Summer 2006
About the cover...

The Arkansas State University Office of Development expanded on its “Red Beans & Rice” lunch this year. Read more about this event in a special feature spread beginning on page 8.

(additional photos courtesy of Jim Stearns)
The Immeasurable Impact of Arkansas State

At some point in the early 1950s a farm wife and working mom decided to get an education to pursue her passion. She wanted to be a teacher. She knew it wouldn’t be easy. She had responsibilities to her husband, to her three children and to their family farm. So pursuing her dream was necessarily lower on the list of priorities, but she would go for it and find a way to get it done and Arkansas State University would be the place where she would do it.

There wasn’t the luxury of dropping everything and registering for fall and spring semester classes with new clothes, new backpacks and all the like. She would make the 30-mile drive from her home to ASU many times during the week. All of her classes were at night and during the summer as she worked her schedule around the other people in her life.

In 1959 she beat the odds to get an undergraduate degree and she became an elementary school teacher. She was a good one, too. But it wasn’t enough. She quickly went to work on her master’s degree. In the summer of 1961, her oldest daughter came to ASU to become a teacher. The two carpooled together on the same 30-mile drive every day – one pursuing a master’s and the other beginning her bachelor’s degree. The mother ultimately became one of the first female elementary principals in northeast Arkansas – a real pioneer.

So they both became teachers, and they were good ones, too. By the time they both had retired, they had influenced thousands of young lives over a combined period of more than 65 years.

In 1984, the daughter’s own son began his undergraduate studies at ASU finishing up in 1988 and marrying his college sweetheart. He was lucky enough to work at ASU from 1998 to 2006 and during that time he had a great opportunity to finish a graduate degree as well.

Just a few days away from leaving a great job as director of University Development at ASU, I’ve had a chance to reflect on the significance the university has had on my life. You see, the first woman was my beloved grandmother, and the second woman is my dear mom. The college sweetheart is the woman I’ve been married to for the last 18 years.

How big a role has ASU played in my life? It’s immeasurable.

Steve Watkins
Love one another. Work hard and do a good job. Never stop learning, because education is the key to a better life.

Simple tenets put forth by a Mississippi County couple to the children they raised that has garnered remembrance in the form of endowed scholarships at Arkansas State University’s Jonesboro and Beebe campuses.

Life in the Delta was hard in the early part of the 20th century. Mechanized agriculture was a few years down the road. The Great Flood of 1927 was a major setback to many families, and then the Great Depression hit.

Ben T. Eoff and his wife Edith came from large families. Originally from Morrilton, Ben was one of six children whose family moved from Pope County to the Delta during the Depression. Edith was one of 11 children who grew up as a part of a farm family in the Mississippi County community of Lost Cane.

The couple married in 1940 and opened a general merchandise store in Lost Cane. When World War II erupted, Ben left on a tour of duty to Germany and then on to the Philippines, returning home with a Bronze Star.

Thanks to their strong work ethic, the couple persevered, working hard to build a farming operation. When Edith’s parents died, they took in her younger siblings—it was just the right thing to do. Once their son Rick and daughter Cathy were born, they were taught the life lessons, too.

“We were a farm family,” Cathy Eoff remembered. “We were a very close family and we were close to our neighbors. Lost Cane was a small place. We were happy.”

When Cathy was in junior high, the family moved to Dell. Soon after, Ben Eoff died, leaving Edith to raise their children and run the family farming operation.

“It was always my father’s wish we continue our education,” Cathy said. “My mother and father wanted the best for us. They believed a better life was possible through education.”

Following high school, Rick came to Arkansas State University; he graduated with an agriculture degree in 1969. Cathy followed her brother and attended ASU for three years, then finished her degree work in central Arkansas.

The brother and sister became teachers—he at Blytheville, she at Jacksonville—before moving on to other occupations. Rick built a career as a successful lobbyist, first in Florida, and then in Little Rock for the Arkansas Education Association, while Cathy moved to Beebe where she owns a successful insurance and real estate business.

Additionally, she serves as a member of the ASU Foundation Board, is on ASU-Beebe’s Development Council and is a director on the board of Community Bank of Cabot.

She’s also ensuring those life lessons are passed on by spending time with her nieces, Christina and Heather Eoff of Little Rock. Cathy and her sister-in-law Tina now discuss education as the key to the girls’ future, just as it was discussed years ago in that small Delta community.

Following the deaths of her brother in 1997 and her mother in 2005, Cathy Eoff said she wanted to do something that would make a difference in the lives of others. Her family’s love for learning prompted her to create the Eoff Family Scholarship at ASU-Beebe to benefit future teachers.

“Education is dear to me and was to my family,” she said. “We need a wealth of good teachers. These scholarships will help ASU students while paying tribute to my brother, my dad and my mother. Education is the key to a better life for us all.”

Privately funded scholarships may be established at any Arkansas State University campus. To learn more about establishing a scholarship, contact us in University Development at (870) 972-3940 or toll-free, (888) 225-8343.
IT WAS ALWAYS MY FATHER’S WISH WE CONTINUE OUR EDUCATION. MY MOTHER AND FATHER WANTED THE BEST FOR US. THEY BELIEVED A BETTER LIFE WAS POSSIBLE THROUGH EDUCATION.
V.C. KAYS HAD A WONDERFUL MIND. IN THE EARLY DAYS, HE HAD DREAMS OF WHAT THIS SCHOOL COULD BECOME. BECAUSE OF HIS DEVOTION, ASU IS THE INSTITUTION IT IS TODAY.
A gem in the jewel case that benefits Arkansas State University is the Kays Foundation, which has recently relocated to its new home near the ASU pavilion on the Jonesboro campus.

Known for many years as the Arkansas State College Foundation, the organization began two years after the First District Agricultural and Mechanical School, ASU’s predecessor, was founded in 1909. President V.C. Kays and a group of individuals formed a “Board of Control” to oversee funds donated for the purchase of registered livestock for the school.

Dr. Eugene Smith, emeritus ASU president and professor of education and a ’52 alumnus, serves as president of the Kays Foundation Board. He said the mission of the foundation is to support ASU.

“We support Arkansas State University through grants to faculty, staff, colleges, departments or other entities to help further to goals of the university,” Smith said. “While we fund mostly academics, we have made other grants.”

“The foundation purchased land adjacent to the original campus for future growth, provided for sidewalks from Jonesboro to the campus, funded an oral history project for the university’s 75th anniversary, provided financial assistance for the Marching Indians trip to perform in President John F. Kennedy’s inaugural parade, provided land for the construction of Kays Hall and donated funds for the construction of Indian Stadium and other building on campus. If a request is an identified need of the university, the board will consider it.”

Smith said the foundation officially came into being from the “Board of Control” to the “Endowment Association of the First District State Agricultural School,” in 1913, when the state attorney general granted a form of agreement between the state and ten Northeast Arkansas citizens to benefit the school. It was from that organization that the Arkansas State College Foundation for the Advancement of Higher Education was formed in 1945.

Smith noted the growth and development of the institution that is now ASU in its earliest days was the result of the hard work and vision of Victor C. Kays, who not only led the school, but the foundation.

“V.C. Kays had a wonderful mind and was instrumental in the success of this campus,” he said. “In the early days, he had dreams of what this school could become. Because of his devotion, ASU is the institution it is today.”

Kays served as president of Arkansas State until 1943. He was president of the foundation from 1910 until his death in 1966. His son, Victor Hale (Buddy) Kays followed his father as the foundation’s chief executive officer, serving from 1966 until his own death in 2001. In 2005 the board voted to change its name, and is now officially known as the Kays Foundation.

In addition to Smith, the present board of directors includes Charles Rasberry, ASU emeritus chair and professor of Radio-TV and ’56 alum, as vice president; Lucinda McDaniel, ASU ’79 alumna, as secretary; Dr. Robert Ferralasco, emeritus chair and professor of Administrative Services and Computer Information Systems and ’49 alumnus; Dr. Tom Bishop, emeritus professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and ’64 alumnus; and Betty Jo Rousey, ASU ’97 alumna.

Also, Wayne Blake serves as executive vice president and treasurer of the board, and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the foundation. Terms on the board of directors are life appointments.

Smith said the board meets yearly to consider grant applications. As will all campus requests for funding from off-campus sources, grant applications should be submitted through Dr. Elizabeth Hood, vice chancellor for Research and Technology Transfer, for processing and forwarding to the Kays Foundation. The application must be received in the Kays Foundation office by October 1. Funding for approved grants will then begin the following July 1.

For more information about the Kays Foundation, visit www.kaysfoundation.com
A $15,000 grant from the Kays Foundation is having a positive impact on recruitment for Arkansas State University's Graduate School.

Dr. Andrew Sustich, Graduate School dean, said increasing enrollment in graduate programs involves a multi-step process, and thanks to the Kays gift, those processes have begun.

“Our plan to market the Graduate School includes five components,” he explained. “Some of these components have already been implemented with promising results.”

Sustich said a Graduate School viewbook, containing information about the university, graduate programs and the community, is being developed for potential graduate students. He said a mini-CDROM of the Graduate Bulletin, along with a promotional video file will accompany the viewbook.

Additionally, other printed materials, like posters and mail-out pieces will be developed for the Graduate School as well as for specific graduate programs.

A third component includes promotional items touting the school. Those items will be strategically used at additional on-campus recruiting trips and graduate fairs. Sustich represented ASU at a graduate fair held at Jackson State University in Mississippi earlier in the year, and has plans to complete a five-campus tour next year in that state. He said similar opportunities exist in Tennessee and Louisiana.

Sustich said the fifth component consisted of a seminar, “101 Great Ideas for Recruiting Graduate Students,” that was held on-campus for all graduate programs.

Even though implementation of the plan is in its early stages, the Graduate School is already reaping benefits.

“We had our highest enrollment ever for the Spring 2006 semester, so we’re very pleased.” Sustich said. “Of the 1,295 students enrolled in graduate programs, 109 are participating in doctoral studies.”

“We are now offering a Master of Arts degree in criminal justice, and we hope to offer a Master of Social Work degree beginning the Fall 2008 semester. These programs are important for us; they're two advanced coursework offerings that are most in demand.”

The Arkansas State University Graduate School traces its beginnings to 1935, when along with Henderson and the Arkansas State Teachers College, now the University of Central Arkansas, Arkansas State College offered classes toward a Master of Science degree in education that would be completed elsewhere. In 1955, the first MS in education was offered at ASC, and the graduate school was initiated a year or two later.

Arkansas State’s Graduate School has a variety of graduate programs available. A graduate certificate in three fields, 15 master’s degrees in 55 fields, two specialist degrees in three fields (with 23 emphasis areas), and two doctoral degrees in four fields are offered.

For additional information about Arkansas State University’s Graduate School, visit their website, http://graduateschool.astate.edu/
WE HAD OUR HIGHEST ENROLLMENT EVER FOR THE SPRING 2006 SEMESTER. OF THE 1,295 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS, 109 ARE PARTICIPATING IN DOCTORAL STUDIES.
Building on a successful first-year, the Office of University Development at Arkansas State University expanded last year’s red beans and rice lunch into “Red Beans and Race,” a weekend of activities in March toward support of the ASU Foundation.

The two-day celebration started on Friday, March 10, with the familiar lunch at the ASU pavilion, featuring red beans, smoked sausage and rice, cornbread and peach cobbler, served up by University Advancement staff members.

Bright and early on Saturday, March 11, more than 250 eager participants gathered at the Student Union for a 5K race/walk that wound its way through the ASU campus. The run/walk was the second of 11 events in the 2006 Northeast Arkansas Running/Walking series. Following the race/walk, participants gathered in the Student Union for a breakfast of pancakes and sausage.

Red, ASU’s spirit character, was on hand Friday to greet hungry guests and cheer on runners and walkers on Saturday. Door prizes were awarded throughout the two-day event.

“We are very pleased with the level of participation in this year’s Red Beans and Race weekend,” said Steve Watkins, ASU director of University Development. “The tremendous amount of community support made it a fun weekend for all.”
Dr. Kenneth L. Swan created the Mary L. Swan Memorial Scholarship following his wife's death. Mrs. Swan, a Randolph County native, taught sixth-grade students in Pocahontas for eight years. The couple moved to Missouri, where she taught fourth grade for one year and then became the remedial reading teacher for 20 years in the St. Charles School District. The Swans planned together to set up a scholarship to help students pursue an elementary education degree.

“She enjoyed working with students so much,” Dr. Swan said. “She knew all students could be successful if motivated to do their very best.”

The Swans were both students at Arkansas State. She received her Bachelor of Science in Education degree in 1961. She later obtained her remedial reading certificate following coursework at the University of Arkansas and ASU. Dr. Swan earned a bachelor’s and two master’s degrees at A-State, and earned his doctorate at St. Louis University.

Although the Swans had no children of their own, they helped many students in need, taking them into their home for periods of time. Dr. Swan said his wife was a quiet person who was greatly admired by her students.

Dr. Swan has carefully planned for the future of the scholarship, building it into an endowment that will benefit students throughout the life of the university. “From his establishment of this memorial to his wife until the present, Dr. Swan has conveyed his desire to foremost honor his wife and her teaching career by providing financial assistance to deserving students who are pursuing a similar path,” said Peggy Britt, ASU’s coordinator for privately funded scholarships. “His thoughtful attention and consideration extends to all involved in the administration of this memorial.”

“I’ve had the privilege of working with many generous people, and Dr. Swan is one of those.”

Information about scholarships that memorialize or honor others is available by contacting University Development at (870) 972-3940 or toll-free (888) 225-8343.

Jacklyn McCord received the Swan scholarship while she was a student at ASU.

“This scholarship was such a help to me; I was overjoyed when I received this honor,” McCord said. “Like most others, I was a college student who had to rely on student loans to cover my tuition and fees. It was a very nice feeling to know that I was not only working for myself, but in the name of Mary Swan.”

Since her graduation in 2005, McCord has served as distance learning facilitator at Batesville High School. She said becoming a teacher has been rewarding.

“It has been a great experience for me to take the training I received from ASU and influence students on their own educational experience.”
She enjoyed working with students so much. She knew all students could be successful if motivated to do their very best.
THERE’S AN ENORMOUS SENSE OF SATISFACTION EVERY TIME I CAN GET SOMEBODY TO SHARE ANY OF MY PASSIONS AND INTERESTS, OR HELP THEM DEVELOP THEIR OWN PASSIONS AND INTERESTS.
Dr. Michael B. Dougan, who was recently named emeritus professor of history at Arkansas State University, has received the Lifetime Achievement Award given by the board of trustees of the Arkansas Historical Association (AHA).

The award recognized Dougan’s “lifelong dedication to the study, teaching and preservation of Arkansas history,” and his many accomplishments during his teaching career at ASU.

He began his 36-year teaching career at ASU during the second summer term in July 1970. He said he earned an interview for a teaching position with then Vice President for Instruction N.D. Hazelbaker, after he assured Hazelbaker in a pre-interview that he did not wear a beard or moustache.

Dougan’s teaching of history was a natural progression; he said he came from a historical family. His father served as a World War I pilot in the Royal Air Force and was later a test pilot for Lockheed in California, where Michael Dougan was born.

Raised in Newton County, Mo., Dougan said “all his memories are there.” He grew up on the history of the 19th century, reading Stevenson, Balzac and Gibbon’s Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. He said he developed an interest in the Civil War, and by the time he was 17, had compiled his own collection of between 50 and 100 books.

Because of the institution’s strong debate program, he matriculated to Southwest Missouri State College, now Missouri State University, where he earned his undergraduate degree in history.

Earning a fellowship to Emory University, Dougan studied under the prominent Civil War historian Bell Irvin Wiley, author of The Life of Johnny Reb, and The Life of Billy Yank. Because Missouri Civil War history was already well-documented, Dougan focused his graduate work on Arkansas Civil War history. (A comprehensive work had not been completed since 1926.) It was at Emory Dougan earned his master’s and doctoral degrees.

Dougan began his career at ASU by teaching freshman and sophomore introductory courses, but he is remembered by many students for his class, “Constitutional History of the United States.” He said teaching the course encompasses two of his areas of interest.

“Public speaking is an exact and demanding proposition,” he said. “Lecture is the center of my teaching strategy. I’ve enjoyed teaching, no matter what kind of group. I believe had I not gone into teaching, I may have explored the law—it’s another area of interest for me.”

“There’s an enormous sense of satisfaction every time I can get somebody to share any of my passions and interests, or help them develop their own passions and interests.”

In addition to his teaching skills, Dougan was recognized by the AHA for his exemplary record as a researcher and writer of Arkansas history.

“Michael B. Dougan has contributed immensely to Arkansas history, including writing an authoritative history of the state (Arkansas Odyssey), publishing groundbreaking articles on Arkansas legal history, and delving deeply into the social and cultural history of our state,” said Tom Dillard, University of Arkansas archivist and former president of AHA.

Dougan said he’s enjoyed the number of people he’s met by being involved in the documenting of Arkansas’ history, including Judge Henry Woods, U.S. Representative Brooks Hays, attorney Bill Penix, editorial cartoonist George Fisher, and Arkansas governors Sid McMath, Orval Faubus, Dale Bumpers, David Pryor and Bill Clinton.

In his “retirement,” Dougan will continue his public speaking, and continue to work on Arkansas history projects. He plans to update Arkansas Odyssey, is working on press histories of Greene, White and other Arkansas counties, and is completing a biography of William Minor “Cush” Quesenbury, noted Arkansas editor, soldier, artist and poet.
On April 21, more than 100 people gathered in the main foyer of the Dean B. Ellis Library on the Arkansas State University campus for the dedication of the Wall of Honor for the ASU Foundation’s Legacy Society.

The Legacy Society was formed in 1999 as a recognition club for persons who include the university in their estate plans; endow scholarships, professorships or chairs of excellence; make gifts through charitable trusts; and create other devised gifts to any campus in the ASU system.

Foundation Board Chairperson Marilyn Hummelstein told the gathering that society members have much in common with ASU’s brand, “Powering Minds.”

“Everyone has the power to make a difference,” Hummelstein said. “Members of the Legacy Society are exercising their power. They share a passion for higher education and the benefits that passion bestows on each and every one of us.”

“These generous individuals use planned giving methods to ensure the university’s strength and progress,” said Deborah Turner, ASU director of planned giving. “This wall honors persons from ASU’s earliest days to the present. They are individuals who, by providing lasting gifts to the university, will continue to make a difference in the lives of ASU students.”

“Most families have special items that are passed from generation to generation—heirlooms to be preserved and passed on to others,” she noted. “Supporting quality higher education can also be an heirloom for future generations.”

Turner said the wall represents donors to each of Arkansas State University’s campuses. She said corporate sponsors who establish endowment support or provide capital funding to ASU are also eligible for Legacy Society membership as Legacy Partners.

Hummelstein pointed out the Wall of Honor incorporates a design from a familiar A-State landmark.

“The symbol of the Legacy Society, reflected here on the wall, is the arch, which reminds us of ASU’s history and the early days when the university began as First District Agricultural and Mechanical School.”

The wall’s inscription notes members’ gifts “ensure the vitality of student and faculty support, enrichment of academic programs, and improvement of campus facilities.”

Persons wanting more information about including Arkansas State University in their estate plans may call University Development at (870) 972-3940 or toll-free (888) 225-8343, or email her at development@astate.edu for more information.
**UPDATE**

**Farewell To Steve Watkins**

Steve Watkins, ASU director of University Development, announced his resignation from Arkansas State University effective July 31, 2006.

A third-generation ASU alumnus, Watkins came to ASU as associate director of University Development in November 1998. He was promoted to director in February 2000. Watkins will now serve as co-publisher of the monthly Jonesboro Occasions magazine with his wife Audrey Lott Watkins, as well as publisher and editor of Faith and Purpose, a quarterly publication.

"It's never easy to leave a job that has given you so much happiness and satisfaction," Watkins said. "It was never 'work' at ASU because it was always so much fun and so rewarding. Audrey and I are looking forward to taking on new roles to support the efforts of the ASU Foundation as volunteers and supporters at every opportunity."

The Watkins' are 1988 graduates of ASU's journalism program. Additionally, Steve earned his Master of Mass Communication degree in 2004. Both Jonesboro Occasions and Faith and Purpose are publications of Herald Haven Media LLC.

**AROUND ASU:**

**Hispanic Community Services, Inc.,** of Jonesboro recently donated $2,500 to Arkansas State University to help provide scholarships for deserving Hispanic students in Jonesboro and the surrounding region. Making the gift were (from left) Henry Torres, HCS board president, Sister Elaine, HCS promotions director, and Gina Gomez, HCS executive director, who presented the check to ASU representatives Steve Owens, (second from right) vice president for University Advancement, and Dr. Glen Jones, assistant to the president for diversity initiatives. The gift is a direct result of the 2005 Hispanic Celebration in May Arts and Music Festival, an annual event designed to promote and celebrate the broader Hispanic culture while fostering cross-cultural relationships throughout the region.
Diligent supporters of a new campus of Arkansas State University for Cleburne County were all smiles on April 7 during a groundbreaking ceremony at the foot of Sugarloaf Mountain in Heber Springs.

More than 200 county residents, ASU personnel, county and state officials attended the ceremony, signaling the start of construction on the new campus.

During a special election in 2000, Cleburne County voters approved a 1/2 cent sales tax dedicated solely for the support of ASU-Heber Springs.

“Creating ASU-Heber Springs has been a group effort involving many people,” said Dr. Eugene McKay, ASU-Beebe chancellor. “We are glad to have been a part of this effort and look forward to helping develop high-quality educational and cultural experiences for the citizens of Cleburne County.”

Volunteers, state legislators and agencies, civic groups and county officials gave thousands of hours of their time to work to bring a branch campus to Heber Springs. In the fall of 1998, the first semester of classes began at night with 80 students. More than 600 students were enrolled during the Spring 2006 semester, and more than half of those students were full-time.

The 230 acres around and including Sugarloaf Mountain became the property of ASU-Heber Springs in March 2002. The purchase was made possible by a grant from the Herget Family Foundation, the Arkansas General Assembly, which matched the Herget gift, and monies derived from the sales tax funds.

Dr. Dianne Tiner, vice chancellor for ASU-Heber Springs, said the new campus will consist of two buildings—an Academic Building and the Administration and Student Services Building. The 25,000 square foot John T. Latimer Skill Training Center, where classes are now held, will continue to be used for ASU-Heber Springs’ technical and adult education programs.

“We already have welding and CADD (computer aided detector design), and we hope to add additional technical programs after the liberal arts classes go to the new campus,” Tiner said.

ASU-Heber Springs currently offers associate of arts, associate of arts in teaching and associate of science in health science degrees for students planning to transfer to a four-year institution to complete coursework toward a bachelor’s degree.

“The new campus will increase educational opportunities, which in turn will enhance the local economy,” Tiner noted.

The new Heber Springs campus was designed by the Wilcox Group of Little Rock, Ark., and will be built by Baldwin and Shell contractors, also of Little Rock. Completion of the project is expected in July 2007.
Fourth Ph.D. Program Approved

The Higher Learning Commission has approved Arkansas State University’s proposal for a new Ph.D. program in molecular biosciences, the university’s fourth offering of a doctoral degree.

Dr. Tom Wheeler, program director, said core courses have been developed and approved by the Graduate Council, and up to ten students will be enrolled in the program during the fall 2006 semester, with twice as many students being admitted the following fall.

Wheeler said the addition of the doctoral degree program will enable ASU to expand its role in the region as an engine for economic development.

“There are any number of possibilities for economic development through independent licensing, patent development, new inventions and technological spin-off companies,” he said.

The new Ph.D. program is “cross-disciplinary,” meaning participants will be involved in a variety of disciplines including agriculture, medicine, environmental sciences, food sciences and renewable energy. Wheeler said students completing the doctoral degree will be in demand in the biological or pharmaceutical industry, may choose to teach, may work in agricultural and food service production, or become researchers.

The molecular biosciences program will focus primarily on plant biotechnology systems, including graduate training emphasis on plant-made pharmaceuticals (pharmaceutical compounds such as vaccines produced cost-effectively in crop plants), nutriceuticals (health-promoting foods and food components), and diagnostic tools for food science.

“Studying the effects of nicotine on the central nervous system through neurophysiology is one example of the program,” Wheeler said. “Genetic engineering of plants to produce pharmaceuticals for better health is another. It’s a broad degree.”

Students will perform research in conjunction with the Arkansas Biosciences Institute. The ABI was created in 2000 as a major research component of the Tobacco Settlement Proceeds Act.

More information concerning the degree in molecular biosciences can be found at http://mbs.astate.edu

Distinguished Speaker General Colin Powell
