

**SGA,
CONTINUED**

Despite the discussion, Middleton's resolution passed unanimously.

During the meeting, SGA President Rashad Kirksey announced that SGA would be partnering with Volunteer A-State to hold a mid semester Swipe Out Hunger meal swipe drive the week of March 15-19.

Sen. Ellie Mayberry passed her resolution to bring Swipe Out Hunger to A-State at the previous SGA meeting and the program is already being implemented quickly on campus.

"The Swipe Out Hunger program is something that we have talked about on this campus for approximately 10

years and you all are a part of making this a reality," SGA adviser Katey Provence said. "I want to commend you on that and being part of that process. I hope you will come out and volunteer and be an active part of that because it's really a big deal. It's going to make a really big impact on those students who

find themselves food insecure." Updates were also given on a new pet policy and new meal plans at the meeting Tuesday night. Cultural Diversity Director Mikee Olegario delivered an update on the pet policy. "We met with the pet policy committee and drafted up some

recommendations. We got that to housing and they looked over it. I heard they really liked what we said to them, they loved it. They're also going to present it to other committees on campus to get more feedback on it to see what's really possible to see what we can do." Olegario said housing would

also present the plan to other schools. Moore gave an update on the meal plan resolution. "The meal plan resolution, it's been formatted," Moore said. "We're just waiting on a finalization as far as increments hopefully that can pass that work with Sodexo as well as what we're wanting."

**REGISTRATION,
CONTINUED**

According to the Director of University Housing Natalie Eskew, last summer, university housing evaluated buildings or communities to take offline in order to get interior or exterior work done. Due to the pandemic, however, that plan was pushed back to this summer.

It's not certain yet which buildings and communities will be open this summer, but Eskew said two buildings in Collegiate Park, at least one building in Red Wolf Den and one of the Living-Learning Community locations will probably be available.

"Our hope is that around Spring Break, we will have finalized information from facilities and then finalized information from finance on what the approved rate is for our summer location students to stay," Eskew said.

It's not required to be a full-time student during the summer in order to live in university housing.

Eskew said as long as the student is registered as a full-time student for the upcoming fall semester, students are allowed to stay.

To be considered a full-time

student over the summer, at least six credit hours must be completed. Since the summer is seen as one collective term, three credit hours could be taken per session, or six could be taken in one session.

Summer courses run around the same price in tuition as fall and spring semester courses. According to Terry Finney, director of financial aid and scholarships, one three credit course would cost around \$910.

Although there are no scholarships offered from the financial aid office for the summer term, there may

be scholarships offered from specific college departments. Students may also qualify for the Pell Grant over the summer, but they must be enrolled in six credit hours.

Students are also required to enroll in six credit hours over the summer if they plan to receive a federal student loan.

"Summer school can allow a student to get ahead and graduate earlier than four years or graduate in four years," Finney said. "Students may be able to make up hours to maintain their eligibility for federal student aid as well."

Summer courses are accelerated more than fall or spring courses. It's important for students to prepare for a fast-paced learning experience before deciding to take summer courses.

"You need to be ready on day one," Cline said. "Have your textbook and whatever materials you need. There's not much time to play catch up."

Eskew said living on campus over the summer comes with some benefits. Students graduating in the summer are allowed to stay until August without signing a full contract, like off-campus

housing often requires. "Summer school is really rigorous," Eskew said. "So, being here close to campus, especially if you have labs that are on campus, (helps) so you're right here."

Financial aid is available to be used for university housing over the summer. Finney said the financial aid office will start awarding students by the end of March.

Finney said, "If a student plans to attend (summer school), make sure they are aware of the amount of financial aid they will receive."

Women in Science organization adds more women's voices to the STEM field

**SAM SCOTT
NEWS WRITER**

Hoping to continue breaking barriers, A-State's Women in Science organization is ready to add more female voices in the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Led by Kayla Treasitti, president of A-State's Women in Science, the organization is meant to empower young women who are interested or who are pursuing a career related to STEM fields. This serves as a place for building more opportunities for any woman looking to break into a STEM career.

"The mission of the Women in Science organization has changed over the years as the leadership and members find different needs and interests," said Dr. Virginie Rolland, adviser of Women in Science and associate professor of quantitative wildlife ecology for the Department of Biological Sciences. "But the current goals of the organization are to honor accomplishments of women in STEM and to reach out to the future generation of women who may consider a STEM career as well as those who are interested in but may not think or were told they are not cut for a STEM career."

Treasitti, like a lot of students, joined the organization as a way to meet new people and be a part of a community.

"I was inspired to join this organization because I was looking for a group of girls to become friends with, learn with, and grow with! The key to enjoying college and doing well is networking and getting involved," Treasitti said.

However, it started to become something much more deeper for her, as Treasitti said,

"Being a woman in STEM is challenging, however, groups such as this one enable females at the university to have the resources they need for success."

The importance of an organization like Women in Science is more than just providing a support system for female STEM majors. It is a way to inspire them to achieve their dreams over any transgressions they may have faced.

"I hope the Women in Science organization can convince them that if science is interesting to them, they should go for it, and not listen to those individuals (including family members, boyfriend, classmates, etc.) who say they can't do it, it's not for women, or that if they're successful, it's only because X, Y, or Z," Rolland said. "Their success is up to them and should not be dictated by others' opinion of them."

Treasitti reiterated that point. "Our organization is important because we serve as a support team for females at our university," Treasitti said. "Aside from what we do within our university, we love participating in events with local high schools to teach younger students about science and the different careers in STEM. We are an important organization because we help students get plugged in and network."

This is all part of a larger effort to bring in more female representation in STEM, as many women are struggling to keep the high ratio from college to workplace, especially women of color. Rolland does see some positive trends coming out of Women in STEM.

"Although I do not have data to support that claim, I'd like to believe that the organization has also helped retain some STEM students through activities, such as study sessions

during which more senior students could help younger students in a sort of informal and non-judgmental peer-tutoring session," Rolland said.

Rolland also expressed satisfaction with seeing more women of color participating in the organization.

"I have been very pleased to see women of color take leadership roles for this organization and I hope that all women in the organization can feel equal and reach or keep self-confidence throughout their career so that women in higher positions are better represented in STEM," Rolland said.

COVID-19 has affected the way Women in Science can do events and spread awareness to the organization. Because of the pandemic, it has affected how they can conduct activities and build group dynamics.

"COVID has affected the group overall because events and activities have become much more difficult and sparse," Treasitti said. "Science is a very hands on, collaboration based field, so COVID has affected the group and our involvement."

Still, this has not stopped Women in Science to continue inspiring female STEM majors to be a part of the organization. There are still plans for the group to expand out to more female students, especially those in other STEM fields, such as biology, chemistry, nursing and more.

With this, Rolland gives out some advice for those who are interested in joining the group.

"Take advantage of this organization to find the support you need from other women in STEM who likely went through the same things you have gone, are going, or will go through," Rolland said. "This is your organization and members are here to help each other succeed."

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