



District 1 candidates face off in ASU-TV's 2024 election debate

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Arkansas State University's School of Media and Journalism hosted the first live broadcast debate of the 2024 election season with running candidates for U.S. Representative District 1.

ASU-TV, The Herald, KLEK-FM, KASU-FM and Red Wolf Radio sponsored the first out of three political debates scheduled for this month, beginning on Oct. 3 at 6 p.m. at ASU-TV studio.

Galen Perkins, instructor of creative media production (CMP), said CMP students are getting a chance to interact with the mechanics and real world concepts of broadcasting debates with real politicians.

"Students took ownership of it and ran everything," Perkins said. "Everything that you saw or heard tonight was run by a student. In fact, my goal was to just sit back in the corner and watch everything happen."

Perkins said it is important to have student involvement in our elections as a lot of the topics that are addressed affect students.

"Having it here on campus, we're inviting these politicians to our local turf so that they get to know the students and they get to know different people from the community that they might not otherwise get a chance to interact with," Perkins said.

Rodney Govens and Steve Parsons were present for the debate. Rick Crawford, incumbent Republican candidate, did not attend.

Govens, Democratic candidate from Cabot, Arkansas said it's important for young voters to participate



Democratic candidate Rodney Govens (left) and Libertarian candidate Dr. Steve Parsons during the debate. Govens and Parsons are running for representative of Arkansas District 1, alongside incumbent Rick Crawford, who did not attend the debate.

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in this upcoming election. "This is the most consequential election of your lifetime, you need to go vote," Govens said. "Voting now is for everybody's tomorrow."

Parsons, Libertarian candidate from Lakeview, Arkansas said it's important to mobilize younger voters because they are the future.

"One of the things I've done, not that this is exceptionally easy, I'll do a lot of MMS (multimedia messaging service). I'll be sending out MMS after the debates, in particular, that'll have my headshot, my logo, links to my website, links to the debate. And I think that's going to be a little more likely to hit younger voters," Parsons said.

Govens' platform includes policy initiatives such as updating the Farm Bill and creating fair labor policies for farmers, expanding broadband access and addressing income inequality. He advocates for criminal

justice reform, affordable housing, environmental sustainability and investment in education to prepare the workforce of tomorrow. He also supports cybersecurity for public schools, veterans' support and healthcare (mental health services too). His focus is on creating economic stability and promoting small business.

Parsons' platform focuses on reducing inflation by eliminating trade tariffs, cutting federal regulations and lowering federal spending. He advocates for immigration reform to reduce bureaucracy and eliminate tariffs on Latin American goods and services. Parsons supports prison reform, particularly for nonviolent offenses and opposes high military spending — calling for a reduction. In foreign military engagements. His economic approach centers on limiting federal intervention and creating clearer paths to residency for immigrants.

Debate panelists for the night included Brandon Tabor, KASU News Director; LaGanzie Kale, KLEK General Manager; and Jerry Don Burton, Editor-in-Chief of A-State's The Herald.

The 40-minute debate highlighted key issues for Jonesboro residents and for A-State students as they engage in this year's election, such as unemployment, healthcare, housing, immigration, student debt and improving or enhancing Arkansas' agricultural and steel industry.

Parsons said it's important to create a pathway for legal permanent residency and work permits for undocumented workers in his discussion on immigration. In regards to student debt forgiveness, Parsons said he will not work towards a plan to forgive student loans.

"It's not fair to somebody who went to school, took out a loan, repaid the loan, or someone who went to school never took out a loan," Parsons said. "More importantly,

it's not fair to the people who never went to school."

Govens focused on healthcare and student loan forgiveness, stressing the need for welfare support. Throughout the event, Govens repeatedly criticized Crawford for his absence.

"I think it's completely disrespectful (Crawford's absence)," Govens said. "I know I'm not supposed to take this stuff personally, but I will. It makes me sad and angry, but really it's the disrespect and audacity for me."

Perkins said for the next upcoming debate, there will be finer tuning on the technology side of things, but will be doing overall the same formatting from Thursday night.

The next political debate will take place on Oct. 16 at 6 p.m., with Arkansas Senate District 20 candidates, Dan Sullivan and Erika Askeland.

Writing Center pop-ups scheduled for Thursday

Drop into the Leadership Lounge Thursday for a Writing Center midterm pop-up. Tutors will be available for five to 10 minute mini-sessions, to answer last-minute writing questions, and to help students book appointments with the Writing Center.

Therapy dog de-stress event scheduled for Thursday

Come out and pet some therapy dogs from 12 to 3 p.m. on the Heritage Plaza Lawn. Therapy dogs provided by Puppy Paws Therapy Dogs. This event is hosted by both the Psychology Club and the A-State Psi Chi Clubs to help promote healthy ways to manage stress.

You Made A Difference award deadline approaching

Recognize outstanding academic advisors by nominating a advisor for the "You Made a Difference" Academic Advisor Award. The deadline to submit nominations is Oct. 30.

BRIEFS COURTESY OF A-STATE DAILY DIGEST

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- Campus roads and traffic are an unnecessary

NEWS, 3A

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- College of Veterinary Medicine coming 2026
- College of Agriculture partners with Ag for Autism for Furry 5k
- Campus Crime

SPORTS, 1B

- A-State women's hoops hopeful for success in '24
- Red Wolves win Homecoming game vs South Alabama, 18-16

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- The flawed morality of true crime dramas
- This album is pretty okay 'For cryin' out loud!'
- This week's pop pick: Joker: Folie à Deux

LIFE, 3B

- Despite political contrast, civic engagement a priority for students

Students report mold growing in Living Learning Community dorm rooms

SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE

NEWS EDITOR

Some students residing in the Living Learning Community (LLC) have found mold growing in their dorms and are taking action with Arkansas State University housing to get it removed.

Zoe Mathes, a junior strategic communications major from Forrest City, Arkansas, said she discovered the issue of mold growing in her dorm room, as well as noticing spots throughout LLC.

Mathes said in the second week of living in her dorm she noticed mold growing through a leak in the ceiling tile that existed previous to her moving in. She said there was also mildew growing on hair that had been thrown in the trash can.

She said the day after she reported the mold, multiple

people came by her dorm to take pictures before leaving and nothing was done to remove the mold until the next day.

"It was just really frustrating and I didn't feel like my concerns were taken very seriously because it was affecting my health and I didn't want it to get worse," Mathes said. "I just wish people would have properly taken care of the dorms and checked them before allowing students to move in. I wasn't really offered any compensation for that, they said something about moving us and then they never did."

Nayumi Rodriguez and Nahomi Rodriguez are sisters from Paragould, Arkansas, living in the LLC 3 and experiencing issues with mold growing in their dorm room.

Nahomi Rodriguez, sophomore pre professional studies major, said they felt



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZOE MATHES

Mold growing on ceiling panels in Zoe Mathes', a junior strategic communications major from Forrest City, Arkansas, dorm. The mold was caused by a water leak and was removed by maintenance.

moisture in the room when moving in, but did not think much of it as it was cold. She said they would open their windows to try and help with the moisture and eventually started noticing

that their bedding felt damp, which furthered their suspicion of something being wrong.

She said the mold started as a few spots on a ceiling tile in the corner above their

sink, which motivated them to file a maintenance order.

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