



**PHOTO, 4B**  
Valentine's Day at A-State

## MAPS hosts Black Women in Medicine event for Black History Month

LAILA CASIANO

OPINION EDITOR

The Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS) hosted a Black Women in Medicine event where guest speakers discussed their career journeys, challenges and accomplishments.

In honor of Black History Month, MAPS provided food — including pizza, cheese dip and chips — for students and guest speakers. The organization also offered complimentary gifts to the guest speakers as a token of appreciation.

"We thought that this event would be a way to highlight incredible Black women medical professionals while also giving our students opportunities to learn, network and be inspired," Kalayna King, MAPS president, said.

This event built upon last year's "Black Men in Medicine" event by focusing on Black women in various medical fields. The goal was to provide students with role models and inspire them by showcasing the achievements of Black female medical professionals.

Lorna Scaife, academic adviser for the student support services and MAPS, said the goal of the event was to emphasize the importance of representation in medicine.

"I think the medical field, both minority and majority professionals, now largely agree that having doctors and caregivers who reflect the patient population leads to better trust, better communication, and ultimately, better healthcare outcomes," Scaife said.

The event featured seven guest speakers, selected based on MAPS' membership application and the career



Photo by Laila Casiano | Opinion Editor

Guest speakers network with attendees at the Black Women in Medicine event. The event, hosted by the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students, featured seven guest speakers who discussed challenges and accomplishments in their careers.

aspirations for active members.

Guest speakers included: Amber Ray, a nurse practitioner; Kellie Turner, a general surgical oncologist; Chika Holder, the director of radiology at NEA Baptist; Tasha Starks, family medicine; April Shepard, radiology manager at the Arkansas Children's Hospital; Deidre Sparks, a physical therapist and Adrienne Loftis, an OB-GYN.

After introductions, attendees had the opportunity to network with the speakers, gaining insights into shadowing opportunities, internships and career advice.

King, a junior biology major with a pre-professional emphasis from Conway, said they started planning the event in October 2024. She

said she hoped attendees were able to see someone who looks like them within the field of medicine they aspired to enter.

"Sometimes certain professions or goals can feel out of reach, but I hope that getting to see these professionals and hear about their experiences will inspire them to stick to their path," King said.

Additionally, she said she hoped events like this could change students' lives. "I know that there are multiple testimonies of students who didn't know exactly what they wanted to do, but they met or heard someone speak about something and it really sparked their interest," King said.

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MAPS, 4A



Photo by Laila Casiano | Opinion Editor

(Left) Guest speakers Chika Holder, Kellie Turner, Deidre Sparks, Amber Ray, Tasha Starks, April Shepard, Adrienne Loftis.

## Events rescheduled in response to inclement weather

The following events have been rescheduled to the provided dates:

- The Price is Right Live at First National Bank Arena has been rescheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 24.
- The Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering, Computer Science and Technology Fair at the Cooper Alumni Center has been rescheduled for 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 25.
- The A-State Symphonic Winds and Concert Band performance at the Fowler Center has been rescheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

## 7th Annual Living Legends Gala scheduled Saturday

The Living Legend Awards highlight A-State alumni and others living in Northeast Arkansas who have enriched their communities, excelled in their fields and inspired younger generations. The gala will be held at 5 p.m. on Saturday at Centennial Hall.

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### THIS WEEK IN THE HERALD:

#### OPINION, 2A

- Trump tariffs are more harmful than helpful
- America's hyper-individualism is a destructive force

#### NEWS, 3A

- Black Student Association Hosts Talent Show
- Student Athletes participate in "National Random Acts of Kindness Week"
- Campus Crime
- A-State introduces more secure password reset process

#### SPORTS, 1B

- Red Wolves fall 4-2 to Ole Miss in extra innings
- Red Wolves win big on Senior Day over Bobcats

#### ARTS & E, 2B

- "Stuck on the Train to Nowhere" is a masterpiece
- "Shutter Island" turns 15
- The Lumineers' new album is an "Automatic" hit
- This week's Pop Pick

#### LIFE, 3B

- Campus fosters romance, two students announce engagement
- How to: Register for classes
- This week's horoscopes

## Agribusiness Conference shares challenges concerning Arkansas farming

SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE

NEWS EDITOR

The College of Agriculture at Arkansas State University hosted the 31st annual Agribusiness Conference to provide information on the farm economy, agricultural and trade policy and commodity markets.

Bert Greenwalt, professor of agricultural economics, co-founded and directed the conference.

He said Arkansas agriculture is facing headwinds this year as farmers struggle with commodity prices decreasing over past years while farm input prices have declined very little.

"Farmers are in a cost-price squeeze situation, as it's referred to, low profitability, struggling to make ends meet and looking to government, farm policy, the farm bill for some assistance," Greenwalt said. "Unfortunately, our farm bill expired a couple of years ago and Congress

has yet to address updates in the farm bill that would address the current situation."

The farm bill is a federal legislation passed by Congress governing various agricultural and food policies. It's passed approximately every five years and covers a wide range of topics, from farm subsidies to food assistance programs. The bill affects farmers, ranchers, rural communities, consumers and the environment.

"Agriculture is a cyclical business. Historically, there are ups and downs, like in some other businesses, and so we're going through that down cycle right now," Greenwalt said. "Agriculture will continue to be an important industry in the United States and globally, but not all producers will remain in the industry over time."

Greenwalt said one of the factors contributing to uncertainty in the agricultural



Photo by Shailey Wooldridge | News Editor

Wes Ward, Arkansas Department of Agriculture secretary and keynote speaker at the Agribusiness Conference, addresses water infrastructure, food insecurity and trade initiatives.

economy today is the shifting trade policy in Washington. Since U.S. agriculture relies heavily on export markets, any disruptions, such as tariffs or trade wars, that affect trade or access to global markets are a significant concern for the industry.

"Farmers this time of year are making a lot of plans for the coming year, what to plant, how to renew their lines of credit with lenders. So hopefully some of this information will be useful to them as they complete their business planning for the season," Greenwalt said.

Keynote speaker, Wes Ward, addressed water infrastructure, food insecurity and trade initiatives.

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AGRIBUSINESS, 4A