Features

Foundation president’s message ........................................... 1
Development notes ................................................................. 1
Dr. Calvin Smith records history .............................................. 3
Horizon Institute update ........................................................ 4
Saunders scholarship awarded .............................................. 5
Executive Director of ABI named ........................................... 5
Found treasure for ASU Archives .......................................... 5
ASU has stellar debate team ................................................... 8
High voltage lineman program at Newport ............................ 9
Center for Social Research fills void ....................................... 10
Student Health Center grand opening ................................... 11
Foundation endowment grows .............................................. 12
Glickman speaks at Agri-Business Conference ...................... 13

About the cover...

Dr. Calvin Smith is serving as Presidential Distinguished Professor in Heritage Studies. He has written a new book that is detailed in the story beginning on page 3. (Photo by ASU student Landon Kramer)
There’s an unmistakable buzz in the community about what’s going on at Arkansas State University.

It’s just expected these days that someone will inquire about the status of one campus project or another whether I’m visiting with friends at a ballgame, seeing them at church or running into one of them at the grocery store.

It’s fun to respond to those inquiries and paint a picture for them about how things are beginning to take shape and how it all comes together in such a dynamic way. People’s eyes light up when they hear about these big dreams that come closer to being within our reach every day.

One of my favorite “pictures” to paint for my friends is the ongoing development of a new pedestrian mall through the heart of our campus along the former Caraway Road.

There is definite progress for a new railroad overpass that will create a new high-volume entrance at the campus’s west side.

Eliminating the conflict between thousands of vehicles and some 60 trains per day that currently exists on Caraway Road permits the removal of railroad track crossing guard arms and flashing lights, and thus sets the stage for a spectacular new scenic view of the campus from the south.

Some beautiful developing green space along both sides of Caraway and between the existing tracks helps highlight the new Arkansas Bio-Sciences Institute that makes its own bold, new statement about the future at ASU.

At that point, the new pedestrian mall will open up as a primary avenue for students, faculty and staff to get from one end of the campus to the other in a safe and convenient manner.

It will be a picturesque sight anchored by ABI on one end, and adorned along the way with some of the campus’s primary academic learning centers, set to include a new College of Business that will be a sight to behold in itself on the east side of Caraway and just north of ABI.

The pedestrian mall will lead up to its north anchor: the new liberal arts teaching facility at the top of the hill east of Wilson Hall and southeast of the spectacular new student union. It will be a real beauty. We can hardly wait to get started on it.

The residential aspect of student life on campus is also taking a new shape.

Mobile home life on the ASU campus is a thing of the past and many former residents have relocated to the beautiful new Indian Village. In less than a year, occupancy there is already at capacity, and as a result, that project is being expanded in its second phase with an additional 92 units.

A large tract of some 30 undeveloped acres in close proximity to the heart of the campus has now been acquired much for the purpose of student housing that will replace outmoded facilities such as Twin Towers and Delta Hall. These unique living facilities will be situated in a beautiful environment to become the home for some 840 students.

Our alumni center, scheduled to have its own attractive location on the south side of the lake near the Convocation Center, is closer than ever. A lead gift provided by Darrell and Charlotte Cooper will make Cooper Center a reality. There couldn’t be more exciting news for ASU alumni.

It’s an exciting time of growth and development.

And it’s a big picture that all of us at Arkansas State love to paint.

Thank you for all the support you direct to ASU. 

(Steve Watkins is director of development at Arkansas State University and serves as executive editor of “The Foundation News.”)

Dear Alumni and Friends:

I am happy to reaffirm something you probably already know—Arkansas State University is home to many of the finest up-and-coming students anywhere.

Several of these outstanding students are a part of the Arkansas State University Singers, who performed recently at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Some of you chose to make the trip with these exceptional young musicians.

While listening to the group’s performance, I thought about how fortunate we are to have such bright young talents here at ASU, not only in the group that sang, but in the students who excel in all fields of study.

It is a pleasure for us to work on behalf of the student body, and on your behalf as well. Please know how much your gifts, your time and your talent are appreciated.

Very Sincerely,

Steve Owens
Vice President, University Advancement
President/CEO, ASU Foundation
Recording History
Dr. Calvin Smith, chronicles the work of Arkansas’ black school administrators

(Disclaimer: The following story recognizes the accomplishment of Dr. Calvin Smith for the recent publication of his book, “Educating the Masses: The Unfolding History of Black School Administrators in Arkansas 1900-2000.” In the story, Smith chronicles both his work on the book and his more than 33 years at Arkansas State.)

“A real leader faces the music, even when he doesn’t like the tune.”
-Anonymous

For the better part of the 20th century, black school administrators in Arkansas faced many unpopular “tunes.” Their tireless work to improve education and educational facilities for their students has been chronicled in a recently released book, Educating the Masses: The Unfolding History of Black School Administrators in Arkansas 1900-2000, by Arkansas State University Professor Dr. Calvin Smith.

Smith said the idea for the book came from his work with the Retired Educators of Little Rock and Other Public Schools, who were concerned that the contribution black principals made in struggling to keep African American schools open would be forgotten.

“The group had submitted a survey to principals from past years to start gathering information,” Smith said. “They contacted me to help them put the information in a historical format. That led to additional research on my part for preceding generations. I knew about this history in a general sense, but it came alive to me during my research.”

Smith said facilities for black students were rarely adequate, and black schools were under-funded. Many times principals performed multiple functions at their respective schools—they did serve as principals, but also acted as coaches, janitors and roofers to provide an acceptable place where kids could learn—if that place was available.

He noted that in some Arkansas locations, school was held in facilities used by white students when those students were on a break. In rural areas, conditions were especially severe. In the Prescott school district, for example, Smith said for several years the basketball team played games on the road because there were no gymnasium facilities at the school.

Many black schools were only able to offer an education up to the sixth or eighth grade because of a lack of facilities.

“There were no black high schools except in Little Rock, Hot Springs, Fort Smith, Pine Bluff and Jonesboro,” he explained. “If a person of color wanted to go to high school, they had to stay with relatives or be taken in as a boarder in a town where there was a black high school.”

Often times, blacks attended school on a different schedule than whites. Smith said he attended school on a “split term” up until the 10th grade. Blacks completed classes from around Thanksgiving to May, and then in the hot months of June and July. From August to Thanksgiving, he said he was in the field and can remember seeing school buses go by taking white children to school while he was picking the year’s cotton crop.

Throughout the hardships, Smith said, black administrators acted as leaders. They tirelessly lobbied school boards for money to improve facilities, curriculum and salaries, and accomplished much under adverse circumstances while they continued to teach students a valuable lesson.

“You are as good as anybody. You may not have a lot of material things, but you are as good and you must work hard to prove that fact,” Smith said. “Education was a way to move up. They taught us to respect ourselves and respect our community. I’ve gained all kinds of respect for these folks who put their careers on the line for better schools.”

“The tenacity of these old black school administrators was a defining thing for me, as was the response of their students who continue to thank them for their sacrifices.”

Smith said the modern day administrator continues to play an integral part in the education of his students, by continuing this legacy of uplifting and serving as role models for students of color. He said there are different challenges.

“It’s a new day,” he explained. “There more....
The Horizon Institute of Technology (HIT) recently celebrated its first anniversary at Arkansas State University. Founded through a contribution by ASU alumna Dr. Kathy Brittain White in the fall of 2002, HIT has the specific purpose of developing technology-based initiatives in Arkansas through support of education, information technology employment and economic expansion.

The following is a summary of the year's events at HIT:

- The institute hosted the annual Executive Speaker Series in March 2003. This event is celebrated for bringing nationally known and respected information technology leaders to Jonesboro to address business leaders from across Arkansas. Dr. Jack Rockart, author and leading expert in information technology, came to Jonesboro to talk about the history of and future trends for information technology in various aspects of business and industry. Dr. Rockart is currently serving as director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sloan School of Management's Center for Information System Research.

- The speaker series continued in March 2004 as HIT welcomed Jonesboro to talk about the history of and future trends for information technology in various aspects of business and industry. Dr. Rockart is currently serving as director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sloan School of Management's Center for Information System Research.

Recording History ...

is a different type of student. The educator competes with other things. Teachers and administrators have lost some authority, it's been weakened, and that has impacted negatively on the learning environment. Teachers can only work with what the parents send them—prepared or not.”

Smith's own teaching career at Arkansas State began in 1970, when he was hired as the first black instructor in a regular classroom. (Lt. Col. Fredrick Turner was an instructor in Military Science.) Smith said when then-Vice President for Instruction Clark Elkins hired him, Elkins told Smith to go into the classroom and be the best teacher he could be.

"That was not fun," he said. "I was told by some professors that I didn't belong here. It was that way for two years. But I did get to know virtually every black student on campus. I was a teacher, yes, but I was also a pseudo-counselor. The word got around campus that 'hey, you can talk to this guy.' So I was a sounding board for the students, and I'm still talking to them to this day."

While enrollment has grown over the years, Smith said a constant has been the number of black faculty, who have built a support structure among themselves. As ASU becomes the university for the Delta, he believes the faculty should reflect the makeup of the Delta.

He said there has been a gradual change in attitude in his years at ASU. At first, only black students enrolled in his classes; after a few semesters, he said, white students started to enroll in his classes as well.

"If I go into a classroom and do a really good job of teaching the material, and if the student does his part in the class, there will be success."

Another major change Smith has noted in his time at ASU is in the academic requirement for faculty members. He said over the years professors were required to be good teachers; ASU was a teachers' college. But as time has progressed, professors have been involved in academic development through publishing works in journals and conducting research, resulting in those professors becoming academic scholars.

Smith taught until 2002 and retired as emeritus professor of history. But last year, Dr. Les Wyatt asked him to come back as the first Presidential Distinguished Professor in Heritage Studies. He finds the work rewarding.

"In teaching doctoral studies, one expects more from the student. I enjoy the smaller class size, because we can discuss things in depth. For example, this semester I'm teaching a course in regional cultures. We can examine the lifestyles of a culture, but we can also examine what gives that culture a common identity. We look at experiences through the years to form a common bond of beliefs and then look at the subcultures from that. It's interesting."

Smith said he is happy with the reception his new book has received throughout the state, and he has been a little surprised by the positive sales, because of its academic nature.

"This is a story that needed to be told. It turned into a labor of love to me. I have more respect now for what my predecessors, many of whom are still alive, have gone through."

The Foundation News is published twice yearly by the division of University Advancement at Arkansas State University. We welcome your ideas about the ways in which we might better serve you with information about Development project highlights, or about information related to opportunities for charitable giving to the ASU Foundation.
A scholarship named in memory of a Jonesboro doctor has been awarded at Arkansas State University.

The Dr. Earnest Lee Saunders Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to Kyle Trauth of Jonesboro, a senior chemistry and physics major.

The scholarship is awarded to an outstanding upper-level students majoring in chemistry. A Department of Chemistry faculty committee makes the selection.

Trauth, a graduate of Jonesboro High School, is a Trustees’ Scholar at Arkansas State. He has served as president of the Student Affiliate of the American Chemical Society and treasurer of the Theta Chi chapter of Sigma Chi fraternity. After graduation he plans to attend medical school.

The Dr. Earnest Lee Saunders Memorial Scholarship was established in 1993. Dr. Saunders, a Jonesboro radiologist, held degrees from Arkansas State University and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

He was a member of the Craighead-Poinsett Medical Society, and he was active in Boy Scouting, the Jonesboro YMCA and the American Songwriters Club.

Friends and family established the scholarship to honor his memory and to reward outstanding chemistry students at ASU.

OF NOTE

Saunders’s Scholarship

Executive director of Arkansas Biosciences Institute named

Dr. Susan Allen, vice chancellor for research and academic affairs, has announced Dr. Carole L. Cramer of Blacksburg, Va., as the first executive director of the Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI) at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

Cramer, a professor and research scientist at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, holds a Ph.D. in biological science from the University of California at Irvine with undergraduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

“We’ve been looking for over a year for a director of the ABI to help us build our effort,” said Allen. “We’re very excited that Dr. Cramer has agreed to join us. We couldn’t be more pleased to have her here at ASU.

“Dr. Cramer is a very well-known plant molecular biologist,” Dr. Allen said. “Her work was on the Institute for Scientific Information’s most-cited list in 2002. She was appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman to the USDA’s Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture. Well-known in the biotechnology field, she has several patents, has founded two companies, and is well published.”

An internationally recognized leader in the area of “plant-made pharmaceuticals,” her current research involves the use of tobacco plants to produce vaccines for dysentery and for the biodefense area.

The focus of ABI and its scientists will be to use collaborative research efforts through agricultural and medical research to improve the health of Arkansans. (The ABI was created as a major research component of the Tobacco Settlement Proceeds Act of 2000.)

The ABI building on the ASU campus is scheduled to open by late summer or early fall, well ahead of schedule, according to Cramer. Plans for the ABI include ultimately hiring 14 faculty members.
Found Treasure
A gift of early beginnings keeps ASU’s history alive in the Department of Archives

If you’ve ever wanted to catch a glimpse of what the early days of Arkansas State University may have been like, you may soon have a chance to find out.

Union Planters Bank of Northeast Arkansas, who executed the estate of Victor H. “Buddy” Kays, has presented to ASU more than 40 cubic feet of documents that include the personal papers of Mr. Kays’ father, V.C. Kays, the first president of what would become Arkansas State University.

“When Buddy Kays died in 2001, Union Planters allowed us to have this collection of papers,” said Dr. Brady Banta, archivist at the Dean B. Ellis Library. “It was a mixed bag of materials, but a good portion appears to be V.C. Kays’ presidential correspondence. This documents, in a fashion, some of the earliest history of this institution.”

Banta said that when V.C. Kays retired, he took papers and correspondence with him, something not uncommon in the first half of the 20th century. Thus far, Banta has found a variety of information, including the hiring of personnel for the new school and the construction of Wilson Hall.

But what may be the historical treasure of the entire lot is Mr. Kays’ correspondence with Hattie Caraway of
Arkansas, the first woman elected to the United States Senate.

“Mr. Kays had a long-standing personal relationship with senators Thaddeus and Hattie Caraway,” Banta explained. “This is an exciting find, because little of Hattie Caraway’s materials has survived. There are several pieces of correspondence that contain her original signature.”

Banta said the collection also includes documents that track the development of the campus through the 1940s and 1950s. V.C. Kays kept correspondence and other papers that trace the beginnings of the Arkansas State College Foundation and its construction of housing for the campus community.

Additionally, there are boxes of correspondence between Buddy and his parents, which Banta believes is bound to have material about the university in it, along with photocopies of diaries Buddy Kays kept during his own tenure with the ASC Foundation.

“It was known Buddy Kays had these materials,” Banta said. “He was very protective of the material and would photocopy pieces from time to time for people. Because of the sheer volume of the collection, it will be time consuming but very interesting to go through.”

“No student of Arkansas State University’s history has had access to this kind of information before.”

- Dr. Brady Banta
Ellis Library Archivist

Banta said work on archiving the Kays materials will begin in the next academic year in order that they may be ready for use by Arkansas State’s centennial in 2009.

The Kays collection is one of several important collections that have been donated to Arkansas State over the years, Banta said.

During the last four years, Banta said he has been archiving the congressional papers of former First District Congressman E.C. “Took” Gathings. He noted that when finished, this collection will give an interesting view of the history of migrant workers in eastern Arkansas, as well as information on integration and civil rights in the mid-20th century.

Other collections donated to ASU include the congressional papers of former First District Representatives Bill Alexander and Blanche Lincoln; the gubernatorial papers of Jonesboro native Francis Cherry, the senatorial papers of ASU alumnus Mike Beebe and the legislative papers of General Assembly member and ASU alumnus Shane Broadway.

Banta said ASU’s archives focus on eastern Arkansas, with an emphasis on politics, issues in agriculture and drainage, and people who have ties to the university.

An archive of Poinsett County’s Judd Hill plantation should be competed by early summer, Banta noted. The archive includes records and an oral history of the plantation.

Banta said material from the Judd Hill archives will be a good source of history for area schools to use in teaching Arkansas history.

“Little physical evidence remains of the way those folks lived,” he said. “The archive documents a way of life that has disappeared.”

Banta said collections like Judd Hill and the Kays materials have been a welcomed addition to the university’s archives.

“Gifts of materials, along with tips and luck in stumbling onto things are helping us to build a documentary heritage of eastern Arkansas. It is very rewarding.”

V.C. Kays
Friendly Persuasion
ASU’s Debate Team talks their way to the top of the Forensics world

It’s a subject that can’t be argued—Arkansas State University has one of the best debate teams in the United States.

Ranking fourth in the nation, above teams from Rice, the University of California at Berkley and the University of Texas, the ASU debate team recently won the national Pi Kappa Delta Forensics competition, one of the two leading contests in the United States.

Chris Harper, ASU Debate Team coach, said it takes a special kind of student to compete in forensics, and Arkansas State has those kinds of students.

“Students must be extremely hard-working,” he said. “There is a tremendous amount of time devoted to research in this competition. Plus our students must have excellent communication skills and have the ability to perform under pressure. Of the 1,200 two-person debate teams in the nation, ASU has two of the top 12.”

Harper said forensics does not recognize conferences like sports competition does. ASU regularly competes against larger universities such as Harvard and the University of Florida.

The 10 members and two coaches of ASU’s debate team travel 12 to 14 weekends each academic year. In March, ASU competed in the International Forensics Tournament in Madrid, Spain. Next year, the team will vie for world title honors against teams from the United Kingdom and France.

Harper said each competition consists of six rounds with a different topic for each round. Teams have 15 minutes to prepare for each round, and may consult with their coach and other team members during that time.

“Subjects range from sanctions and tax policy to current domestic and foreign events,” he said. “The topic
In recent statewide competition, ASU junior Ian Van Hoose won first place and the ASU Debate Team won six of the eight competitions at the tournament.

Harper said while most of the students are speech communication majors, some students are majoring in political science or radio/television, and some have double majors.

He credits a part of the team's success to the support it receives from the ASU community.

"Thanks to programs like the President's Partners, we've been able to compete in these national competitions. We've had a tremendous amount of support throughout the university."

Harper said the success of the debate team has garnered a lot of interest from students across the nation, and he now has students from California, Utah, Texas and Idaho enrolled in the speech communication program.

"Our students have the best critical reasoning and analytical skills," he said. "They have a great ability to communicate and a certain degree of self confidence. They relish a challenge."

High Wire Act

ASU-Newport is implementing a new program that's way up there

Don't be surprised if you soon hear strains from the song "Wichita Lineman," as you drive past the Newport campus of Arkansas State University. A new program to educate high voltage linemen is set to begin in the fall 2004 semester.

The program began out of a concern for the lack of up-and-coming qualified linemen in the state, according to Dr. Larry Williams, ASU-Newport chancellor.

"We were contacted a couple of years ago about the possibility of establishing a training program for high voltage linemen," Williams said. "The Arkansas Electric Cooperatives have an aging worker population, with 30 to 50 percent of their workforce being eligible for retirement within the next 10 years. There is a need for such a training program in Arkansas; the closest programs are in central Missouri and eastern Tennessee."

Williams said each of the 17 individual electric cooperatives is supporting the new program. The Arkansas Electric Cooperatives have made a five-year commitment to the program, and will provide poles, lift trucks and other materials to equip an outdoor lab on the Newport campus.

Additionally, each cooperative is sponsoring a full scholarship to the program. Studies will include classroom and indoor laboratory work, and an internship leading to a one-year certification. Although a student will wish to continue coursework, an additional general studies component will be available toward an associate in applied science degree.

The lineman program is not the first partnership training program in which ASU-Newport has been involved.

Barlow World of Johannesburg, South Africa, sponsors a diesel technician program at Newport. Williams said there are currently 10 students enrolled in the program that includes academic instruction as well as three five-week internships.

Since 1987, ASU-Newport has conducted a commercial driver training course on the campus. The program started as a partnership with JB Hunt Trucking, but has grown to include student sponsorship by trucking companies PAM of Tontitown, USA Truck and Star Transportation.

Williams said the campus' fleet consists of 27 tractors and trailers. Last year, 900 students successfully completed the course.

"These training programs provide a large number of students an educational and career opportunity that might not be available without these partnerships," Williams said. "Our ability to successfully partner with these groups, I believe, speaks highly of the ASU System."

Williams said curriculum for the high voltage lineman program is being submitted to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education for approval this spring. Each cooperative will recruit the best candidate in its area to receive a scholarship to the program.

For additional information, interested persons should contact their local electric cooperative, Williams said. [¶]
Tell Us How You Really Feel
The Center for Social Research gets an earful - gladly

Providing valuable information to the region while supporting faculty and graduate student research, Arkansas State University's Center for Social Research is supplying a service that until now was not available in northeast Arkansas.

"There is no phone interview or research center in the region," said Dr. Andrew Knight, ASU assistant professor of criminology, sociology and geography. "We are providing a service to northeast Arkansas that was previously only available from Memphis or Little Rock, and we are engaging students in the research process."

The Center for Social Research was instituted in 2001, Dr. Knight said, with the goals of providing research support, providing research services and providing expertise in analysis of a variety of data, mainly to non-profit and public sector organizations.

During the last three years, thanks to grants and private gifts, the center has grown, and added a 15-unit call center laboratory in its headquarters in the International Student Center on campus.

"Each individual station has a phone, a headset and a computer to conduct telephone research," Knight said. "The Masters of Public Administration program at ASU provided funds for software for the center, and we've received a $35,000 grant from the Arkansas Biosciences Institute to procure an auto-dialer."

The center recently completed a study measuring quality of life in the city of Jonesboro. Graduate and undergraduate students in Knight's Sociology of Applied Research class, and Dr. William McLean's master of public administration program conducted the research. Dr. McLean is an ASU instructor in political science.

Additionally, the center conducted a study of Jonesboro residents on tobacco use and regulations through a...
grant from the Tobacco-Free coalition. Knight said students receive quite a few benefits from the studies.

“Involving students in these projects gets them involved in the research,” he noted. “This is research they might be able to use in their own projects they complete for their classes. But the students also gain an applicable skill in the call centers, which helps them relate better to the research they are conducting.”

Knight said the Center for Social Research is capable of conducting research in fields as varied as health care analysis, land use planning and labor market analysis.

He said the center began conducting a statewide survey in March involving opinions of homeland security, educational reform and environmental health risks. The center also began a survey at the end of March recording perceptions of biotechnology.

Knight said the center does not conduct phone surveys exclusively. Professors and graduate students with the center provide program evaluation and needs assessments, qualitative research and analysis, and statistical analysis as well.

Persons interested in learning more about research conducted by the Center for Social Research may contact Knight at P.O. Box 2410, State University AR 72467.

Ceremonies were held Jan. 27, 2004, to celebrate the grand opening of the new Student Health Center on the Arkansas State University campus.

The center, 3,900 square feet in size, will be especially convenient to the university’s commuter student population. Located south of Indian Stadium, the facility is co-located with a First Care emergency medical clinic and Outpatient Sports Therapy and Physical Therapy clinic through a partnership with St. Bernards Healthcare.

The Student Health Center provides treatment of minor illnesses, immunizations and health screenings to ASU students.

New Student Health Center Opens

Robert Eckert, chairman and chief executive officer of Mattel, Inc., to Arkansas State. Eckert joined Mattel in May 2000 from Kraft Foods, Inc., the largest U.S.-based packaged food company in the world. A 23-year veteran of Kraft, he most recently served as its president and chief executive officer, a position he had held since October 1997.

• In 2003, grant awards funded The Children of the Delta: A Program for Exposure to Technology, Children’s Business Technology Camp, and Girls of Promise at the Horizon Institute of Technology. Faculty development and community initiative grants were awarded in March 2003 that focused on expanding technology expertise in data warehousing and database mining and implementing web-based technologies.

• Concerned with the number of management information systems and computer information systems graduates that remain unemployed or underemployed, White guided the organization to be a leading supporter of Arkansas Rural Sourcing, Inc. ARS is a statewide initiative dedicated to stimulating economic expansion through the creation of high technology employment opportunities for information technology specialists who wish to remain in the area and have meaningful employment.

To learn more about the Horizon Institute of Technology visit the website at www.horizoninstitute.org or, contact Mark Young, director, at myoung@astate.edu, Marti Rowan, project coordinator, at mrowan@astate.edu, or call 870-910-8184.
Improved financial market conditions and a sound investment strategy have resulted in positive gains in endowments for the Arkansas State University Foundation, Inc., in the 2004 fiscal year.

As of December 31, 2003, the endowment pool had risen to $27.9 million, up from the July 1, 2003, total of $23.7 million. An additional $3.4 million in trust funds are held by other entities for the benefit of Arkansas State University.

Much of the success in growing the endowment pool is a result of asset allocation. The University Committee on Joint Investments, a group comprised of representatives from the ASU Foundation, ASU, the ASU Alumni Association and the ASU Indian Club, in 2003 elected to change the asset mix of the endowment pool, with increased exposure to equities, and added asset classes to improve performance through diversification.

“During the bear market, we opted for a conservative asset mix heavily weighted in bonds and fixed income vehicles,” said Philip Jackson, ASU Foundation treasurer. “Our new allocation is more aggressive and long-term in focus. It provides for long-term health of the institution, allowing for increased program enhancement, faculty support and student scholarships.”

At present, Jackson said, the biggest portion of the endowment is grounded in academic and program support—45.1 percent. Another 42.5 percent is grounded in scholarship support, 7.7 percent is in faculty support, and 4.7 percent is in athletics.

ASU Foundation President/Chief Executive Officer Steve Owens said the ASU Foundation’s board of directors adopted an approach to asset allocation that is showing a direct effect in the increased value of the endowment pool.

“The Foundation board’s philosophy toward asset allocation is two-fold,” Owens said. “Because the endowment pool has a perpetual time horizon, the board agrees to an acceptable level of risk to maintain the safety of the principal, while exercising a parallel strategy of maximizing income.”

“This helps in that the asset management base will grow, and as the assets grow, the variety of assets in which we can invest broadens, thus spreading risk. This provides for long-term health of the institution, allowing for increased program enhancement, faculty support and student scholarships.”

Persons who are interested in including Arkansas State University in their charitable giving plans may do so by mailing a check, made out to the ASU Foundation, Inc., to P.O. Box 1990, State University AR 72467-1990. Additionally, interested individuals may make an online gift any time using their credit card by logging on to http://support.astate.edu. For information on establishing an endowed scholarship or gift, call the ASU Development Office at (870) 972-3940, or toll-free at (888) 225-8343.

Steve Watkins, ASU director of Development, said one of the best things about how donors choose to allocate their charitable gifts to ASU is that the university benefits in both the long- and short-term.

“Charitable gifts benefit the university’s students, faculty and programs in the short-term from gifts directed to scholarships, faculty projects and capital building projects,” he said. “But gifts directed toward endowments—endowed scholarships, operational endowments and endowments for certain programs—have long-term benefits. Those gifts make an impact on future generations, and always will.”

Watkins said charitable gifts made to the ASU Foundation in the first six months of the 2004 fiscal year totaled more than $3 million toward academic programs, and more than $500,000 to ASU athletics. Charitable gifts received during the eight-week holiday giving period totaled more than $660,000.

$28.3 Million Total Endowment as of June 30, 2003

- Academic and Program Support $12,757,828
- Faculty Support $2,188,443
- Scholarship Support $12,022,242
- Athletics $1,325,971

45.09% 42.49% 7.73% 4.69%

Persons who are interested in including Arkansas State University in their charitable giving plans may do so by mailing a check, made out to the ASU Foundation, Inc., to P.O. Box 1990, State University AR 72467-1990. Additionally, interested individuals may make an online gift any time using their credit card by logging on to http://support.astate.edu. For information on establishing an endowed scholarship or gift, call the ASU Development Office at (870) 972-3940, or toll-free at (888) 225-8343.
Biotechnology is critical to the future of agriculture and to the future of our well-being as a nation, according to a former Clinton administration cabinet member.

Speaking at the 10th Annual Agriculture-Business Conference at Arkansas State University, former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman said the nation has looked at the agriculture industry as a problem solver—especially in substituting farm products for plastics and petroleum products. He said biotechnology is another way in which problems can be solved.

"The greatest benefit of biotechnology is that it will allow for the reduction in usage of pesticides and herbicides," he noted. "Our greatest single problem in the world is a lack of good water. We must begin to develop crops that can deal with the stress of arid conditions that are resistant to pests."

Glickman said what's happening in the world affects trade and in turn affects U.S. agriculture. There is an anti-U.S. sentiment in the world now, and people are sensitive to issues of environmental safety.

Glickman now serves as head of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Before serving as the 26th Secretary of Agriculture, he acted as U.S. Representative from Kansas for 18 years.

He said agriculture should do five things to further biotechnology:

- Devote monetary resources into research on water and plant stress and any potential for problems;
- Review the currently regulatory system in the United States;
- Continue a dialog with other countries on the benefits of biotechnology;
- Move toward consumer-recognizable benefits of biotechnology; and
- Show farmers and customers the system is fair in developing intellectual properties of biotechnology.

Ultimately, he said, "public confidence is the key to success in biotechnology."

Glickman also delivered the luncheon address to the more than 600 participants at the conference, speaking on the use of humor in politics.

"Self-deprecating humor is a strategic tool of the political trade," he noted. "By bringing focus to one's own self, one becomes disarming, projects humility and deflects an opponent's criticism of that same flaw."

Glickman encouraged the group to "fight for what you believe in with a smile and a few bad jokes."

Dr. Bert Greenwalt, ASU professor of Agriculture Studies and conference organizer, said the event is one way the College of Agriculture fulfills its mission. "At this event we are able to present information to producers and agri-business people in the region," he said. "The conference also complements classroom instruction, so we see it as a service for the industry and a component for our education program. We have several high school students at the conference, too, so it is also a recruiting tool for us."

The Judd Hill Foundation, Farm Credit MidSouth, Riceland Foods, the USA Rice Federation, Liberty Bank, Busch Agricultural Resources, AgHeritage Farm Credit Services and the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation sponsored the event.

Dr. Greg Phillips, dean of the College of Agriculture, said the conference is a great event for the region.

"It's good for agriculture industries and producers to get together like this."
Springtime on the ASU campus.