



PHOTO, 4B

Four cultures, one celebration: East Asian Festival



## Two communities, one city: What students are howling for



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

(Left) Students gather on the Heritage Plaza Lawn and listen to a speech from Chancellor Todd Shields during the 2023 Pack Preview event. (Right) Cheerleaders march down Jonesboro's Main Street during the 2025 Paint the Town Red event. According to 186 responses from a survey administered by The Herald, 62% of Arkansas State University students feel there is a divide between Jonesboro and the campus community.

ALLIE CARSON

NEWS EDITOR

While Arkansas State University students are split on whether they believe there is a divide between the Arkansas State University campus and the city of Jonesboro, they agree that support could be improved.

In a poll conducted by The Herald in February, 62% of the 186 students that responded said there is a divide between the city and the campus.

Lesleigh Sullivan, Student Activities Board (SAB) president and senior criminology major from Little Rock, said while the city is working toward advancements to bring the campus and the community together, it still feels like the campus is on an island while the city benefits from A-State being in Jonesboro.

"The city of Jonesboro benefits more from A-State just because we are bringing people to support things, economically, financially, and we are such a large percentage of the Jonesboro population," Sullivan said.

### What students want from the community

The survey indicated the two things students would most appreciate from the community are more discounts and more internship opportunities.

One respondent, William Warren, said he would like to see more benefits for A-State students and more opportunities for students to thrive in the Jonesboro community.

Another student, Emma Taylor, said she wanted more establishments to offer student discounts.

"Many students either have a lower-wage job or no job at all," Taylor said. "Give more discounts!"

Jarron Brantley echoed Taylor's statements.

"More places could offer student discounts, as many students struggle to balance school responsibilities and some way to earn money," Brantley said.

One responsibility many students balance alongside a full class load and a job is an a. Karleigh Clements said Jonesboro provides a lot of internship opportunities pre-graduation.

While many Jonesboro businesses already offer internship opportunities, the need for more grows as A-State repeatedly breaks enrollment records.

Ethan Rose, a survey respondent

from Bauxite, Arkansas, said students are always looking for internship opportunities, even free ones.

Other student responses concerning what they want to see from the community include:

- Spaces that accommodate being social and meeting new people
- Hiring students with more reasonable hours
- Businesses that stay open later
- Job shadowing opportunities
- More activities throughout the day, not just bars
- Support for some of the lesser-known athletics
- Support for registered student organizations.
- Better sidewalk accessibility for students
- Alcohol sale legalization
- Axe throwing

**Downtown as a destination**  
Fayetteville's entertainment district, Dickson Street, is roughly a five-minute walk from the heart of the University of Arkansas campus.

Downtown Jonesboro, on the other hand, is a 40-minute walk from the Reng Student Union on campus.

A-State students want a more accessible entertainment district of their own.

Harrison Herget, a junior interdisciplinary studies major from Jonesboro and president of Phi Delta Theta, said she supports the idea of an entertainment district within walking distance of campus.

"That's kind of what makes the college town feel is just that one strip. And I think having something like that, like an entertainment district where we have an amphitheater and have

good spaces, and have more concerts going on. Just cool stuff going on all the time," Herget said. "And I think if we were to do anything, that's first place."

68% of students who took the survey said they would like to have more seasonal events downtown, such as fall festivals and holiday markets.

Survey participant Nataleah Ort said she'd like to see more off-campus spaces for students to socialize.

"(Jonesboro should) acknowledge that students need motivational activities to connect to the city rather than just the campus," Ort said.

Respondents also said they would like to have 24-hour or late-night spots and even live music nights featuring local bands for A-State students only.

**Campus needs work too**  
Survey respondents noted it's not just the Jonesboro community that needs to work on keeping A-State students in town and engaged.

Students said having more happen on the weekend since there's nothing to do on campus. In the same vein, students also said more events on campus should be hosted.

Sullivan said that while the A-State campus is packed with events during the week, the pack clears out after classes end.

"I think more events on the weekends, because a lot of the time it's like, you look at the campus calendar, and during the weeks, we are great. We are very involved. But as soon as Friday around noon hits, the parking lots clear out," Sullivan said.

While students stay in town during the football season, many leave on the weekends. Herget said SAB does a

good job with homecoming week, but the student body needs to do its part in participating more. However, Herget said there are also ways to improve, including bringing back the homecoming parade.

"We need to do a better job of that as students, because they spend a lot of time and a lot of money on those events. One thing we do well as a university are those events," Herget said.

Kayla Zarp, a junior health studies major from Chino, California, said alumni attendance, support for homecoming activities and overall hype are low.

"I think if we could do a better job at reaching out to all the alumni and make homecoming the biggest thing," Zarp said. "Make it feel different than all the other games."

2026 Miss A-State Reese Worthington, a first-year accounting major from Bonne Terre, Missouri, said in order to increase homecoming turnout between both the campus and the community, A-State could offer lower tickets for the community and give away ball caps or jerseys to students or fans from the community.

Herget said other communities could serve as models for Jonesboro to take advice and insight from.

"There are definitely ways to improve and I think some of that starts with just looking at what other universities or high schools do that show more engagement and show good community support."

Whether on or off campus, the data is clear: students want more to do.

## Only 15 days until the last day of class!

The last day to drop or withdraw from a course is Friday, April 17.

## Create@State scheduled Thursday

The annual campus-wide symposium for student research and scholarship is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, on the third floor of the Reng Student Union.

## Howler Sprint to be held Saturday

The Howler Sprint is a 5k obstacle run across the A-State campus. The 5k will start at 8 a.m. at the Frederick C. Turner Jr. Military Science Building. Participants may join as individuals or for the 5-person team event. More information may be found by scanning the QR code below:



BRIEFS COURTESY OF A-STATE DAILY DIGEST

## THIS WEEK IN THE HERALD:

### OPINION, 2A

- The solution to the raging war between servers and Karens
- No, artificial intelligence is not taking our jobs

### NEWS, 3A

- Students walk to raise awareness on sexual assault
- Annual Farm Day brings spring buzz
- Arise to "The Finish Line": A strong finish

### LIFE, 4A

- Don't steal the spotlight: a guide to theater etiquette
- Spring cleaning for your dorm
- Finals playlist curated by Herald editors

### ARTS & E, 1B

- It's been 15 years since winter came
- Anime power-ups need a switch-up
- "Project Hail Mary" and the return of the space craze

### SPORTS, 2B

- A-State bowling: behind the pins
- Baseball falls to No. 7 Chanticleers
- Creating a super team out of 2026 NBA Draft Prospects

