



Alandria Maddox makes history as first Black woman drum major at A-State

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RACHEL RUDD

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

An Arkansas State University student made history as the first Black woman drum major in A-State bands.

Alandria Maddox, a junior majoring in history from Jonesboro, has been drum major for over half a year.

“It is an amazing experience and is just a blessing. Honestly, I’m so thankful for that opportunity,” Maddox said. “What makes it so enjoyable is the support that I get from people that I’ve known for years, or people that I just met this year.”

Steven Riley, interim director of bands and director of athletic bands, said press coverage regarding Maddox didn’t happen until this semester due to the band being more visible during football season.

“We really didn’t even process it here until very recently, either,” Riley said.

Maddox said the press coverage has been overwhelming.

“To be acknowledged for the things I’ve done instead of letting it be on the backburner has been a different experience,” she said. “There’s so many notifications on social media and I’m not a social media person. So it’s been a big adjustment.”

Maddox said despite the support she’s gotten from friends, family and her band, she said there have been comments where people thought she only got the position

due to her race or gender.

“That comes with being Black and a woman,” Maddox said. “But that wasn’t why I got the position. It was my character. It was my personality. It was my wit. It was my brain. That’s why I’m here. Not because of what I look like on the outside.”

Maddox said she is looking forward to using her position as drum major to educate people on the progress Black people have made, as well as discussing diversity at A-State.

“It’s important for me to use this platform to establish not just a historical point and be a part of history,” Maddox said. “But to also recognize the contextualization before it and what this means after. Being able to tell people no, ‘we still got work to do.’”

Maddox has been in band since seventh grade, where she played the clarinet. Over the years, she has played different variations of the clarinet. When she got into her college marching seasons, she started playing sousaphone.

“I didn’t want to march clarinet,” Maddox said. “I love to dance. I was like ‘yeah, I’ll dance with a 50 pound instrument.’ That was my mentality. So I just wanted to switch it up.”

Maddox has been a drum major since high school, which she said paved the way for her college band career.

She tried out her first year of college and didn’t get the

position, but was told by Tim Oliver, former director of bands, to try again the next year.

“So we had a conversation in a hallway while I was trying to run away,” Maddox said. “I was very busy and I was trying to run away and he was like, ‘Yo girl, we want to have a talk in this hallway. And I want to know why you’re not doing it.’ It was my final push over the edge to finally try out for drum major.”

Riley first met Maddox when she was in high school. He said even then, she was a significant part of her community.

“She’s a wonderful member of our A-State band community. She’s got a really great understanding of the band, culture and community, from all perspectives of our students. I thought that some of those things were wonderful for her when she decided she wanted to apply for the drum major position,” Riley said.

Maddox works with two other drum majors, Christian McNeice and Travis Slaughter. “Alandria is one of the spunkiest that we’ve had, especially in this group. She is definitely a person who has her own unique personality and loves sharing that with people,” Riley said. “That connection and engagement with students and with anybody who comes to our field is something that she just is very friendly and open about.”

Even in the classroom, Maddox acts as a leader.

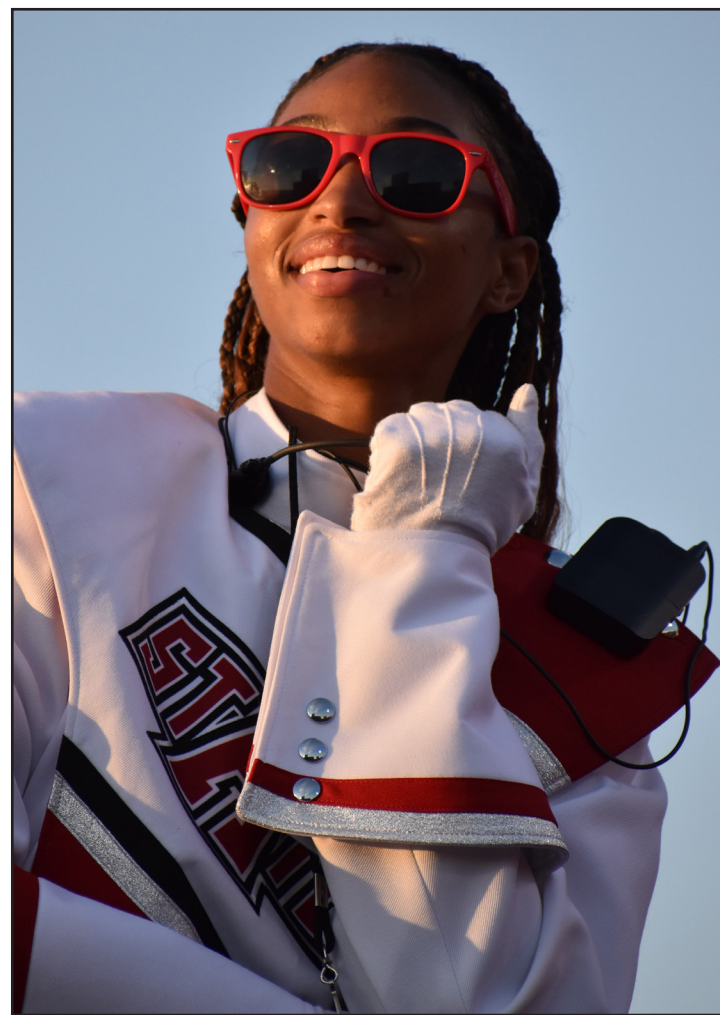


Photo by Kion Summons | Staff Photographer

Alandria Maddox at the Sept. 16 football game.

“She’s a very good student, very energetic,” said Peggy Wright, instructor of political science. “She offers a lot of insight into the class and helps motivate other students to talk. She brings a perspective where they understand I’m not challenging you, but I’m also getting you to understand that I am a

Black female from the Delta.” Maddox tries to push her band to “spread a little more grace,” whatever the situation may be. “You still have a life outside of that success or that failure. We all do,” Maddox said. “We’re all college students. We fail and succeed all the time. It’s just part of the process.”

Communication Center accepting spring 2024 applications

The Communication Center is now accepting applications for the spring 2024 semester. Seniors and graduate students interested in receiving upper-level course credit for helping students develop presentations and stronger communication skills, email Matt Robins, director.

Intramural bowling tournament scheduled for Oct. 2

A-State Intramurals will host a bowling tournament on Oct. 2 at The Social. This will be a one-night tournament with up to eight teams of five participating. Each team will bowl two games and the highest pin total after both games will win. More details are online.

Delta Sigma Theta sorority to host formal rush informational meeting

The Kappa Xi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority will host a rush informational meeting on Sept. 30, at 11:13 a.m., in Room 157 of the Museum. Attendees must attend the entire meeting to receive an application. Students must arrive on time in business attire with their A-State ID. Refreshments will be provided.

BRIEFS COURTESY OF A-STATE DAILY DIGEST

THIS WEEK IN THE HERALD:

OPINION, 2A

- Don’t romanticize the tortured artists
- Use campus resources, you’re paying for them anyway

NEWS, 3A

- Savvy Shields Wolfe speaks to A-State students
- Campus Crime

SPORTS, 1B

- Red Wolves Volleyball cruises through early tournaments to start season
- “Fore” the love of the game

ARTS & E, 2B

- A-State Theatre presents new play
- Review of new Chappell Roan album

LIFE, 3B

- Student Speak: Yik Yak
- Pig out at the A-State Meat Market

Jan Paschal is guest speaker in Greenfield Distinguished Lecture series

REBECCA ROBINSON

NEWS EDITOR

Jan Paschal lectured on “Every Child Is Ours” (ECIO) educational foundation and her life experiences as the Greenfield Distinguished Lecture guest Tuesday.

ECIO is a non-profit organization with the mission of food security and educational empowerment founded in 1997.

“She positively impacts students’ success not only in the Jackson County School system but across the Arkansas Delta.” Brad Rawlins, Ph.D. and interim dean of College of Liberal Arts and Communications said. “I find her very inspiring and the work and passion that she has for the children in our region is contagious.”

Paschal is director of the educational foundation ECIO based in Tuckerman, Arkansas. A driving point from the lecture was helping out the Delta region and not leaving smaller communities behind.

“Oftentimes we forget

Arkansas State University is the hub for all the little towns around that are struggling,” Paschal said. “All the little towns around need support and need Arkansas State University to flourish.”

Paschal was picked by former President Bill Clinton and selected to serve as the secretary’s regional representative for New England where she built partnerships between schools. ECIO was created to complement Clinton’s “America Reads” initiative.

Paschal shared her experiences with ECIO and helping kids from different parts of the world.

“You know I think often in life we have chances to really help someone,” Paschal said.

Every Child is Ours has improved educational opportunities for schools in Tilton, New Hampshire, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Kanana, South Africa and Acuña, Mexico. Paschal used a bulk of time out of her lecture to recognize others and their success or help with the ECIO



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERRANCE ARMSTARD

Jan Paschal speaking on Tuesday. She discussed her life experiences, as well as Every Child is Ours.

effort including students, faculty and community members.

A-State began participating in ECIO activities in 2014 and has remained involved. Paschal commended Volunteer A-State for their work in the community. The executive board was in attendance along with their advisor and were recognized at the event.

“One of the greatest joys of my life is to witness students develop a heart for service through volunteering,” Bekah Herring, the adviser for Volunteer A-State, said. “It is my belief that what the students are doing is not only changing the lives of those in need, it is also changing the lives of our students who are volunteering.” Paschal also recognized

Diana Davis, Gina Houge Ph.D., Dean MacDonald, and others.

“Dr. Houge and Jan have helped reinforce in me that we need our brightest and our most talented to stay right here in the Delta and help those who need it most,” MacDonald said. The event was sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Communications.