

## Meet Brendan Kelly, new ASU System president

**SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE**  
NEWS EDITOR

Brendan Kelly began his tenure as the third Arkansas State University System president Sept. 23. Kelly said he's been studying the ASU System for a long time in part because of his friendship with Chuck Welch and his leadership at A-State. He said his primary job is to coordinate all improvement efforts across the system towards the goal of creating the greatest amount of value for every student they are in service to. "Regardless of what program or level of education you're coming from, we're supposed to elevate your life economically and we're supposed to elevate this state, both economically and in strengthening communities

as a result of our presence and our work," Kelly said. Kelly most recently served as the president of University of West Georgia, in Carrollton, Georgia. He was chancellor at the University of South Carolina Upstate in Spartanburg and Greenville from 2017-2020 and was appointed as interim president of the University of South Carolina in 2019. He was vice president of university advancement and president of the UWF Foundation, Inc., at the University of West Florida in Pensacola from 2013-2017 and before that spent 13 years teaching in Florida and Michigan. Kelly said he didn't start his career out with the ambition to be a university system president in mind. "I think you start out

teaching students and asking questions and being curious about your discipline. If that sits with you well, then you want to be in service to students as much and as intensely as you possibly can," Kelly said. Kelly said over the years, he learned there's an opportunity to increase the scope of impact which could affect students' lives. "That was the driving force for me," Kelly said. "When you have the opportunity to serve an entire university system, multiple institutions, thousands and thousands of students statewide, you get a chance to go and hopefully help drive the forces that help make students successful." Previous president of the ASU system, Charles (Chuck) Welch, held the position from Nov. 2010 to Jan 2024. He is

now the president and CEO of American Association of State Colleges and Universities in Washington D.C. Welch said he believes Kelly will be a perfect fit as he is a good communicator and collaborator. Additionally, Welch said Kelly's diverse experiences within higher education and unwavering commitment to student success only exemplified Kelly as a great choice for the role. "I have long admired Dr. Kelly as a leader and change agent in higher education and when I heard the news that he was to be my successor I was thrilled to know that the System is in good hands and the future remains incredibly bright," Welch said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF A-STATE  
Brendan Kelly, Ph.D., third ASU System president

CONTINUED:  
KELLY, 4A

## College of Veterinary Medicine coming 2026

**LAILA CASIANO**  
OPINION EDITOR

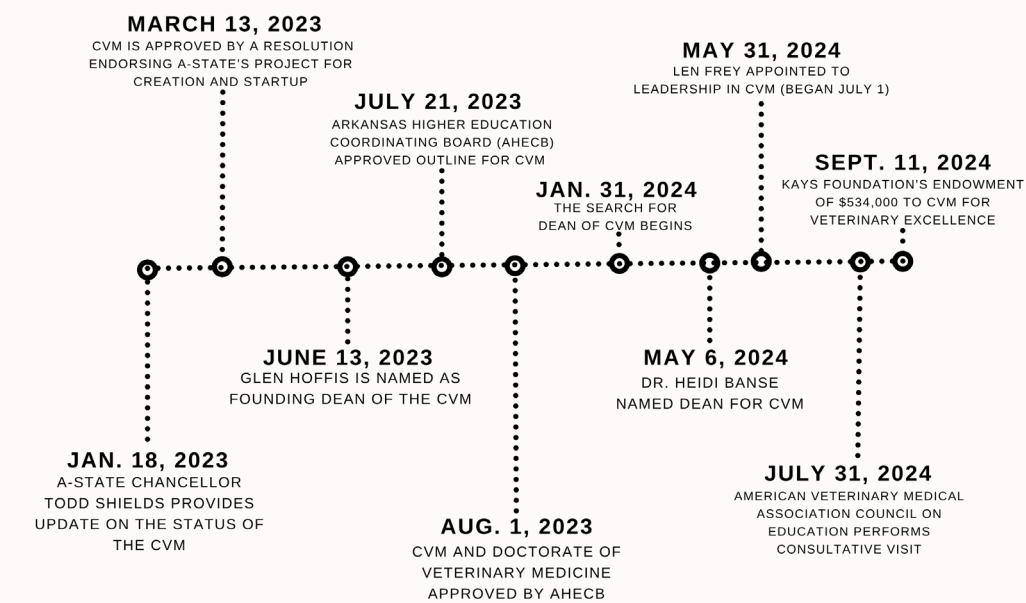
The College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) is projected to open at Arkansas State University in the fall of 2026, with an expected enrollment of 100 students coming from both in-state and out-of-state. The addition of this pre-professional college aims to address the shortage of veterinarians in Arkansas while preparing the next generation of veterinarians in the state. The college is currently undergoing accreditation, with comprehensive visits expected next summer. "What drives us now, and where our focus is, is making sure that we're able to develop a program that trains students so that they are what we call 'day one ready' or ready to enter practice,"

Heidi Banse, Ph.D., dean of the CVM, said. "Then we will refine our curriculum to make sure it supports that as well." Banse said an important aspect of having the college at A-State is that it's going to be based in the "heart of agricultural country." She said students from a rural or agricultural environment often go to the city to train, leaving behind the need for veterinarians in rural areas. "By having it in a more rural environment and then sending our students out into other rural practices in their clinical year, hopefully they will stay in Arkansas," Banse said. "They'll train and stay here where we need them, so that's another really exciting part about having it here in Jonesboro." Hunter Burnett, Ph.D., an assistant professor of animal science, said his

background in beef cattle production highlighted an issue he's recognized at A-State regarding students in pre-veterinary studies not staying in rural places. "We need vets in the animal health industry for vaccines and antibiotics, but when it comes to practicing vets for animal agriculture, we are limited," Burnett said. "So when I heard the news I was happy to hear that we're going to have something available here in the state." In addition to addressing rural veterinary needs, the college's goal is to provide comprehensive training for students and prepare them to work across all areas of veterinary medicine.

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CVM, 4A

### The College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) A TIMELINE OF ITS CREATION AND PROGRESS



GRAPHIC BY LAILA CASIANO | OPINION EDITOR

Timeline depicting the progress made towards creating the College of Veterinary Medicine.

## College of Agriculture partners with Ag for Autism for Furry 5k

**KATIE KNIGHT**  
STAFF WRITER

Ag for Autism sponsored the fourth annual Furry 5k on campus Saturday morning with the help of the College of Agriculture (CoA) and the Pre-Vet Club to spread awareness for autism. "Having the route be an actual 5k was a big deal," Abigail Jorgenson-Coleman, event coordinator for the College of Agriculture, said. "For the people that are serious 5k runners." Ag for Autism, a local non-profit composed of farmers raising money for autistic individuals in Northeast Arkansas, designed the awards for the event. Daniel Ieroni, a board member with Ag for Autism, said he volunteers for the organization because he wants to honor his 11-year-old autistic son. "We work with Dr. Latour every year to design this event," Ieroni said. "We're trying to promote awareness



PHOTO BY KATIE KNIGHT | STAFF WRITER

Allyson Bise, A-State alumni from Jonesboro, and her blue heeler mix Delta. Bise and Delta finished first place in the female with dog category with a time of 25:15. Runners and their dogs took home awards in categories like cutest dog, first-place male and first-place female. Kristen Nunnely, student ambassador, donated a podium for the dogs to stand on as they received their plaques. "It's been a great partnership," Mickey Latour, Dean of the CoA, said. "We run the 5k out of our building, because of the materials we have, but we allow Ag for Autism to lead this activity." Latour said the awards are shaped like puzzle pieces because autism is a puzzle.

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FURRY 5K, 4A

## CAMPUS CRIME



**SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE**  
NEWS EDITOR

**Oct. 6 | 4:49 p.m.**  
Officer Robert Kary responded to 113 Dean St. in response to a report of theft. Upon arrival, Kary spoke to the Victim who said she parked her car Oct. 5 in the afternoon and returned to it Oct. 6 around 7 a.m. She said when she started her car she noticed it making a very loud noise. The Victim stated she had someone look at the vehicle who determined that the catalytic converter had been cut off and the cost for the repair is about \$1500. The investigation was turned over to the Craighead County criminal investigation department.  
**Oct. 6 | 2:17 p.m.**  
Officer Robert Kary responded to Collegiate Park in response to a report made of damaged property. I was dispatched to Collegiate Park to take a report of property damage. Upon arrival Kary

spoke to Complainant who said that some time between 9 p.m. on Oct. 5 and 8 a.m. on Oct. 6. a blue tent belonging to the Astate Rugby team was damaged along with a couch that was under the tent. The Complainant said there was damage to the frame of the tent and the couch had been flipped over, torn apart and the stuffing removed from the pillows of the couch. The Complainant also said that the trash can had been flipped over causing trash to spill out on the lawn. Kary took photos of the damage and The Complainant provided him with a video of the damages. The Complainant said that the tent cost \$250 but the couch was used and did not have any value. Kary reviewed camera footage for the time frame but was not able to get the right angle to see anything.  
**Oct. 5 | 10:06 p.m.**  
Sgt. Chase Barnett conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle with no headlights pulling into 801

University Loop East at Pack Place. Upon contact Barnett could smell alcohol coming from The Arrestee. He also observed red glassy eyes and slurred speech. The Arrestee stated he had nothing to drink. Barnett asked to check the Arrestee's eyes and saw a lack of smooth pursuit. Barnett asked for another unit to conduct field sobriety tests. When the back up unit arrived Barnett had the Arrestee step out of the vehicle to conduct a field sobriety test. During the assessment the Arrestee was reminded to keep his head still and continued to move it throughout the assessment. After the Arrestee failed the field sobriety test, Barnett tried to administer a portable breathalyzer but the Arrestee refused.

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CAMPUS CRIME, 4A