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A-State x TEDx: Ideas that Inspire

JESSI WOOD

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

TEDx Talks will return to Arkansas State University this month after nine years.

The idea to bring TEDx back to A-State started as an idea to extend Create@State. Organizers said they wanted another way for students to take their creativity a step forward. Originally, they expected mainly students to apply to participate, but the staff received more than 100 applications from individuals all over the world.

“It was a shock; so many applications were unexpected,” said student organizer Seoung Ho Jeon. The 2026 version of A-State’s TEDx includes an opening panel and 26 speakers packed into one day. The event starts at the Fowler Center at 1 p.m. with a panel featuring ASU System President Todd Shields and State Senator Dan Sullivan who will discuss “The Future of AI and Higher Education in the Coming 10 Years.” Other topics planned include mentorship, rural health, and how to live joyfully. Student organizers Jeon and

Shanhjahan J. Memon said they strongly suggest students reserve a spot because capacity is limited. To reserve your seat, visit. Those who sign up before the event will receive an email survey and after completing the survey the individual’s name will be put in a drawing for a gift card.

Jeon described the event as a learning opportunity. He said students should enter the building with a “What am I learning?” mindset. Each idea being presented was hand-picked for the student body by Jeon and Steve Leslie, associate professor of business communication.

“It is a good place to learn good ideas,” Jeon said. “If you are blocked in life or lost in direction and listen to a TEDx talk you could figure out a direction to take even if it does not directly correlate with your situation.”

A topic that does correlate with students is Christin Webb’s “What Happens When Leaders Stop Abandoning Their Voices” which begins at 2:45 p.m.

Webb, who earned her bachelor’s and graduate

degree in social work and business administration from the University of Tennessee, applied to speak at the event because she has previously been a public speaker and has admired TEDx Talks.

“It was surreal to be selected, an honor even,” Webb said. “The expectation of excellence is a little terrifying but it is beautiful.”

While preparing for her appearance Webb mentioned that despite the pressure, she has to be brave enough to put herself out of her comfort zone and that we all have a responsibility to use our voices. The topics chosen for the TEDx event are in hopes for genuine conversations that students need to hear. Webb said she absolutely advised students to apply for the future TEDx events held at A-State. She encourages students to use their voices.

“If you want it, go after it,” Webb said.

Jeon said he would like to see A-State continue hosting TEDx Talks. “This is the first of many more I hope,” Jeon said. “TEDx should help serve as a gateway for students to

SCHEDULE	
1:00	Todd Shields and Dan Sullivan, <i>The Future of AI and Higher Education in the Coming 10 years</i>
1:45	Vishak Meenachi, <i>Opening access to Student Research</i>
1:55	Cameron Wimpy, <i>Rural Isn't a Place - It's a Measurement Problem</i>
2:05	Jonathen “Johnn” Toma, <i>The Power of Mentorship</i>
2:15	Amanda Carpenter, <i>Rural Health as a Delta Region Priority</i>
2:20	William Garrett Partain, <i>Arkansan Connections During My Peace Corps Service</i>
2:30	Jason Holzman, <i>AI and the art of asking good questions</i>
2:45	Christin Webb, <i>What Happens When Leaders Stop Abandoning Their Voices</i>
3:00	Andi Esters, <i>What Shipwrecks Teach Us About Who We Were – and Who We Are</i>
3:10	Pete Ferrari, <i>Beware the False Prophets – Nutrition is Destiny</i>
3:25	Karen Hite, <i>The Gift You Keep Burying - How knowing your God-given gift changed the way you lead, sell and build</i>
3:40	Valentine Leonett, <i>Why rejection is an involuntary identity audit... and what your brain can do about it</i>
3:55	Kevin Sandlin, <i>Get High at Work (without getting fired)</i>
4:10	Joshua T. George, <i>The Lower the Stakes, the Worse I get</i>
4:25	Randy Green, <i>The biggest financial scandal you've never heard about</i>
4:40	Tom Goodlet, <i>Listeners Win More Than Talkers</i>
4:55	Gilda Wake, <i>When Knowledge Stops Being Power: Unlocking the Age of Possibility</i>
5:10	Karen Aberle, <i>How to live joyfully everyday</i>
5:25	JC Hite, <i>Appreciation At Work</i>
5:40	Leigh Gall, <i>The Trap of Being Good at Something</i>
5:55	Jesse Favre, <i>Leadership as a public health variable</i>
6:05	Valerie Renee, <i>Human connection begins with ourselves</i>
6:15	A.D. Edwards, <i>The Beauty of Starting Ugly</i>
6:25	Brian Arnold, <i>What Faith Sees Before Proof Arrives: How Relationships, Not Information, Unlocks Human Potential</i>
6:45	Stephanie Thoma, <i>Hold the Room</i>
6:50	Netu Rishi, <i>The size of Your Dreams Is Not Measured In Inches</i>

Schedule graphic by Allie Carson | Editor-In-Chief

learn as well as find the passion to use their voice.”

The event will be filmed and posted on YouTube via the

TEDx channel, so students can revisit any ideas that inspired them. The video is also for those who cannot attend.

Hall of art, innovation, collaboration: A-State holds ribbon cutting for new Windgate Hall

ALLIE CARSON

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Arkansas State University held a ribbon cutting for its new Windgate Hall of Art and Innovation where art + design majors and computer science majors will work and collaborate.

Although A-State’s campus already houses a Windgate building and the Fine Arts Center, the Windgate Hall of Art and Innovation focuses more on the technology side of art and provides additional tools the artists can use.

“I’d say it just has a lot of opportunities for well, the name of the building, innovation,” said Nathan Scarborough, a graphic design senior from Jonesboro.

With the second Windgate building, the Windgate Foundation becomes A-State’s largest single benefactor in its 117-year history, with more than \$40 million in endowments.

Rachel Boillot, assistant professor of photography at A-State, said she thinks the hall truly shows the university’s commitment to the arts.

“I think that’s something that the students see, and that’s really meaningful because I think art can be treated like it’s a luxury or a hobby,” Boillot said. “I think it’s such a beautiful thing that the arts are being taken seriously and honored on this campus.”

Students in the arts were displaced before the new Windgate Hall opened.

Graphic design students’ classes were on the third floor of the library and photography students were in the Fine Arts Center after the arts annex was demolished.

Now, students have dedicated spaces for multiple art disciplines under one roof.

Emmi Briones, a senior graphic design major from Bryant, Arkansas, said she loves the hall’s location on campus in relation to the other art-related buildings.

“I love that graphic design is finally not isolated from the studios because we used to be in the library, and now I get to actually be around other people outside of my major,” Briones said.

The three-story building features specialized spaces for

photography, graphic design, fashion design and other areas of art. Computer science majors also use space in the building with virtual-reality equipment and 3D printers in the project studio.

The hall, however, is designed to encourage students from the two colleges to collaborate.

“An engineer or programmer can benefit from understanding design, and an artist or designer can benefit from understanding technology,” said Will McLean, interim university provost and executive vice chancellor. “All of our students benefit when they learn how to communicate, collaborate and create alongside people who approach a problem differently than they do,”

The project studio on the first floor is where the computer science majors’ technology lives but also where the collaboration between them and the art + design majors will take place

From the 3D printers to the virtual-reality sets, computer science department chair Jake Qualls said the room gives students the resources they need to turn an idea into a prototype.

“Oftentimes, the key to solving the problem at hand is viewing it through a different lens, and that is exactly what this open lab space is designed to promote,” Qualls said.

With the Department of Art + Design being in the College of Liberal Arts and Communication and the Department of Computer

Science being in the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Windgate building was designed to foster a sense of collaboration and helpfulness between all areas of A-State.

Scarborough said he can see instances where the students in each major will be able to collaborate and help each other out.

“I do not have experience with 3D printers, so I think it’ll be nice to be able to share expertise where if they’re needing help with some sort of design aspect of something they’re building versus us needing help using the technology in that room,” Scarborough said.

With floor-to-ceiling windows, glass walls around the classrooms and a balcony overlooking campus, the architectural design of the building fosters the feeling of collaboration as well.

Katherine Baker, chair of the Department of Art + Design, gave the credit to WER Architects for the design.

“As you look across the spaces, you can see different classrooms’ activity, and so inherent in the structure is the idea of crossing, crossing the ways, and that echoes in the interdisciplinary,” Baker said.

Although the ribbon cutting took place Sept. 11, students within the art + design and computer science disciplines have already been using that space—both for classes and for their own projects—since the start of the semester.



Photo by Allie Carson | Editor-In-Chief

(From left) Nathan Scarbrough, senior graphic design major; Will McLean, interim university provost and executive vice chancellor; Katherine Baker, chair of the Department of Art + Design; Pat Forgy, executive director of the Windgate Foundation; Jake Qualls, computer science department chair; Calvin White, interim chancellor; Erika Chudy, vice chancellor for advancement cut the ribbon outside the new Windgate Hall of Art and Innovation.

THIS WEEK IN THE HERALD:

OPINION, 2A

- Obama was the best president: Choosing the lesser evil
- Professor’s podium

NEWS, 3A



- Red Wolf Vintage Market is coming to campus
- Inaugural Brunch with the Band kicks off before first football home semester
- School of Media and Journalism students to host political debates in October

ARTS & E, 4A

- Dancing With the Stars kicks off its 35th season
- Secret Lives of Mormon Wives: The trainwreck continues in season five
- Next Best Watch: “Adults” is bringing back comedy television

LIFE, 1B

- Red Wolf Vintage Market is coming to campus: A chance to shop second-hand, support local small businesses
- Students Speak

SPORTS, 2B



- A-State bounces back with blowout win over West Georgia
- NFL week one woes: Herald editors react to performances

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