. Once all of these groups have voted, the results will be presented to the Chancellor. If the Chancellor approves, he will take the recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The board is the group who finally approves or disapproves of the adoption of

the new admissions standards. The new admissions criteria could mean a lot for potential A-State students along with the graduation rates of students who come to campus. “The task force is really keenly aware that changes to the admissions criteria have an impact on retention and graduation,” Lockhart said. “A measure to evaluate regularly should be put in place.”

MARDI GRAS, CONTINUED



Photo by: Rangsiya Faihin | Staff Photographer

(Left) Jimya Haynes a freshman exercise science major from Texarkana, Texas; Timecia Sohnsen, a freshman elementary education major from West Memphis; and Kiya Mitchell a freshman, exercise science major from Malvern hold up beads from the Mardi Gras celebration.

“We were just talking about how we feel more connected to campus,” Perkins said. “This makes me feel better because the majority of my classes are

on Zoom. I don’t even get to go out and go to my classes a lot. It’s nice to get out and do stuff like this and see people.” While Perkins just tried

the King Cake, Newton also tried the gumbo. “I absolutely love it,” Newton said. “I love spicy foods but I’m so sensitive and



Photo by: Rangsiya Faihin | Staff Photographer

Students at the Mardi Gras celebration could pick up a slice of King Cake for dessert. If a student found a baby in their King Cake, they received a Starbucks drink voucher for any size, any drink.

this is like the perfect amount.” Perkins and Newton said the Mardi Gras celebration reminded them of home. Both went to Catholic school in Little Rock and said they had a

celebration like this every year. The pair also enjoyed DJ King Vick’s music and said they would hire him themselves. “I really do feel more connected,” Newton said. “I feel

like I’m part of a community. I feel like no other school would just have a party in the middle of the morning on a Tuesday. It’s really fun.”

# Arkansas Biosciences Institute houses many different fields of study

EMMA ALLEN  
NEWS WRITER

The Arkansas Biosciences Institute, also known as the ABI building, has become internationally known for research throughout the health and science fields. Without the help of the five members of this organization, the state wouldn’t have the advancements in improving the health of

Arkansans. There are five member institutions that are partners with ABI including: Arkansas Children’s Hospital, Arkansas State University, University of Arkansas-Division of Agriculture, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The ABI is located beside the Agriculture Building and provides a place for students and faculty to conduct research

along the lines of health for science. One of their main goals is to find more answers in tobacco-related diseases. Although finding cures for tobacco-related diseases is a big area of interest in the Arkansas Biosciences Institute, they also conduct more research within the areas of agriculture, bioengineering, nutrition and many other areas. While scientists, students and faculty are conducting

projects through the many different areas of interest, they are hoping more scientists will come to Arkansas to help expand the institute. If a student at Arkansas State University wants to, they can apply for the ABI Undergraduate Research Scholar Program. This program allows a student to participate in hands-on research activities with the help of faculty and staff. This program gives the

opportunity for students to help with science breakthroughs and work in their field of interest to get their foot into the door of the real world of science research. The Arkansas Biosciences Institution is not only for college students and faculty, it is also for high school students that have interests in the biotechnology field. The program provides a 1.5 hour tour and science demo around the ABI. This allows high school students

to get hands-on experience to provide insight on the world of agriculture, medicine and health. If a student is interested in hearing more about the advancements in the world of health and science the Arkansas Biosciences Institute has made, go to [www.astate.edu/a/abi/index.dot](http://www.astate.edu/a/abi/index.dot) to find out more information. Join the research world of science and help Arkansas get healthy.

# Rugby hires new head coach after months without anyone in the position

A-STATE NEWS  
NEWS RELEASE

Jake Mizell, a former collegiate all-America pick at Arkansas State University, has been selected to lead the Red Wolves as the rugby program’s new head coach. Mizell begins his responsibilities March 1. Mizell, who has been involved with rugby for more than 18 years, comes from Iowa Central Community College where he served as the program’s top assistant, forwards coach, and a recruiter since 2018. In 2019 the Iowa Central Triton’s rugby team won

the D1AA 15s National Championship; and Mizell was instrumental in one player being selected for the USA U20 National team, and another getting drafted in the first ever Major League Rugby Collegiate Draft. “Becoming the men’s rugby head coach at Arkansas State University is a dream come true,” said Mizell. “This is where I was first introduced to a high-performance rugby environment. “I enjoyed a successful collegiate career by becoming a five-year starter, collegiate all-American, and playing for a national championship. I look at going back as a coach as taking



PHOTO COURTESY OF A-STATE NEWS

Jake Mizell has been hired as A-State’s rugby head coach. care of some unfinished business. I set high goals for myself and the teams I coach and the bar is even higher at my alma mater.”

with the Red Wolves, the program won two USA Rugby 7s national championships in 2012 and 2013 and advanced to the title game of the 15s tournament in 2012. Arkansas State also appeared in the D1A semifinals four times. A-State is perennially ranked in the national rugby polls. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. Following his time at Arkansas State, he accepted a position with the University of Oklahoma men’s rugby team where he was the forwards coach, recruiting coordinator, and strength and conditioning coach for a short period.

Afterwards Mizell moved to Colorado, where he played for the Glendale Raptors and helped them to a Pacific Rugby Premiership Championship. From there he moved on to Spring Hill College in 2016 where he coached the forwards for the men’s and women’s teams. “I am very excited about coming back to Jonesboro,” Mizell continued. “The community is truly a college town that thrives on athletic success; and the support for the rugby team is no different. Curt Huckaby Field has a reputation for being one of the toughest places to play in the country and I’m looking to magnify that.”