

# THE GAVEL

Today's Student Government at the University of Arkansas

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# WELCOME FROM ASG PRESIDENT CONNOR FLOCKS

**“I have the utmost confidence that we will ensure ASG continues to represent the voice of over 27,000 students each day.”**



**Connor Flocks**  
ASG President

Fellow Razorbacks,

My name is Connor Flocks, and I have the honor of serving as the Associated Student Government President during the 2016-2017 year. My passion to be a part of the University of Arkansas sparked long before my journey began. Even as a small child from Greenwood, Arkansas, I knew I wanted to go to the college where I could call the Hogs. Since becoming a Razorback, I have grown as a person, I have grown as a leader, and I have grown to see the potential our students have to impact our university and, ultimately, the world.

Big things are happening here in Fayetteville. Not just within the organization, but across our campus. With the introduction of our sixth chancellor, Dr. Joseph Steinmetz, this past spring, a fresh perspective has brought about tremendous goals for the university. With new leadership, comes a new responsibility for the student body to show just how much of an impact we can make. Socially, progressively, and academically the student voice is more important than ever.

On behalf of the entire newly elected executive team, we are excited to get into office and make things happen. Our leadership

team decided early on that we would run on big things, or we would not run at all. As such, our administration plans to implement many initiatives to move Arkansas ahead. These include endeavors such as increasing diversity, providing free legal consultation for all students, improving the Homecoming Court selection process, restoring the original senior walk, and establishing plain language university policies on issues like sexual assault. These are only a few of our many plans, and our executive team knows that we cannot accomplish them alone. With the hard work of our over 300 members, I have the utmost confidence that we will ensure ASG continues to represent the voice of over 27,000 students each day.

We have quite the agenda to address before you read next summer's issue of The Gavel, but I assure you that we are excited for the opportunity, passionate about the future, and ready to get to work. I invite you to tune into our social media,

stay in contact, and jump along for the ride. I hope that each of you are doing well, and as always, please feel free to reach out with any thoughts, questions, or concerns! Good times are ahead.

God Bless and Go Hogs!

R. Connor Flocks

95th ASG President

# RAZORBACK ACTION GROUP



R.A.G. students on the step of the capitol building in Little Rock.

During the 2015-2016 school year, the Razorback Action Group continued to advocate for the University of Arkansas student body by traveling to Little Rock and Washington D.C. to meet with policymakers at the state and national level. Additionally, the Razorback Action Group published its first ever Higher Education Honor Roll, aimed at recognizing Arkansas state legislators who have made a meaningful contribution to higher education in the past year.

In the fall semester, the Razorback Action Group (RAG) traveled to Little Rock to discuss higher education issues with state legislators, the Arkansas Student Loan Authority, and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. RAG had the opportunity to discuss issues like the growing student debt burden and scholarship availability with State Representatives Eddie Armstrong and Warwick Sabin, two former ASG presidents. This is the third year that RAG has traveled to the state capitol in order to build relationships and relay the thoughts and concerns of the student body.

In the spring semester, RAG members Thomas Selig and Davis Trice accompanied ASG President Tanner Bone and Vice-President Morgan Farmer to Washington D.C. for the SEC in D.C. conference where they met with delegations from other schools located in the SEC, including Texas A&M, Florida, Georgia, Vanderbilt, and Alabama. It was extremely beneficial to meet with these delegations and discuss common issues affecting SEC campuses. The team also arranged meetings with Senator Tom Cotton and Representative Steve Womack of the Arkansas delegation.

In April, the Razorback Action Group released its inaugural Higher Education Honor Roll in order to celebrate Arkansas state policymakers who sponsored or cosponsored legislation that benefitted the University of Arkansas student body in the 2015 general session. Razorback Action Group members used the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's legislation summary for the 2015 General Session to determine which pieces of legislation should

be included in the list. The sponsors and co-sponsors of these bills were recognized in the honor roll, which is available for viewing on the ASG website ([asg.uark.edu](http://asg.uark.edu)). The Razorback Action Group plans on publishing an honor roll for each general session and will also look into the feasibility of producing an honor roll for the fiscal session. The Razorback Action Group made great strides this year in student advocacy and hopes to build on this work in years to come.

# PWHC WELLNESS CENTER RECOVERY LOUNGE

WRITTEN BY  
SENATOR WILL WATKINS



Breaking ground at the Pat Walker Health Center.

To give you some context as to why I felt it was important to write legislation to support the PWHC Recovery Lounge I have to tell you how I met Dr. Asher Morgan. During winter training for being a Resident Assistant, Dr. Morgan presented information about the disciplinary process that students go through after receiving alcohol and drug sanctions. She very briefly mentioned that Pat Walker Health Center (PWHC) was creating a space in the Garland Parking Garage for a multipurpose Wellness Center that can hold classes as well as serve as a place for alcohol intervention meetings with students. Additionally, Dr. Morgan said that there would be a place in the Wellness Center called the Recovery Lounge that would serve as a safe place for students in drug and alcohol recovery where they can be free of temptations they might face where they live. Sometime later I emailed Dr. Morgan to inquire about the space and see how it was developing. She said that the Wellness Center had just been completed in Garland Parking Garage and they had just begun moving equipment and desks in. This is when I asked her about the Recovery Lounge and its development. Dr. Morgan said that their budget was slim for the Recovery Lounge and they would be able to afford the essentials for the room but they would not be able to afford some of the other things they had in mind,

like a TV and other entertainment for students to use while they are in the room to make it more comfortable. From here I and Senator Jack Casey met with Dr. Morgan and Executive Director of the PWHC Mary Alice Serafini to tour the Wellness Center and talk about what they had envisioned for the Recovery Lounge. Jack and I decided to write legislation that would allocate \$2,500 to the Recovery Lounge to purchase better quality furniture as well as entertainment equipment that students could use while they are in the lounge. After passing this legislation we saw that there was still a significant amount of money left in the Senate allocations budget and we decided to write another piece of legislation to allocate the remainder of the Senate allocations budget to the Recovery Lounge after all other final Senate funding legislation had gone through. As of today we have allocated a total of \$8,410.72 to the PWHC Recovery Lounge. Seeing the

efforts of Dr. Asher Morgan and Executive Director Serafini has truly inspired me; their dedication to the wellbeing of the students they serve and that they are trying to make a difference in these student's lives. Eventually Dr. Asher Morgan and Executive Director Serafini would like to add electronic access to the Wellness Center where students would have 24/7 access to the Recovery Lounge so that even after business hours they have a space where they can be comfortable. This is one goal that I would love to see happen in my remaining time here at the U of A so that we can better serve the students that need the Recovery Lounge.

With all of the different things that are going on in ASG and on-campus I thought this was an incredible way to give recovering students something they need to change their lives for the better. Not every student will use the Recovery Lounge but for the students that do, it makes all the difference. If ASG helps 1,000 students or even if we help one student, we get to assist them make a positive change in their lives and that is what we are all about here in ASG.

# RED TALKS

FROM DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS DIVERSITY  
**WILLIAM TAYLOR FARR**



Student presents research at Spring RedTalk.

In 2015, under the administration of Daniel McFarland, Hua Wang, Director of Campus Diversity, created an event called "Conversation with Diverse Leaders." The event aimed to express the need for more diversity in the corporate world and encourage participation from the international community in the business sector. Over the course of the following summer there were multiple diversity related issues that sprung up across the United States. Between the fallout in Boston Marathon bombing, the building tension around Muslim culture based on extremist actions, and the Supreme Court decision favoring marriage equality, it became very evident that our world needed to be educated on diversity and inclusion. It became our responsibility as the Associated Student Government to ensure that this education was happening on our campus for our student body.

I, now serving as the Director of Campus Diversity, began to work with the executive team to create an initiative that would be both engaging and educational. I remembered the Conversation with Diverse Leaders event from the year before and realized that it was a great foundation for what we wanted to do. We decided to create an event that is similar to TED Talks that brought in speakers from on and off campus to discuss diverse issues that were impacting our students. For these events, which we named RED Talks, our goal was

to present overviews of the issues, highlight speakers who were creating positive impacts, and generate intentional conversation among our students. The first talk focused on the issues we had seen the previous summer. We brought in a police officer, Tommy Norman, from Little Rock who had gained national attention for his positive policing, a professor, Jacquelyn Mosley, who was an ally to the LGBT community and the advisor for PRIDE, and an Islamic professor, Dr. Hameed Naseem, who spoke about peaceful Islam. We also brought in a faculty member and student to speak about how to bridge differences between students and others with different values. It ended up being a very successful inaugural event for ASG. It met the goals which we had established earlier and set a platform for us to continue the event.

We ended up having four more RED Talks over the course of the academic year. We covered topics including student issues, student re-

search, & sustainability. Our most successful talk covered the issue of sexual assault. Over 375 students came to Hillside Auditorium to hear about what sexual assault is and how to initiate a bystander intervention. Now, RED Talks are drawing attention of not only students but speakers nationally. Students are now asking for specific topics to be addressed in upcoming talks and speakers are seeing the University of Arkansas as a place where new ideas can be shared and embraced. Overall, this was a great year for a new program and I only expect bigger and better things as I turn over the initiative to Carus Newman, the first Director of RED Talks.



Student presents research at RedTalk.

# THE DREAM B.I.G. 5K

WRITTEN BY FLF COORDINATOR  
BLAIRE WADDELL



Freshman Leadership  
Forum staff, 2015–16.

The Dream B.I.G. 5k hosted by the Associated Student Government Freshman Leadership Forum (FLF) on March 5th of this year was such an honor to be a part of. As part of the curriculum for the Freshman Leadership Forum the students who are members host a “Big Event” that is a service event. What is so special about this “Big Event” is that each year, freshmen students at the U of A get the to choose something they are passionate about and execute an event tied to that topic.

In October, the FLF staff introduced topics and then the discussion commenced on which topic the freshmen leaders felt most passionate about. Topics varied from food sustainability to education resources and positive self image in adolescents. Eventually, it was decided that they wanted to host a 5k in support of the University of Arkansas’ own Dream B.I.G. program. Dream B.I.G. is an organization on campus that helps facilitate a positive self image for adolescent girls in the Northwest Arkansas area. Working with Charity Walker and Bria Bonnette, the Program Coordinator and Student Coordinator for Communications for Dream B.I.G., was incredible. Not only were they

very communicative and helpful but so excited about what these freshmen wanted to do.

Truly, there are so many people to thank for making the Dream B.I.G. 5k possible. The ASG Exec: Tanner Bone, Morgan Farmer, Meera Patel, Ray Todd and Jace Motley were all incredibly supportive of this big undertaking as well as the GSC Speaker, Scout Johnson and Chief Justice, Jenna Poe. None of us on the ASG Leadership Team or the FLF Staff had ever planned a 5k before, but working with these freshmen with the support of so many made it easy. The FLF Staff, which consisted of Lillie Pitts, Kyle Ward, Yvonne Ngome, Jordan Canter, Lindsey Smith, all worked so hard and were extremely committed to making sure this event was successful and that the freshmen felt responsible for its success. Jamie Wangler, Ms. Jody Preece, and the ASG Advisor, Rainer Gall, answered every question that we threw their way. This event would not have been such a success without them.

We were blessed by the support of the community. Rick’s Bakery, Raising Canes, Tacos 4 Life, Chartwells, Inta Juice and Resident’s Interhall Congress gave financial support and donations to Dream B.I.G. in conjunction with supporting the 5k. With all of their help as well as what we raised from the 5k itself, the Freshman Leadership Forum was able to give over \$3,000.00 to Dream B.I.G. to help kick start their summer program.

The 5k itself was extremely successful. With over fifty participants for a first time event, I was very proud. More than anything, I was proud of the students that hosted the 5k. These students learned not only different leadership skills, but also how to positively impact the community. They did something that can impact the lives of young girls and for that I am satisfied.

I hope that this event can become something ASG continues to support in the future and that the Freshman Leadership Forum can continue to reach out to better the Northwest Arkansas community.

**“These students learned not only different leadership skills, but also how to positively impact the community.”**



15-16 ASG Secretary Meera Patel and 16-17 Treasurer Shelby Cormack.



15-16 ASG Treasurer Ray Todd and Member of the Month Macarena Arce.



ASG Leadership team 16-17.



ASG President Tanner Bone and Vice President Morgan Farmer cut the ribbon for Boss Hog Outfitters.



Razorback Action Group in Little Rock.



Yoga on Old Main lawn during ASG's Health Week.



ASG students in the Czech Republic participating in the Model UN.



ASG students meet with Chancellor Joe Steinmetz.



ASG recruitment tabling.



ASG Readship Week.



ASG Pizza Wars.



F.L.F.'s Dream Big 5K.

# PHOTOS: SPRING 2016

# STAY CONNECTED

The Arkansas Alumni Association serves graduates, friends, and donors around the world. Connecting and serving the University of Arkansas Family is our mission. Building relationships is our passion. We take pride in having alumni, friends, and family support us through membership dues.

By joining the Arkansas Alumni Association, you will not only receive exclusive VIP perks, but you will also be giving back to the University of Arkansas by supporting students through our Membership Scholarship. MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!

Visit <http://www.arkansasalumni.org>.

## Support ASG:

If you would like to learn more about ways to support ASG, please contact Michael McAllister, Assistant Director of Student Activities at (479) 575.6565 or via email at [mrmcalli@uark.edu](mailto:mrmcalli@uark.edu).



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UNIVERSITY OF  
**ARKANSAS**  
STUDENT AFFAIRS

Student  
Activities