



Printed by the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

April 2023

Diego Rivera Exhibit Portrays Cooperation in America

Christopher Luna
The Multicultural News

Har-Ber art teacher Milan Jilka hopes students will take advantage of an opportunity to learn more about Diego Rivera.

For the first time in more than 20 years, an extensive solo collection of the Mexican artist's work is being showcased. And it's right here in Northwest Arkansas.

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art is featuring the exhibit Diego Rivera's America from March 11 to July 31.

"Diego Rivera is an extremely important artist, and the exhibit itself is an eye-opening look into his processes and ideas for art making," said Jilka, who has a master's degree in painting/drawing from the University of Arkansas and doctorate degree in art education from the University of North Texas.

"Many years ago, I lived across the river from Detroit and was able to go to DIA (Detroit Institute of Arts Mu-

seum), where he had painted the Detroit Industry Murals. These were amazing. The details, colors, and sheer size of these frescoes were really fascinating to be able to see in person," Jilka said.

Rivera worked in Mexico and the United States between the early 1920s and the early 1940s and was inspired by the social and cultural life of the two countries.

"He envisioned an America — broadly understood — that shared an indigenous past and an industrial future, and where cooperation, rather than divisions, were paramount," according to a Crystal Bridges press release.

The exhibit, organized with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, includes more than 150 works, including drawings, easel paintings, and frescoes. Some of the iconic works are Dance in Tehuantepec (1928), The Flowered Canoe (1931), Nude with Calla Lilies (1944) and other depictions of flower carriers and vendors. Three major paintings by Frida

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State Education Overhaul Concerns Educators

Alli Flynt
The Multicultural News

When Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed the LEARNS Act on March 8, parents and educators wondered how legislation so nuanced and complex could pass so quickly and without significant consultation with the people it would most directly affect — teachers and students.

The LEARNS Act, a 145-page, expansive education overhaul enacts changes to teacher starting pay, abolishes the Arkansas Teacher Fair Dismissal Act, requires literacy screenings for K-3 students, prohibits certain content and

creates a new voucher system, among other changes.

Each student in Arkansas has a set amount of per-student funding provided by tax dollars. Under the new legislation, students have a voucher to take their allotted state funding to a private school or homeschool program of their choice.

The introduction of this new system, the Arkansas Children's Educational Freedom Account Program, will harm public schools, state Rep. Megan Godfrey, a Democrat from Springdale, said.

"The stated goal of Gov. Sanders' administration and the lead sponsors of the bill is to

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Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signs the LEARNS act into law.
(Photo by Antoinette Grajeda)

2023 Multicultural News Staff

Student Participants

Don Tyson School of Innovation

Ashley Perez
Zoey Pierce

Fayetteville High School

Jackson Brunner
Eleanor Eichmann
Caitlyn Shaw
Katie Shelton
Stella Sutton
Thomas Jacob Warmack
Ben Watson

Rogers Heritage High School

Amelie Auxier
Madison Barstow
Jayden Galvan
Lexi Gray
Kamiryn Gwinn
Angie Ramirez
Caroline Tallmadge

Rogers High School

Gissel Barrientos
E.V. Beyers
Melissa Cornejo
Cady Enyart
Kenady Enyart
Eva Mundo
Chance Kolman
Oliver Perron
Nick Quinn
Thalia Ramos
Analyse Riley
Camilah Roldan
Damian Ruiz
Nick Quinn

Springdale Har-ber High School

Tori Baldwin
Alli Flynt
Christopher Luna
Audrey Marvin
Jamy Mendez
Landon Smith

Springdale High School

Nailyn Caldera
Yollisa Castillo

Aine Eport
Tiria Gushi
Isaac Hernandez
Nadia Jieta
Maelin Kannel
Jamie Taidrik
Miracle Tonyokwe
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Stephanie Adams and Reggie Brasfield,
Voice of Diversity KDIV
Lakyra Banks, 40/29 News
Jenna Brown, researcher U.S. Geological
Services
Brandon Carter, assistant U.S. attorney
Wendy Echeverria, University of
Arkansas graduate student
Zessna Garcia Rios, University of
Arkansas graduate and leader
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Ginny Monk, Connecticut Mirror
Anna Pope, KUAF
Elena Ramirez, KNWA
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and criminology at the UofA
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Jeanne Roberts, founder of Foster Love,
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Lemke Journalism Project Returns After Covid-19 Challenges

Gissel Barrientos

The Multicultural News

More than 40 students from six Northwest Arkansas high schools spent five weekends at the University of Arkansas in the 22nd year of the Lemke Journalism Project.

Known as LJP, the program is free and designed to increase diversity in journalism. Students work on news stories, photography projects, podcasts and television roundtables.

Gina Shelton, LJP director, said COVID-19 hampered the program the past two years. In 2021, the program was virtual. Safety concerns last year limited the size of the group and the number of meetings.

Shelton went school-to-school in 2023 recruiting with former program students Halle Roberts, Rachell Sanchez Smith and Wendy Echeverria.

They spoke to hundreds of teens at high schools throughout Northwest Arkansas urging them to apply.

"Some of the students have already committed to attend the U of A, and that is exciting," Shelton said. "Instead of just Saturdays, We will spend time with them regularly and help them navigate college, figure out their passions, pursue careers. There's an entire LJP family ready to help them."

Sanchez Smith is a UA junior who graduated from the program and is now a mentor.

"I owe a lot to this program. I met a lot of my favorite professors, people that hopefully will be in my life for a long time and I wanted to hopefully in some way emulate the same experience I went through for the students," said Sanchez Smith, a reporter-producer for public radio station KUAF 91.3.

Tori Baldwin, a Har-ber High School student, said participating in the program piqued her interest in journalism.

"I'm a part of the newspaper team at my high school, but it was sort of an alternative thing to me. But now I'm really glad I stayed in it because I found my love for news broadcasting, especially podcasts since I'm the only host there. It was a really nice opportunity that there's a broadcast station here and an opportunity for me to do whatever I want. This program definitely spiked my interest in journalism itself," Baldwin said.

Gerald Jordan, co-founder of the program, shared his goals during several talks to students.

"If you have any questions, ask questions. If you don't have any questions, shame on you," Jordan said. "I promise you, this makes my heart soar to see this many students are here on a Saturday."

About 20 guest speakers met with students over five Saturdays in Kimpel Hall. They spoke on a variety of topics including journalism, mental health, foster care, photography, sports communications and legal issues.

The program is named after Walter J. Lemke, founder of the journalism department, which has grown into the School of Journalism and Strategic Media. It is funded by a grant from Tyson Foods. Northwest Arkansas Newspapers publishes *The Multicultural News*, featuring stories by students in the program.

Students are being honored this month with a scholarship and recognition reception.

Gissel Barrientos is a senior at Rogers High School. This is her first year in LJP.

Director's Note

Director Thanks Teamwork in Program's Second Decade

Gina Shelton

The Multicultural News

LJP turns 22 this year, and we have a lot to celebrate.

Our co-founders, Gerald Jordan and Katherine Shurlds, remain active in the journalism community. They have retired from full-time teaching, but both have rich legacies. Some of their former students are now high school journalism teachers passionate about the news business and about the training our program provides. Many are journalists and LJP mentors.

LJP graduates work in journalism, law, communication, business, education.

Special thanks this year to Rogers Heritage teacher Kristen Coppola and Rogers High teachers Bailey Aguilar and Lisa Cassidy for joining us on campus for our weekly sessions. Springdale High teachers Rachelle Moore-Nicols and Susannah Swearingen, as well as Fayetteville High teacher John Gossett, Har-Ber High's Karla Sprague and Don Tyson School of Innovation's Craig Pasquinzo, were partners in student recruitment and retention.

These high school teachers are invested in their students, and they know that LJP comes with scholarships and opportunities.

Antoinette Grajeda was our

top volunteer this year, despite covering a very busy legislative session in Little Rock for the Arkansas Advocate. KUAF's Rachell Sanchez Smith and Anna Pope were regulars in our newsroom, guiding the young reporters in writing. Senior Kaitlin Garza, a standout broadcast student, kept things on track as the program assistant.

Katelynn Santiago found time in her busy graphic design schedule to put together the newspaper, and Donna Lonchar was the volunteer editor.

Kimpel Hall was packed on Saturdays, thanks to the dedicated students, mentors, UofA faculty and expert lecturers.

We have a record number of LJP students who are continuing their journalism careers on our campus. The reporting field needs their diverse voices.

One bittersweet note is that this is the final publication under the leadership of Northwest Arkansas Dem-

ocrat-Gazette editor Rusty Turner. Rusty has been a steadfast supporter of diversity and excellence in local journalism. He's been a terrific editor and friend to LJP. We wish him well on his much deserved retirement.

See you in 2024.



Lemke Journalism Project students gather outside Kimpel Hall on the first Saturday of the program. (Staff Photo)

New State Laws Target Transgender Community

Audrey Marvin

The Multicultural News

The Arkansas General Assembly approved four pieces of legislation this year that affect the transgender community.

Act 317 requires students to use bathrooms, locker rooms, and where they stay on overnight school trips to correlate with their assigned gender at birth and requires schools to provide single-occupant accommodations. Act 274 allows doctors to be sued for malpractice for providing gender affirming care to minors.

Two pieces of legislation were sent to Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders by April 6. Senate Bill 270 makes it a criminal penalty for an adult to stay in a bathroom of the opposite sex to arouse or gratify a sexual desire if a minor of the opposite sex is present. House Bill 1468 prohibits school employees from addressing students by

pronouns inconsistent with the student's sex assigned at birth unless provided parental consent.

If all these bills become law, the effects will be far-reaching, making many aspects of life more difficult for one of Arkansas's most vulnerable groups, Sarah Everett, policy director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, said.

"It's already hard to be transgender anywhere, especially in the South, especially in a state where we've already passed multiple bills sending the message that it's not okay to be transgender and where transgender kids are already experiencing bullying and harassment at school in many cases," Everett said.

Sen. Breanne Davis, (R.-Russellville), argues the bills are necessary to protect kids.

"If we are allowing kids to change multiple times their gender and pronouns throughout the school year, and then allow them in the

locker room with my middle school child, I have a problem with that," Davis said, according to the Arkansas Democrat Gazette. "And this is about protecting every kid, including transgender children, in our public schools."

Everett said this reasoning doesn't hold up.

"They're not protecting kids because there are many, many real problems in Arkansas, including problems kids face at school and in treatment in sports, and all kinds of things that aren't being addressed by the state Legislature."

For non-binary and transgender youth, like Springdale Har-Ber High School junior Quinn Benham, House Bill 1468 has the potential of damaging relationships with trusted teachers. Benham, who uses both she/her and they/them pronouns, asks some teachers to use gender non-conforming pronouns to feel comfortable doing activities they enjoy and spend a great

deal of time doing, such as theater.

"It would make me feel a little more uncomfortable working in environments with teachers I really trust because they're being forced to disrespect me," Benham said. "I'm wanting to do something I love, but I'm being violated."

Benham said they are especially worried about how this legislation could affect other students who fall under the trans umbrella, especially those who get support and respect at school they might not get at home.

Greer McAllister, a senior at Har-Ber, said she is unsure about her stance on transgender girls who haven't begun transitioning using the girls restroom, but she has no qualms about girls who have transitioned sharing a bathroom with her. In addition, she believes the point brought up about cis men pretending to be transgender women and using the restroom is taken out of proportion.

"It's not as big of an issue as some people make it out to be. It's only a hypothetical," McAllister said. "It's maybe only just happened once and everyone makes it a bigger issue than it should be."

For Springdale Har-Ber junior Carter Cotton, a transgender boy, the new laws could completely change the path of his life for the worse.

"I feel like my whole life would be uprooted," Cotton said. "Basically there's not one thing that I think I could do to save myself or anyone else in that scenario."

According to the National

Library of Medicine, 80% of transgender youth have considered suicide. Cotton said he's had suicidal thoughts. During the early months of COVID-19 and before he received hormone therapy, Cotton's gender dysphoria got so bad that he said he developed agoraphobia, a fear of leaving one's home.

"It got so terrible for me, especially on social media. It tore me down so bad, and I was at such a high risk for suicide for years because of it," Cotton said. "They think they're saving teenagers from something, but they're actually putting their kids at risk."

Growing up transgender, Cotton said he has gotten good at avoiding the bathroom despite the inconvenience. Still, he said punishment for using a bathroom not corresponding to one's gender assigned at birth is unacceptable; all he and other transgender people are trying to do is use the restroom, just as cisgender people do.

"They make it into something that it isn't," Cotton said. "They want to make an observable trait in people into a spectacle, and that's what it turns into."

This constant flow of anti-transgender legislation in the Arkansas government is the sole reason he plans to leave the state as soon as he turns 18, Cotton said.

Audrey is a senior at Springdale Har-Ber High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.



Protestors gather outside Washington County Courthouse over bills targeting the transgender community. (Photo by Brittaney Mann)

Longtime Journalist Wraps Her Arms Around Foster Care

Katie Shelton

The Multicultural News

Jeannie Roberts spent 10 years covering news for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Now, she's a full-time advocate for foster children.

Roberts, a foster mom for several years, spoke in March to students in the Lemke Journalism Project.

She has had as many as six foster children at one time in her home in Beebe, a small town about 35 miles northeast of Little Rock. Her new career as the co-founder and leader of the nonprofit group Foster Love comes as the state deals with a critical shortage of foster homes.

Roberts decided to become a foster parent after her biological daughter was grown.

"In journalism, you are constantly working. You get calls in the middle of the night. You are always on. So I questioned my sanity at wanting to do journalism plus being a foster parent. But I made it work for the past six years. It was a huge juggling act. I felt like I was on a tightwire at some points, but it worked," she said.



Jeannie Roberts (Courtesy Photo)

During the pandemic, she covered breaking news about Covid-19 and wrote profiles of Arkansans who died.

After her mom died of the virus, Roberts announced in fall 2021 she was done. For her mental health, she would no longer cover the topic.

"It's surreal to be writing a story with my own mother as a statistic: 31 more Arkansans dead. Mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sons, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Every single loss triggers a tsunami of life-long devastation and pain," she tweeted.

During her time as a reporter she used social media to document her love of fostering and to promote the needs of children. "These kids desperately need us .. you .. to step up, to show them they are worth it," she tweeted.

She also posted milestones, including a photo of her work decorating a room with two single beds and colorful walls. "Curtain & nightstands to go, but I will be ready for DHS inspection on Friday #fosterlove," she tweeted.

Last January, she wrote an adoption birthday note. "Nothing can touch the pure JOY of this day. I'm still pinching myself that you chose me to be your mother. I'm so proud of the beautiful, brave, kind, creative human being you are! Adopt teens from foster care, ya'll."

She told LJP students she realized how bad the crisis was when the phone calls kept coming from case workers saying, "It's an emergency, it's critical. Do you have any space whatsoever to take this kid in?"

Arkansas leaders are trying to address a shortage of foster homes. Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed an executive order promoting a new program to improve the adoption process.



Foster Love volunteers recruit LGBTQ+ foster parents at an event April 1 in Little Rock. (Courtesy Photo).

State agencies will work with a group of organizations called Every Child Arkansas to find more foster families. Sanders called for better training for parents and more resources for children who are aging out of foster care.

About 4,100 children were in foster care and about 1,600 homes available as of early this year, according to state records.

"If we are not taking care of these kids, then that's a pipeline to prison," said Roberts, who mainly works with teens. "Where are they going to put all of these emotions? How are they going to get them out? It typically comes in with drug use, with crime, with behavior."

Foster Love's motto is "Every Child Deserves a Home," and the goal is opening more all-inclusive foster and adoptive homes and a place for LGBTQ+ children to call

home, according to its website. The site has resources, like a handbook for foster parents, and recommendations for other groups that can help.

Roberts said her 30-year journalism career, including time at the statewide Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, prepared her.

"I've covered everything, so I knew how the government worked. I knew what it took to get things done because I watched other people - so many heroic people - getting organizations started and making a difference," Roberts told LJP students. "Journalism benefited me greatly in switching from journalism to the nonprofit."

Katie is a senior at Fayetteville High School. This is her second year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

LEARNS Act Criticism

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provide educational choice so that every student has access to a quality education,” Godfrey said. “But in reality, I’m not sure that the bill, as written, will achieve its stated purpose.”

Sanders tweeted March 15, “The failed status quo is over - and a new era of prosperity and opportunity is here for every kid in Arkansas.”

In the first year of the program, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, foster children, children of active duty military members, students enrolled in an “F”-rated school or school in need of Level 5 support, and students enrolling in kindergarten for the first time are eligible. Participation will be limited to 1.5% of the statewide public school enrollment.

Beginning in 2024, the cap will increase to 3% and will include children enrolled in “D”-rated schools and children of veterans, military reservists or first responders. The Arkansas Department of Education issues the grades for each public school in the state based on a variety of factors.

Godfrey, a former educator, said she is worried because the act is not specific in what vouchers can be used for and how they will be regulated.

“This bill would expand too, in three years, giving every student in Arkansas opportunity for one of these educational freedom accounts,” Godfrey said. “It is a voucher to take the money that should be going to their public school, and instead take the money with them out of the public school system, in the form of a voucher, and be able to use it on qualifying expenses, including private school tuition, or a variety of other educational options.”

Rachel Cockrell, an English teacher at Har-Ber High School in Springdale, is concerned by the speed at which the act was passed by the Senate.

“This is the biggest overhaul in education Arkansas has ever seen, and

we blew it through legislation like it was a one-page document instead of almost 150 pages,” Cockrell said. “To me that implies that the people pushing it through know that there’s a lot in it that’s not well thought out, that needs revision, and they just don’t want to deal with it.”

Cockrell said she is most disappointed in the lack of representation from teachers in the creation and passing of the bill.

“No teachers were included in the writing of it,” Cockrell said. “Nobody was consulted. Gov. Sanders refused to meet with any represen-

“It’s hard as a public school teacher not to feel like what they really mean to do is destabilize public schools and privatize education,” Cockrell said.

Godfrey agreed. “We’ve seen voucher programs like this attempted in other states, and we see pretty overwhelming evidence that these types of programs have benefited families who are already in private school, or who already have access to choice options because of their income,” Godfrey said.

Although the program is set to include disabled students in its early

and accountability provisions for private schools, or for these upcoming homeschool service providers, that we have in public schools.”

Mark Breden, a volunteer at Ozark Catholic Academy, testified Feb. 22 to the Senate Committee on Education that after five years of volunteering in a private school, he supports the voucher program because of the opportunities he sees in private schools that he believes public schools lack.

“It’s an opportunity for young kids who may have gotten lost in the shuffle of a big school to be able to be a big fish in a small pond, which I believe happens oftentimes in the private school sector,” Breden said.

Godfrey said rather than provide an opportunity for disadvantaged students, she sees the act as a threat to public school funding, which is necessary to improve the quality of education in rural areas of Arkansas.

“It is hundreds of millions of dollars projected that will be needed to sustain and expand this program, and that’s funding that otherwise could and should be going to public schools,” Godfrey said.

“I spent the first 14 years of my career in public education, and I will be the first one to say that public education deserves attention and deserves criticism and deserves a commitment to improvement,” Godfrey said. “I would say that every time I had a public school job, I got in trouble for being too aggressive and too passionate and wanting to disrupt the status quo. I will never be a defender of failing public schools. There are things that we can and should do better.”



Students protest against the LEARNS act outside the Arkansas Capitol. (Photo by Antoinette Grajeda)

tatives from the Arkansas Education Association. And teachers across the state, blasted every senator, every House member, the education committees for the House and the Senate for the last two weeks about this thing. We asked questions, we sent emails, we left voicemails. As far as I know, nobody got any response.”

Cockrell said she worries Sanders’ stated goal to promote school choice freedom with the new voucher system does not align with the true goal of Act 237.

stages, Godfrey said she does not feel that it will be beneficial to these students, as private schools are not held to the same standard of inclusivity as public schools.

“Private schools absolutely are allowed to turn students away,” Godfrey said. “They are allowed to have more stringent policies that are discriminatory, that turn kids away for their disability, or ability status, for their gender, for their religion, for their academic achievement. There are not the same anti-discrimination

Alli is a senior at Har-Ber High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Former Arkansas Governor Joins Republican Presidential Field of Candidates

**Ashley Perez and
Zoey Pierce**
The Multicultural News

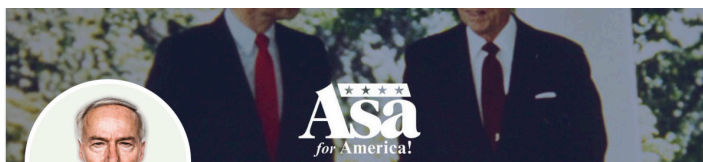
Former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson is running for president in 2024.

Hutchinson scheduled an event April 26 in Bentonville to launch his campaign. Republican candidates announced as of early April include former President Donald Trump, Nikki Haley, Corey Stapleton, and Vivek Ramaswamy.

“As I’ve traveled the country for six months, I hear people talk about the leadership of our country, and I’m convinced that people want leaders that appeal to the best of America, and not simply appeal to our worst instincts,” he told ABC News on April 2. “And that inspires me when I see everyday Americans just saying: ‘Give us good leadership, give us common sense, consistent conservatism and optimism about our great country.’ And I believe I can be that kind of leader for the people of America.”

Hutchinson completed serving eight years as governor in January. He was first recognized nationally in 1982 when he became the youngest U.S. attorney when appointed by President Ronald Reagan.

Hutchinson, 72, served in Congress from 1997-2001. He was named director of the Drug Enforcement Administration in 2001 and two years



Gov. Asa Hutchinson ✓

@AsaHutchinson

Current: GOP Candidate for President. Husband, Dad, Papaw. Lifelong Arkansan. Former: 46th Gov of AR, Congressman, Admin. of DEA, Undersec. of Homeland Security

Follow

Source: Asa Hutchinson Twitter account

later he took the position of under secretary for Border and Transportation Security, where he oversaw over 110,000 employees, according to his government biography.

Hutchinson has called on Trump to drop out of the presidential race. A grand jury in New York City indicted Trump in early April on 34 counts of fraud, accusing him of falsifying business records to conceal damaging information before and after the 2016 election. Trump served one term as president before losing a re-election bid to Democrat Joe Biden.

Janine Parry, political science professor at the University of Arkansas, said Hutchinson “has been saying for years that Donald Trump was not a constructive force in the Republican Party or in the republic itself.”

“His bid appears to be as much about rallying conventional Republicans to oppose the former president as about Hutchinson’s own ambitions,” Parry said.

On the American Strong and Free political action com-

mittee site, Hutchinson’s Arkansas roots are featured.

“Governor Hutchinson grew up on a small farm near Gravette. He is a graduate of Bob Jones University and the University of Arkansas School of Law. He and his wife, Susan, have been married for 49 years, and have four children and seven grandchildren,” according to the site.

“Firm in his faith and practice, and spurred by his love of country, Governor Hutchinson looks forward to sharing his forward-looking vision of consistent conservative leadership for All Americans,” according to the website.

U.S. News and World Report called Hutchinson’s bid a low-key route to the White House. “It’s a strategy that just might put Hutchinson ... in the perfect long-shot position to get the GOP nomination for president.”

Ashley and Zoey are sophomores at Don Tyson School of Innovation. This is their first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Law Gives Parents Power

Madison Barstow
The Multicultural News

Some students and educators are concerned about revisions to high school student success plans in the new LEARNS Act.

Success plans will have to include a recommended sequence of courses to complete a diploma. Each student will have a plan by the end of eighth grade developed by the student, their parents, or legal guardians, and a school counselor. The plan must meet the new requirements starting with the 2023-2024 school year and will be updated annually. The parents or legal guardians must approve any changes to the original plan.

Some are worried the change will give too much control to parents about the high school student’s future.

“One of the things that I love about the American education system the most is that our children have the freedom to forge their own destiny through choice in their course work as well as the privilege to change their minds and choose a different path as their dreams change. One of my fears about the LEARNS Act is that it puts parents in the driver’s seat of their children’s ambitions,” said Tianne Malloy, a substitute teacher.

Some students fear the new law will allow parents to withhold financial or emotional support if their child doesn’t follow the success plan they laid out.

“Knowing that upcoming generations such as my younger brother will be facing the effects of the upcoming LEARNS Act is distressing. I have a healthy relationship with my parents and they have always supported my dreams in becoming a model,” said Zaid Aguayo, sophomore at Heritage High School. “Knowing that some kids are not as fortunate in having those same healthy relationships, it makes me think how stricter parents are going to use this new found power to control their kids’ hopes and dreams.”

The goal for the plan is to provide a focused path to success, but some students could consider it as another thing that adds stress to their lives.

Madi is a sophomore at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

“Eye-Opening” Diego Rivera Exhibit

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Kahlo, all done in San Francisco, including a self-portrait of her standing next to Rivera, are also on exhibit.

Frida Kahlo and Rivera were married twice and became famous and controversial artists before their deaths. Salma Hayek starred in the 2002 movie “Frida,” and Alfred Molina portrayed Rivera.

Jilka, who is an artist in Springdale in addition to teaching at Har-Ber, said, “Rivera definitely had an extremely interesting back story,

including his political beliefs and multiple marriages. Frida, in her own right, was and is just as revered as Rivera was, and there was definitely their share of turmoil and artistic production by both artists during their time together.”

The exhibition includes rarely seen works from private collections, major paintings on loan from museums in both the United States and Mexico, studies for pivotal mural projects in Mexico City, San Francisco, Detroit, and

New York, as well as large-scale digital projections that convey the immersive quality of his epic murals, according to the press release.

The exhibit reveals the broad range of Rivera’s work through a series of thematic sections that bring together more works from the two

decades than have been seen together since the artist’s lifetime, according to the press release. Rivera died in 1957.

“In general, I think Crystal Bridges continues to bring in special exhibits that are interesting, awe-inspiring, and relevant in our society. It also makes art available for people

that would not normally have access to it, especially our younger generation,” Jilka said.

Tickets for the special exhibit are \$12 for adults and free for veterans, youth 18 and under, and SNAP participants.

Christopher is a sophomore at Har-Ber High School. This is his first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.



Top left: Diego Rivera, *La Tortillera (The Tortilla Maker)*, 1926, oil on canvas, 42 3/16 x 35 3/16 in. University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine Dean’s Office at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center. © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Top middle left: Frida Kahlo, *Frieda and Diego Rivera*, 1931, oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 31 in. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Albert M. Bender Collection, gift of Albert M. Bender. © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Top middle right: Diego Rivera, *Woman with Calla Lilies*, 1945, oil on Masonite, 47 5/8 x 47 1/2 in., Private Collection, U.S.A, courtesy Galeria Interart. © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Top right: Diego Rivera, *The Flower Carrier*, 1935, oil and tempera on Masonite, 48 x 47 3/4 in. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Albert M. Bender Collection, gift of Albert M. Bender in memory of Caroline Walter. © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Bottom: Diego Rivera, *La Ofrenda (The Offering)*, 1934, oil on canvas, 48 3/4 x 60 1/2 in. Art Bridges. © 2022 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



Campus Activities



Opinion Discrimination Based on Skin Color Should Be Addressed

Nailyn Caldera
The Multicultural News

Growing up I would always hear people say, “brown is ugly,” or “stay inside so you don’t get more tan” and more hurtful phrases regarding the color of my skin.

Even though dark skin and dark hair are common characteristics in Mexico, blond, thin, light-skinned women are considered the most beautiful. These beauty standards are harmful to young people’s self esteem, and indigenous beauty should be celebrated.

Unrealistic beauty standards lead to discrimination against Latina women. According to a Pew Research Center study, two-thirds of Latinxs report being discriminated against because of their darker skin. Sixty-two percent of Hispanic adults say having darker skin color hurts their ability to get a job in the United States.

Colorism is a form of discrimination that is common in Latin America. This discrimination can lead to unhealthy skin-whitening procedures. These procedures can be life

threatening because some whitening creams have dangerous chemicals such as mercury and hydroquinone. According to the Cleveland Clinic, the melanin your skin provides for you is used to help your skin against the sun so when that protective layer isn’t there it can lead to skin cancer.

Ruchika Tulshyan, author of the book “Inclusion on Purpose: An Intersectional Approach to Creating a Culture of Belonging at Work,” wrote about colorism in the April edition of Harvard Business Review.

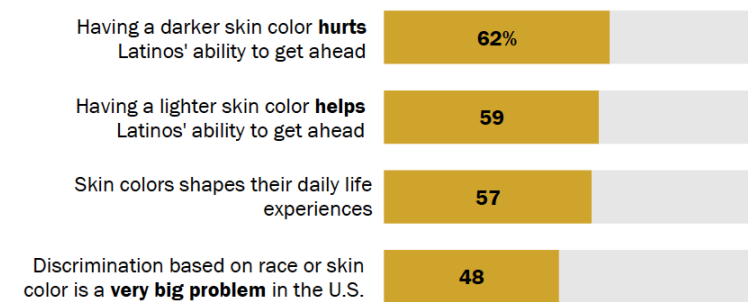
“Colorism is an insidious, globally prevalent bias that deeply impacts the lives and livelihoods of darker-skinned women. Leaders must become aware not only of how they may have perpetuated it, but they must also push back against it when they see it,” she wrote.

In our community, adults need to stop using phrases that can be considered colorism and instead encourage young people to embrace their darker skin tones.

Nailyn is a sophomore at Springdale High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

For U.S. Latinos, skin color shapes life experiences

% of Latino adults saying ...



Note: Share of respondents who did not offer an answer and other answer options not shown.
Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted March 15-28, 2021.
“Majority of Latinos Say Skin Color Impacts Opportunity in America and Shapes Daily Life”
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Students, Parents, Teachers Deal with School Shootings

Eva Mundo

The Multicultural News

Students and educators across the country are dealing with the aftermath of the increasing number of school shootings.

The deadliest mass shooting in 2022 was when 19 children and two teachers died at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. There were about 250 incidents of gun violence resulting in death and injuries at school campuses from 2010 to 2019, an increase from about 80 incidents in the decade prior, according to data collected by several non-profit, nonpartisan groups.

Tracy Mitchell, a counselor at Rogers High School, says it's very important for students to talk about their fear of being involved in a school shooting and about how to deal with violent incidents.

Jennifer Hinojo, a junior at Rogers High, said, "It often does come up in my head, especially during lunch, where I think about what I would do if someone were to walk in and shoot."

Mitchell said, "Statistically, it's pretty common to have that kind of trauma. If people just store trauma without seeking counseling, it can lead to depression and some things that cause problems with successfully living their lives."

Scarlett Lewis, whose 6-year-old son Jesse died in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, co-founded the nonprofit Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement. A former student at the elementary school killed 20 children, six adults, and himself after shooting his mother to death on Dec. 14, 2012.



Graphic by Eva Mundo

"After that day, I knew that what is going on with school shootings is 100 percent preventable. It is our responsibility to keep all kids safe. It is our first responsibility as humans," Lewis said in February in an online visit with the Lemke Journalism project class.

"In order to fix the problem, we are all going to have to get together on the same page," Lewis said.

Lewis' program provides a formula to teach children how to manage their emotions to maintain healthy relationships. She seeks to find the root of the problem and use the formula to stop school shootings before they happen.

The program is taught in all 50 U.S. states and in more than 100 countries, according to the program's website.

"Fear divides us and love unites us," Lewis said. "Love is connection and belonging. We when we don't have it, we suffer."

Eva is a junior at Rogers High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Social media blamed for teen conflicts

Amelie Auxier

The Multicultural News

Concerns about rising violence are creating fear among some students and administrators who worry when the next fight may break out.

Over the last several years, violence has been affecting schools across the United States.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, or CDC, 44% of teens have experienced some type of violence, and one in seven have experienced two or more types of violence. Homicide is the third leading cause of death for teens in the U.S., and approximately 360 teens a day are treated in emergency departments for assault injuries.

Rogers Heritage High School, located in Northwest Arkansas, is home to diverse groups of students, active in academics, sports, the arts, and their community. Visit the campus between classes on most school days and you'll find a typical high school scene - students walking to class,

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Heritage High Locks Exterior Doors for Safety

Angie Ramirez

The Multicultural News

Students and educators are increasingly concerned about school safety and what precautions should be taken.

A recent example happened at Hall High School in Little Rock. The magnet school was put on lockdown after a brawl erupted during school hours March 2. Little Rock police arrested 13 students after a student with minor injuries was taken to a hospital, according to a police statement. One student faces a felony charge of inciting a riot, and 12 others face misdemeanor disorderly conduct charges.

Lockdowns are reported daily throughout the nation when school officials respond to a variety of safety concerns, from the sighting of a felon on the school campus to a direct threat of violence to a student.

"To lessen the opportunities for violence at a school, a constant evaluation of processes must transpire. Finding best practices is key as well as accountability to those practices," said Brian Walker, a teacher and coach at Rogers Heritage High School.

Precautions should be taken in every school for students to feel secure and parents to feel comfortable sending their children to school.

The staff at Heritage High School in Rogers decided this school year to lock exterior doors to maintain the safety of everyone in the building during school hours.

"Although some processes can be seen as inconveniences to some stakeholders, the inconveniences are necessary in order to secure the safety at all schools," Walker said. "Knowing my children are safe and that my students are safe is key to stakeholders experiencing a safe learning community."

Angie is a junior at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Theatre Squared Serves Community

E.V. Beyers

The Multicultural News

On the corner of Spring and North West Street in Fayetteville, sits a warm, two-story building.

Large glass windows give a clear view of the interior: collections of tables and chairs, a cafe (The Commons Bar/Cafe), softly glowing lights, and a staircase. Local art decorates the space.

Construction on the 50,000 square foot project finished in 2019 (when the company moved from the Nadine Baum Studios to the current building), but the institution it houses has been a part of NWA's theatre scene since the early 2000s.

In the time since its original opening, TheatreSquared has established itself as both a local staple and a nationally-recognized company. The New York Times acknowledged them as part of the Best Theater of 2020 and they received an Obie Award (excellence in off-Broadway theatre) for their digital/hybrid productions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, TheaterSquared is producing "Chicken & Biscuits," by Douglas Lyons as one of the final shows of their 2022-2023 season. Following Lyons' work is "Violet," by Jeanine Tesori and Brian Crawley. The latter production ends its run in early July, but in August, the 2023-2024 season begins.

This is part of TheatreSquared's 12-month-cycle, according to Chad Dike, director of education. Play selection begins in October, is finalized around January, announced in March, and performances begin in August.

Casting begins shortly after the season is decided.

"We almost immediately start casting shows," Dike said. "We do Equity calls-- Equity is the actor's union, and we also do non-equity calls. Then, we cast as many of the shows as we can."

Auditions for the productions take place in cities like New York and Chicago, but the theater also casts locally. In addition to actors, a director and design team (costumes, sound, lighting, scenic, props) must be found as well.

"Once we have the main core of the team, all the designers will start doing their work-- months before the show goes up," Dike said.

The designers will make a drawing of what they envision the set looking like. From there, the sketch is given to the technical team to see if the illustration can be translated to the physical theatre. Dike refers to this process as 'negotiations' in which different creatives discuss the original vision and the space itself to see what can be done.

Then, it's on to rehearsals.

"We do about three weeks of rehearsals - two in a rehearsal space (so not in the theater) and then they move into the theater for about a week and we do tech," Dike said. "Tech includes adding all the technical elements, like the set, sound, props and costumes."

When rehearsals end, there are two days of previews where-in small adjustments are made. According to Dike, these are not changes to the script, but changing the action of the actors onstage.

This work culminates on opening night when the show either opens in West Theatre or Spring Theatre. If the play is in West Theatre, it will run for

four weeks, and if the play is in Spring Theatre, it will run for seven.

In addition to continually running productions, TheatreSquared has several theatre education programs. These include traveling to bring core concepts to students in Arkansas by way of live theatre (they previously played to roughly 25,000 students at 80 schools), hosting summer workshops (for which there are scholarships available), and hosting professional development for teachers.

For students wanting to pursue theatre, Dike's advice is simple.

"Just do it," he said. "If your school has a theater department go and audition, get in a class, try it out (we have scholarships available). If none of those things are an option, read some plays; theater is so much about just trying it out, you can do it whatever way works for you."

Local affiliations have helped TheatreSquared share its learning resources and give back to the area.

"We have partnerships with Canopy, the Amazeum, with school districts, and then our community engagement team; Art Adventure brings in local artists to display their art in our lobby during shows," Dike said. "We as an organization really do value the community, and that's part of what makes us special."

Community is both what TheatreSquared wants to give back to, and what supports them as a non-profit organization. Kat Wepler, director of production, said the building was designed with the intention of being accessible. Because of the various offerings of the building, the community



(Photo by E.V. Beyers)

has different ways to connect with TheatreSquared, Wepler said. The local community in turn backs the theatre by purchasing tickets and providing donations.

"I think the arts scene in Arkansas is growing around here," Dike said. "NWA is huge for the arts. Crystal Bridges is one of the best museums in the country, and then we have us, and the Walton Arts Center. It's a 'small town,' but it still has some of that feel which makes support for the arts really great."

Growth is a recurring trend for TheatreSquared. In addition to the larger building, the staff has grown, as has TheatreSquared's recognition with other theaters and theatergoers. Wepler credits this to a combination of factors including time, the building itself, and the variety of places new staff members are coming from.

During the pandemic, staff got on Zoom calls with other

theaters to discuss how they were working. The true impacts of the pandemic on TheatreSquared won't be visible until more time is past, but both Wepler and Dike expect there to be changes to the composition of the audience, viewing habits, and the kinds of shows patrons want to see.

Right now, however, they're enjoying the process.

"I love empowering artists and getting them what they need, and helping them achieve that," Wepler said. "We're making something here-- we're part of active collaboration."

Dike echoed this sentiment, and shared what it's like facilitating this collaboration and creation. "You can watch a play go from words on a page to seeing the world around them."

E.V. is a junior at Rogers High School. This is her second year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Opinion

Higher Education May Be Answer to State's Poverty

Lexi Gray

The Multicultural News

Theoretically, pursuing higher education is the best way to escape poverty. Poverty affected 16.2% of the Arkansas population as of 2020, ranking the state 47th in the United States.

With such high poverty rates, that makes it pivotal that Arkansans understand the roots of poverty and obstacles to success.

Oftentimes when high school students are presented

with the idea of going to college, some see college as unattainable due to the overall cost of higher education. Fear of student loan debt and government bureaucracy do not help.

Donna Beegle, an expert on poverty, said some states punish college students by stripping them of benefits. With that in place, people in poverty will continue to stay in poverty.

Lexi is a junior at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Opinion

Arkansas Leads Nation in Incarceration

Caroline Tallmadge

The Multicultural News

Year-after-year, Arkansas trails in education rankings but has a high incarceration rate.

Those statistics seem entirely independent of each other, but the quality of the state's education system directly contributes to the rate of imprisonment. This connection is known as the school-to-prison pipeline.

Schools can contribute to the pipeline by removing students from learning opportunities through disciplinary policies

that favor incarceration over education by using suspension and expulsion.

Extreme punishments follow the students and can promote a negative connotation of school. Students from underrepresented communities and those living in poverty are more likely to enter the pipeline.

Meanwhile, the state's rate of incarceration has continued to increase. The number of incarcerated per every 100,000 residents went from 866 in 2010 to 899 in 2020, well above the national average.

That number may increase

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TV Morning Anchor Focuses Views on the Community

Jayden Galvan

The Multicultural News

Crystal Martinez keeps her community first as begins preparing the morning broadcast at 3 a.m. each weekday. Martinez is the co-anchor of KNWA Today and Fox 24 Morning News. She worked as a news reporter in Oklahoma after graduating with a degree in broadcast journalism from the University of North Texas. She moved to Northwest Arkansas as a weekend reporter and anchor in 2019. She shared in a recent interview how she copes with the challenges of her job.

Q: How do you know which stories are newsworthy?

A: Every newsroom has different values they want to keep in mind when they are thinking of a story. Here, we are very big on one question: How does this impact the community? It can be health-related or crime-related, but it is important to

ask yourself: How does this impact the community, not just for one person but as a whole? What's going to impact the viewer the most?

Q: How do you know which information is crucial for the viewers to know?

A: In college my professor taught me a little foursquare to write out:

What do we know?

What do we want to know?

What do we not know?

What can we not say?

You would think writing things you can't say would make you want to say it, but for me, it helps my brain process. Regardless, you always want to answer who, what, when, where, how, and sometimes why to the best of your ability.

Q: How do you keep a refreshed show every day?

A: We pull a lot of the content from last night, like when we watch the evening news. We do get away with repeating some content. The challenge we run into is how to make it new. How can we

make it fresh? That's normally how we organize the story. What is happening that day? We find a way to make it current or relevant to that day. Sometimes we can't do that and run into that issue where we have no updates. We try our best to keep an eye out for overnight news that we can lead with.

Q: What advice would you give your younger self?

A: Be patient and be kind to yourself. Don't feel like a bad day means you made the wrong decision choosing this career. Everyone makes mistakes. Everyone has difficult days, and I just give myself more grace with that. And then there's the patient part of it, especially in this job. I feel like we're always looking to the next move.

Q: What is it like to be moving a lot?

A: It is difficult, but it is exciting for me. It is a way to emerge myself into a community, a new avenue to make new friends and connections. But it is hard because you feel like you are leaving a place you have made home. It's like an adventure and you can make an impact somewhere new.



Crystal Martinez shares broadcast journalism tips. (Staff photo)

Jayden Galvan is a sophomore at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Program.

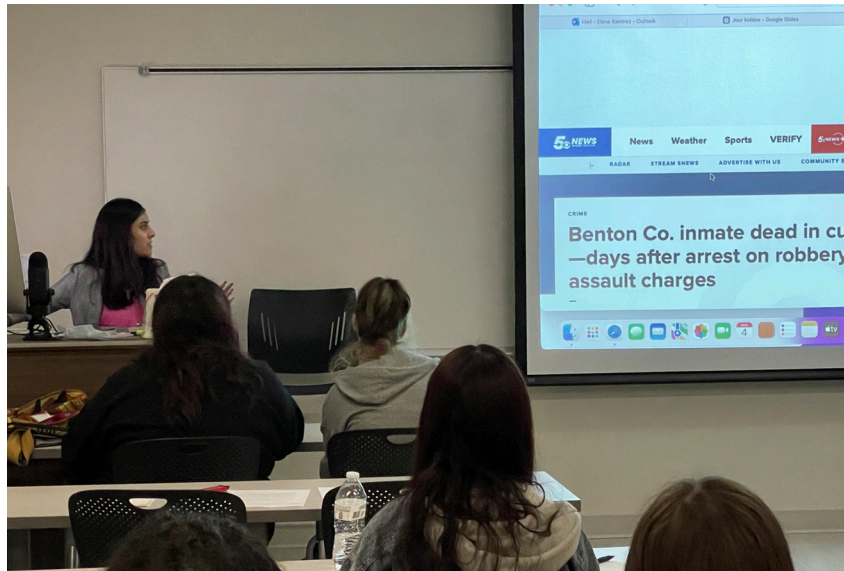
Police Challenged to De-Escalate Situations

**Oliver Perron and
Kenady Enyart**
The Multicultural News

Arkansas made national news in 2022 when two Crawford County deputies were recorded beating a suspected shoplifter at a gas station in Mulberry. A bystander's recording showed the deputies striking the man in the head and legs while he was restrained and laying on the ground. The deputies were fired and charged with federal civil rights offenses.

This incident and others are pushing police departments to review how officers are prepared to de-escalate situations.

Research shows a majority of police officers have mental health concerns. A study by the University of Texas in 2020 surveyed 434 police officers. Of the respondents, 12% had been diagnosed with a mental disorder, 26% reported symptoms of



KNWA's Elena Ramirez discusses her coverage of courts and crime with LJP students. (Photo: Gina Shelton)

a mental illness, and 17% had sought mental health care in the past year.

While police departments perform mental health screenings to assess if a potential employee is right for the job, these mental health screenings may not be adequate after they start the job.

In 2022, students in the Lemke Journalism Project interviewed Kasie Dawson, a certified first responder therapist who started a nonprofit group called Responder 1st to provide more mental health treatment to public safety personnel. She told students officers need to process the trauma that comes

with their occupation, but there's a stigma against seeking help.

This year, LJP students spent a Saturday with a federal prosecutor who gave insight into how law enforcement works.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Brandon Carter said safety checks are in place to ensure officers who mistreat people are punished. He pointed to the 2021 case of *United States v. Anthony Boen*. Carter was the lead counsel in the jury trial that resulted in the conviction of the Franklin County sheriff for the unreasonable use of force on inmates.

The case against former Crawford County deputies Zachary King and Levi White is pending. They pleaded not guilty and were released on bond. A trial date is set for December 2023.

Oliver is a sophomore and Kenady is a freshman at Rogers High School. This is Oliver's second year in the Lemke Journalism Project and Kenady's first.

Social Media Concerns

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chatting with friends. But dig a little deeper and you'll learn that some students are uneasy about the potential for violence.

Among the possible culprits are popular social media platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat, that have influenced bullying amongst peers. Gossip spreads easily, students can send threatening messages, and videos of fights are shared live on these digital outlets.

"In my experience, most fights take place because of miscommunication or misunderstanding. I blame this on social media," said Martin Resendiz, principal

of Crossroads Learning Center and former counselor of RHHS. "Students might post or say things without bad intentions, but it can be interpreted in a negative way."

Teachers are implementing new rules to help, like not allowing students to leave the classroom with their cell phone while using a hall pass. "In my classroom, students keep their phones in the phone caddy," RHHS teacher Kristen Coppola said.

Arkansas lawmakers addressed concerns about social media this year. On April 12, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed a law, known as the Social Media Safety

Act, that requires minors to get their parents' permission to create accounts on many social media platforms. The restrictions take effect in September.

Sanders said, "While social media can be a great tool and a wonderful resource, it can have a massive negative impact on our kids."

Critics contend the law will be hard to enforce.

Amelie is a sophomore at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

Incarceration Alternatives

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even more. A new law overhauls the sentencing laws to eliminate parole eligibility for some offenses. Arkansas also plans to add more prison beds. Critics of the changes contend more resources are needed to prevent crime, including mental health services and social workers.

The work can start in school. If Arkansas school districts reevaluate disciplinary policies, provide resources for

students in need, and address racism towards minority students, a school culture will emerge that engages all students and guides them down a path of academic success that will follow them into adulthood.

Caroline is a junior at Rogers Heritage High School. This is her first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.

ASPA Brings Students to Fayetteville, University of Arkansas

INSPIRE. INNOVATE. IMPACT.



PHOTOGRAPHER: Evelyn Colhoum of Episcopal Collegiate School. The photograph won "Best of ASPA" with a ranking of "superior" in category MB-Photography (2022). The photo was captured then edited by photographer.

Isaac Hernandez
The Multicultural News

Walter Lemke invited 14 high school groups to the University of Arkansas on April 19-21, 1929, for the first meeting of a new association.

Now 94 years later, more than 600 students from dozens of high schools will be in Fayetteville this week for the Arkansas Scholastic Press Association's annual convention. The students are from newspapers, yearbooks, literary magazines and broadcast and media programs. They will compete in on-site contests, attend training sessions and participate in social events, like the traditional dance.

Susannah Swearingen, Springdale High School journalism teacher, said her students have enjoyed the event for years.

"My students have always loved getting to visit and compete with students from schools around the state," Swearingen said. "The training sessions are so beneficial for aspiring journalists. We look forward to ASPA every year."

Walter Lemke founded ASPA and formed the journalism school at the U of A in 1930. The school had been named after Lemke, but that was changed to the School of Journalism and Strategic Media.

However, the Lemke Journalism Project still honors him.

"We've been LJP for 22 years. Walter Lemke did a lot for journalism in the state. His legacy lives on," said Gina Shelton, director of LJP.

Many of the students who participated in LJP this year will be attending ASPA. The LJP's

**ARKANSAS SCHOLASTIC
PRESS ASSOCIATION**

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

EARLY: FEB. 06 - MARCH 23
LATE: MARCH 24 - APR. 07

APRIL 20-21, 2023
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

year-end celebration is in downtown Fayetteville on Friday, April 21, to coincide with the event.

ASPA has been held in various locations over the years. Last year the event was in Jonesboro.

"This is the first time the ASPA convention has been on our campus in more than a decade. We are excited to showcase our campus to a large new audience," said Renette McCargo, who teaches at the UofA and serves as an LJP mentor.

McCargo took over as executive director of ASPA in 2021 as part of an effort to strengthen ties between the Fayetteville campus and the high school group.

McCargo said the goals of ASPA are the same as Lemke's goals: improve school publications in Arkansas, increase their prestige, promote the field of journalism, and recognize outstanding achievement. The 2023 conference has events on campus, in downtown Fayetteville and at nearby media outlets like KUAF radio station.

There are other Northwest Arkansas connections to the high school group. Andrew Young of Woodland Junior High in Fayetteville is the ASPA president, and Karla Sprague of Har-Ber High School held that position previously. Har-Ber teacher Tiffany Hamilton serves as regional director. Bailey Aguilar of Rogers High and John Gossett of Fayetteville High are media directors.

Isaac is a junior at Springdale High School. This is his first year in the Lemke Journalism Project.



Students spent multiple Saturdays in the KXUA radio station in Kimpel Hall, discussing current events and guest speakers.



Antoinette Grajeda (far right) received her master's degree in broadcast journalism from the University of Arkansas and returned to campus to help students record roundtable discussions in UATV.



Working on stories for the newspaper kept students busy. University of Arkansas senior Elyse Cano (far right) was one of 20 students who volunteered their time as mentors.

Students in Action



