

Great Happenings in Academics

October 2016



A Word from our Provost



Dear Colleagues,

This month you can read about the “Start Early, Start Rights” program offered to our first-year students. You will also find a photo of me drumming along with Papa Rap at our annual dinner for first-year minority and international students. This program was enjoyed by all and allowed our students to make great connections.

Be sure to read all of our other great news including the story about student Maleka Momand who is planning a career with the Institute for Justice when she graduates in December.

We know that this newsletter contains only a sampling of the impressive accomplishments of our academic community, and we want to continue to spread the word about our activities. Please keep sending noteworthy items to Suzanne Massey at 450-3126 or SMassey@uca.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve". The signature is stylized and fluid.

*Steven W. Runge
Executive Vice President and Provost*



Start Early, Start Right

For the fourth consecutive year, UCA offered entering first-year students the opportunity to “Start Early, Start Right” through a number of summer bridge programs. One hundred and sixteen students participated in this year’s Summer Start programs, which included Read for Success, Chem4Success, the CNSM Science Boot Camp, Math Academy, Write to Succeed, and the Bear Leadership Experience. The programs in literacy and chemistry were offered as three-week programs beginning in July. In each of these programs, students completed three hours of for-credit coursework, and attended workshops on how to succeed in college.

Programs offered during the one-week August Intersession allowed students a choice of focus. Students who opted to complete reviews in math or writing were then given the opportunity to take the Compass Placement Exam and test out of any requirements for remediation in these areas. Other students focused on preparing to major in the sciences, with a schedule that included sample lectures (and exams!) as well as hands-on lab experience. Students in the Bear Leadership Program spent the week developing their leadership skills as preparation to assist the Resident Faculty Masters, Peer Mentors, and Residence Assistants in their residential college.

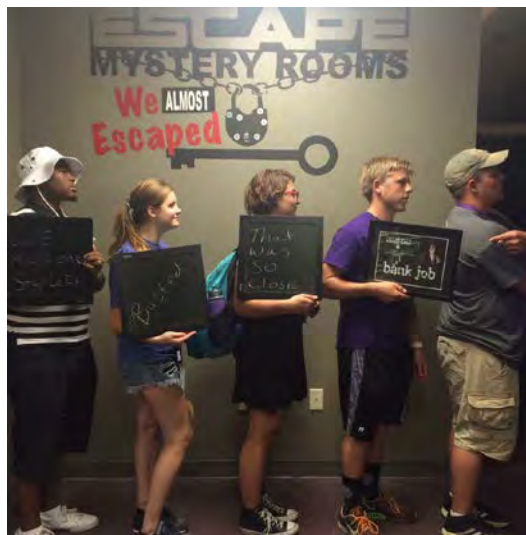


Summer Start students attend Bootcamp at the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

As part of Summer Start, all students also had the opportunity to attend a number of academic success workshops, participate in a community service project, and meet for discussions on the Summer Reading book *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed. It was a wild time, indeed!



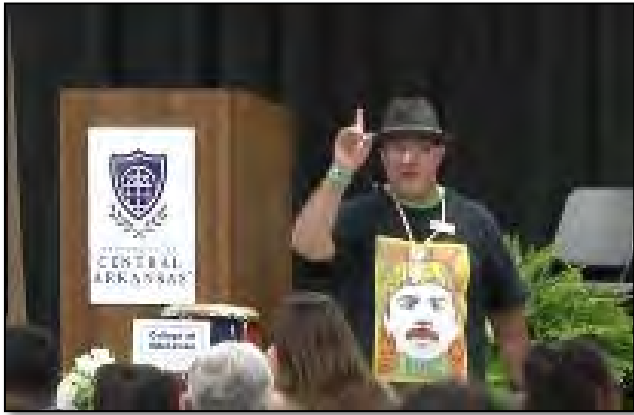
(Above) Students volunteer at local charity (Below) Students develop leadership skills through team building activities



Summer Start is coordinated by the Office of Student Success, in collaboration with CNSM, Learning Communities, University College, and Housing and Residence Life. Scholarship funds have been available to students in the reading, math, and writing programs from funding provided by Textbook Brokers and Coca Cola. For more information on Summer Start, visit uca.edu/studentssuccess/summer-start/.

Together is Better

That was the theme for this year's annual dinner for first year minority and international students hosted by the Provost on September 15. The evening was a celebration of diversity and unity among students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Headlining the event was nationally recognized songwriter and entrepreneur Alvin "Papa Rap" Lopez.



Alvin Lopez speaks and raps from the heart.

Mr. Lopez shared his personal story and encouraged the students to embrace their UCA community by getting involved, asking for help when they need it, and doing their best to graduate. Papa Rap engaged the audience with music by singing about unity and togetherness. Before the night was finished, students were dancing and hugging and taking selfies with their new found friends.



Provost Runge gets in on the fun with Papa Rap!

Internship leads to Career Decision

UCA Senior and Presidential Scholar Maleka Momand spent her summer as a Strategic Research Intern at the Institute for Justice (IJ) in Washington DC, a public interest law firm that focuses on economic liberty. Maleka collected and analyzed data for the activism team and wrote up her findings in memos on topics like civil asset forfeiture and food trucks regulation. The paid internship also provided her with opportunities to improve her skills using Excel and regression analysis. For Maleka, a Political Science major and member of the Honors College, it was the first time she really spent an extended period away from home and from all that is familiar at UCA. The experience taught her to be more independent and confident of her abilities. She was awed by the dedication and sense of urgency displayed at IJ. "The entire organization believes in what they are doing. Their sense of mission coupled with the high morale is truly inspiring." Before the internship, Maleka was uncertain about her future, but now she is determined to begin a career with the Institute for Justice after she graduates this December.



Some of the research Maleka compiled was recently used in IJ testimony before the Sarasota County (Florida) Planning Commission encouraging the commission to revise their food truck regulations.



Veteran Services Flourish Under Williams' Leadership

College can be difficult for most traditional students, but students who are veterans face numerous additional challenges while working to achieve their goal of a college degree, such as missing the camaraderie of a military unit, feeling like an outsider when among traditional students, or dealing with the visible and invisible wounds of war. Students who are dependents of veterans will face the added obstacle of coping with the possible loss of a loved one while trying to navigate through the maze of military affairs. But luckily for the veterans at UCA, they have the help and support of David Williams and his team of dedicated staff members at Veteran Services.



David Williams and SVA President Randel Franks at the VA Student Resource Center in Old Main.

Williams has worked diligently to improve services available to veteran students by expanding the Student Veterans Resource Center, participating in Bear Facts Days and Transfer Days, and sponsoring VA workshops and conferences on campus. Most importantly, he spends one-on-one time with the more than 215 veteran students to ensure their continuing VA benefits eligibility so they can accomplish their academic goals. David has a unique perspective as a former Marine and does everything he can for these students to ensure a smooth transition from military life to college life. The Office of Veteran Services is located in Harrin Hall, Suite 223.

Announcements

Dr. Chad Lairamore of the Department of Physical Therapy was a featured speaker as part of the *Ask the Experts Panel: Best Practices on Post Stroke Rehabilitation* at the 17th Annual Geriatrics and Long Term Care Update on September 23 at the University of Arkansas for Medical Science.

Dr. John Murphy's article, "Helping Students Change with Dignity" has been published in the September 2016 edition of *Counseling Today*, the official publication of the American Counseling Association.

Marvin Williams, Academic Advisor and Coordinator of UCAN, was recently recognized in the U.S. Senate as the "Arkansan of the Week" by Senator Tom Cotton.

Dr. Doug Voss, Associate Professor of Management, will be featured in the upcoming issue of the *Arkansas Trucking Report* for his support and work in establishing the Logistics and Supply Chain Management program in the College of Business.

Dr. Amy Baldwin is serving as Principal Investigator for a multi-campus SMS (short message service) smartphone application that delivers an intervention on growth mindset and sense of belonging. The study's purpose is to determine if receiving daily text messages and providing access to student success stories increase a student's sense of belonging and belief in a growth mindset.

Dr. Renee Ryburn, Assistant Professor of Family and Consumer Sciences, was recognized by the Arkansas Association of Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (AATFACS) as the Postsecondary Teacher of the Year at the Arkansas ACTE conference in Hot Springs on August 2.

Dr. Brent Gregg of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, has been invited to serve as an expert panelist for the International Stuttering Awareness Day Online Conference.

Photography by Steve Runge



Lavender (2015)