

Multicultural Center announces new director to take over innovation

JAYDEN JOHNSON

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

The Arkansas State University Multicultural Center named a former student as its new director. Latika Johnson, from Jacksonville, Arkansas, earned her doctorate of philosophy, master of science and bachelor of science degrees from the University of Missouri, University of Central Arkansas and A-State, respectively. Johnson has nearly a decade of experience working in multicultural initiatives, student affairs and leadership development. During her time at A-State, she studied to become a nurse, but decided to alter her career path. Simultaneously, Johnson served as an actively engaged

student with the work of the Multicultural Center and the programming they provided. She has been on this career track since her junior year of her undergraduate studies when she learned she could pursue higher education and student affairs as both a viable career pathway and field of study. “This physical space (Multicultural Center) is where my passion for higher education and student affairs was ignited. The impact A-State had carried through each experience I had as a student and in my professional capacities,” Johnson said. While searching for a new occupation, Johnson said she explored both her in-state and out-of-state options. “When I saw the opening for the position at A-State, it was a no-brainer for me to ‘throw

my hat in the ring,” Johnson said. “The Multicultural Center held such a special place in my heart when I was a student here. I was actively engaged with the work of the center and the programming they provided.” As the director of A-State’s Multicultural Center, Johnson’s duties involve providing strategic oversight for the programming and initiatives that come from the Multicultural Center. One of her goals involves reintroducing some previous programs it was once known for and developing new initiatives focusing on access for all. Carlitta Moore, vice chancellor for Access and Institutional Engagement, said Johnson aligns with A-State’s institutional mission and vision. “Johnson’s enthusiasm for the position and her vision for

re-imagining the Multicultural Center were both compelling and well-received,” she said. “I look forward to seeing her lead the center and reinforce its openness, ensuring everyone at A-State can access the resources they need to succeed.” Louis Gonzalez, a sophomore biology major from Kansas City, Missouri and Multicultural Center ambassador, said he is grateful and appreciative of Johnson’s engagement in her new role. “She’s getting acclimated to the job. I can tell she’s taking an interest in being informed on students. It’s been a while since we’ve had someone actually taking up the office space, so it’s definitely been very beneficial,” Gonzalez said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LATIKA JOHNSON
Latika Johnson, from Jacksonville, Arkansas, was named director of the Arkansas State University Multicultural Center.

Assistant professor for biology leads change and research prospect for department

CRISTAL MARTINEZ

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

A newly appointed assistant professor in the biology department brings ideas for training future scientists, research potential and a collaborative approach to continuous teaching. Arkansas State University recently appointed assistant professor of cell biology, Edward “Ted” Schmid, Ph. D. Originally from St. Cloud, Minnesota, Schmid began his mentoring program for new faculty this semester after standing out for his passion for teaching, expertise in neurobiology and research potential. Many employees in the Department of Biological Sciences have retired over the last four years. So, in an area of faculty at A-State where being a cell biologist and having expertise in neurobiology is limited, Schmid was a great choice for the department. Someone who shared

this sentiment was Maureen Dolan, an associate professor in biological sciences. She said she was part of the hiring committee that hired Schmid and has been his mentor throughout the fall semester. “He struck me as somebody genuine, who really is interested and excited about teaching students,” Dolan said. After studying at Ball State University and getting his master’s at Yale University, Schmid became a postdoctoral researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles. Schmid researched the aging process in humans by using fruit flies as model organisms. The goal of his research is to extend fruit fly lifespan and ultimately healthy human lifespan. “I have a lot of training in immunology in physiology and I’m applying that in the context of how cell biology could change with various new contacts and specifically I look at how aging affects the

basic cell biology and various tissues. I use a fruit fly model to study that,” Schmid said. During his first semester at A-State, Schmid attended lectures, helped out in classes, set up labs and lectured in a graduate-level advanced cell biology course. Schmid is also involved in the biodiversity committee and is trying to set up a collaboration to push his aging research forward. He plans to have a successful research program at A-State due to the student-oriented professors on campus. Schmid said he believes there is value in working with students due to their energy and enthusiasm for contributions to projects. “I think a lot of professors, including myself, find a lot of value in working with students and enjoy the process a lot. It brings a lot of energy to the research program and just your day-to-day life,” Schmid said. Brody Groves, a sophomore biology major from Jonesboro, is

a student in the honors biology of the cell class that Schmid has been shadowing this semester. “Those are classes that sound really interesting and probably down the line I’d be willing to take, mostly because he’s the one teaching it,” Groves said. Schmid’s work is anticipated to lead to new educational and research opportunities by filling in gaps in the department’s expertise. He said he hopes to be able to collaborate with the agricultural sector for plant-derived compounds and develop therapeutics for aging and age-related diseases. Along with the new faculty, Schmid has brought new energy to the university’s biology department and Dolan said she believes Schmid’s enthusiasm and background will energize collaborative efforts including outreach programs for K-12 education. Schmid will be teaching courses in virology and pathophysiology next semester.



PHOTO COURTESY OF A-STATE
Edward “Ted” Schmid, Ph.D. was newly appointed assistant professor of biology at Arkansas State University.

CAMPUS CRIME



SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE

NEWS EDITOR

Dec. 1 | 8:15 p.m.

Officer Daniel Bradway responded to Arkansas Hall in response to a report of a break-in. Victim One and Victim Two had returned from Thanksgiving break to find their rooms had been disturbed and their belongings moved around. Bradwayspoke to both victims and they described the state of their rooms upon their return. Both rooms showed signs of disruption, with items moved and rugs removed and placed in the shower. Victim Two mentioned her television had been moved from one side of the room to the other. She also had a basket of wet clothes in her closet and showed Bradway a broken decor item in the corner of her room. Victim One said she was missing an art piece she had

created, which had been hanging by magnets on the back of her door, as well as missing feminine products from the bathroom. Bradway told the victims he would review the security cameras for their floor during the time they were away to see if they could determine who entered their rooms. Victim One said she submitted a maintenance request to repair a leaking sink while she was away. Bradway spoke to the floor resident assistant who said she had not seen anyone on the floor recently, but she had gone into a different room to take out the trash after being asked by the resident. Bradway reviewed the security cameras and found on Nov. 27, at 8:02 a.m., maintenance entered the room to check for the leak. Later that day, Trevor Harris Plumbing arrived to address the leak.

At 12:09 p.m., an apparent catastrophic failure occurred in the room, as all individuals exited the room in a panic and ran toward the elevator and stairs. Shortly thereafter, large amounts of water began pooling in the hallway in front of the room. At no point did anyone who entered the room leave with any items they did not bring with them. Bradway concluded that any missing items were likely discarded during the clean-up of both rooms after the flooding. Bradway then called and spoke with both victims to explain his findings. At that time, both victims seemed satisfied with the results of the investigation. Nov. 30 | 12:25 a.m. Officer Heidi Custodio conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of East Johnson Avenue, University Loop and Highway 91 on a white

Nissan Frontier after she observed the vehicle eastbound on Johnson Avenue with no license plate. Custodio then made contact with the suspect and asked for his license, registration and insurance. The suspect then gave Custodio his license, but said he didn’t have his registration in the vehicle. Custodio issued a failure to present vehicle registration and no liability insurance and brought the ticket to the suspect. He interrupted her when she was explaining the ticket and refused to take the citation at the time of the stop by rolling up his window. Nov. 30 | 12:22 a.m. Officer Jacob Foster was patrolling the area around the Collegiate Park apartments when he noticed the southern gate was knocked down. Upon further investigation through the cameras,

Foster tracked down the suspect’s vehicle parked in front of building two. Looking further back on the cameras, Foster observed the suspect pull up at the gate past the identification scanner, slowly push the gate open with his vehicle and knock it down. The suspect then parked in front of building two, got out and checked the damage to his windshield before going inside. After inspecting the gate, Foster noticed the bar was bent from the opposite direction that the suspect drove through originally. He reviewed the cameras further back and saw the suspect drive through the entrance gate attempting to exit and pushing the bar yet again until he forced his way out by bending the bar at the base of the gate arm in the process. Upon inspecting his vehicle on scene, Foster noticed

white paint from the gate arm across his windshield. The suspect received a residence hall violation for intentionally driving through the gate. Nov. 29 | 10:28 a.m. Officer Robert Kary was flagged down by one of the contractors for the construction at 208 Olympic Dr. The workers said a window had been damaged on the south side of the building. Kary and Sgt. Chase Barnett cleared the inside of the building and found several doors unsecured and re-secured them. Pictures were taken of the damages to the window and maintenance was notified to start repairing the window. Cameras were reviewed but they were unable to find an angle that faced the damaged glass.