
ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Friday, August 23, 2019

1:45 - 2:35 p.m. Time Block 1

The Rural Healthcare Crisis: Honoring Alabama's Rural Communities and Ensuring Future Access to Healthcare

Since 2010, over 125 rural hospitals have closed across the United States with 6 closures occurring in Alabama. As Fellows gather to honor the Blackburn Institute's past and build its future, this session will provide Fellows with a unique opportunity to learn of the challenges facing rural communities in Alabama as they struggle to preserve access to healthcare for their communities. Co-presenters will discuss the demographic, financial, and policy challenges facing rural healthcare providers and hospitals. Presenters will also share learnings and observations from their experiences working with rural hospitals, both nationwide and in Alabama, on best practices and federal/state policy options for preserving access to these critical community resources.

- **Co-Presenter: Mr. Dawson Smith, Director of Network Development and Affiliations, UAB Health System.**
- **Co-Presenter: Mr. C. Ryan Sprinkle (Blackburn Fellow) - Practice Leader, Stroudwater Associates**

Public Transportation in Alabama: Understanding Structural Barriers to Health, Employment, and Civic Participation

Open to All UA Students

A functional, accessible public transportation system is key to ensuring smart economic growth and promoting stable, high-wage employment. It also is essential to ensure seniors, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, and other Alabamians without reliable access to affordable transportation can participate fully in society. Due to spending restrictions in the state constitution, however, Alabama's infrastructure funding neglects public transportation entirely. Attendees will learn about the human and economic costs of Alabama's failure to update its state infrastructure spending to include public transportation. Students and Fellows will learn about recent state policy developments on infrastructure spending; gain background knowledge on regional and national trends to help them evaluate these decisions; and discuss proposals to invest in public transportation so all Alabamians can get to work, school, the doctor's office, and other places they need to go when they need to get there.

- **Presenter: Mr. Dev Wakeley - Policy Analyst, Alabama Arise**

2:45 - 3:35 p.m. Time Block 2

Alabama's Transportation Infrastructure: Responding to Concerns and Addressing Needs

Open to All UA Students

In the years ahead, Alabamians will take stock of their transportation network. They will look back on decisions made in 2019 by Alabama's citizens, business community, and elected leadership. This presentation will provide a summary of how The University of Alabama's Transportation Institute worked with a wide range of stakeholders, including legislators, residents, the business community, shippers, truck and auto drivers, passengers, and others to develop a plan to adequately fund the maintenance, rehabilitation, and expansion of Alabama's transportation network. Additionally, the presenters will address why transportation matters and is a key driver in terms of economic development, safety, and quality of life.

- **Co-Presenter: Dr. Shashi Nambisan - Executive Director, Alabama Transportation Institute, The University of Alabama**
- **Co-Presenter: Mr. Justice Smyth - Outreach Director, Alabama Transportation Institute, The University of Alabama**

Connecting Blackburn Values to a Global Community

Open to All UA Students

Over the course of its 24-year history, the Blackburn Institute has seen 12 of its students and Fellows receive awards from the U.S. Fulbright Student Program. This is the largest U.S. exchange program offering opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide. Hear from a panel of past recipients as they discuss their motivations to apply, experiences abroad, and insights into shared values of the programs. Participants will also have the opportunity to ask questions of panelists and learn how to apply through The University of Alabama.

- Co-Presenter: Mrs. Anna Boardman (Blackburn Fellow) - Law Student, The University of Alabama
 - Co-Presenter: Dr. Beverly Hawk - Director of Global and Community Engagement and Fulbright Program Advisor, The University of Alabama
 - Co-Presenter: Ms. Jilisa Milton (Blackburn Fellow) - Fellow, Equal Justice Works
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6:45 - 7:45 p.m.

Blackburn Retrospective Panel

As a start to the weekend's time together as a full community of Fellows, students, and Advisory Board and Blackburn Society members, panelists spanning the history of the Institute will share their perspectives on its unique impact on Fellows and the state. Informed by their personal interactions with Dr. John L. Blackburn, panelists will discuss his vision and aspirations for a "community of ethical leaders" and the Institute's continuing work "to develop a network of diverse leaders who understand the challenges facing the state of Alabama and the nation and who are committed to serving as agents of positive change."

- Moderator: Dr. Kathleen Cramer (Blackburn Society Member) - Interim Vice President of Student Life, The University of Alabama
 - Panelist: Mrs. Katie Boyd Britt (Blackburn Fellow) - President and CEO, Business Council of Alabama
 - Panelist: Mr. Robert Harris III (Blackburn Advisory Board Member and Fellow) - Vice President, Community Lending, BancorpSouth
 - Panelist: Mr. Donald Stewart (Blackburn Advisory Board Member) - Attorney, Stewart & Stewart, PC
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ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Saturday, August 24, 2019

9:00 - 9:50 a.m. Time Block 3

Lessons Learned From Blackburn: Developing a Multi-disciplinary and Multi-generational Approach to Addressing Health Disparities
Open to All UA Students

The Scientific Community of Outcomes Researchers (SCOR) embodies the overarching values of the Blackburn Institute. Just over a year old, the mission of SCOR is to cultivate a dynamic community of scholars steadfastly committed to optimizing wellness, enhancing engagement, and achieving health equity for individuals, communities, and populations. The visionaries, Dr. Mike Mugavero and Dr. Becky Reamey, have developed a series of programs to address the needs of researchers aiming to change the state of Alabama by improving health conditions for all.

- **Co-Presenter: Dr. Michael Mugavero - Co-Director of the Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), The University of Alabama at Birmingham**
- **Co-Presenter: Dr. Becky Reamey (Blackburn Fellow) - Program Director of Training Academy, Center for Clinical and Translational Science, The University of Alabama at Birmingham**

Coming to the Table With Your Own Chair

In an era where the notion of privilege and the acknowledgment of economic inequality and micro-aggressions in professional and academic settings are discussed more, many young professionals and students who come from underprivileged and minority backgrounds struggle with making their voices heard even when they are given "a seat at the table," even so far as feeling as though they don't deserve one despite the obstacles they go through to get to that seat. In this session, the presenter hopes to reach those students and fellow young professionals with her own struggles and strategies in navigating this space, as well as giving our privileged peers an opportunity to listen to those dealing with these issues as we come together to solve societal issues.

- **Presenter: Ms. Sehar Ezez (Blackburn Fellow) - Accounting Assistant, Alabama Transportation Institute, The University of Alabama**

School-Sharing Communities: Career-Focused Education of the Future

Poor educational options, federal housing policy, and wealth or the lack thereof, are among many factors that collectively cause urban blight in our most high need areas. Blackburn Fellow and Advisory Board member Dr. Mark Martin has created a school model that addresses all these simultaneously, tackling a wicked problem with a wicked solution. Build UP (Urban Prosperity) provides young people with a high quality academic education aligned to real world career-focused skills and paid apprenticeships. Youth earn a high school diploma, an associate's degree in a field of their choosing, and they become homeowners and landlords along the way. Through this innovative model, youth and families will become the change they want to see in their communities, and collectively uplift their entire community.

- **Co-Presenter: Mr. Stephen Grover (Blackburn Fellow) - Director of Learning and Expansion, Build UP**
- **Co-Presenter: Dr. Mark Martin (Blackburn Advisory Board Member and Fellow) - Executive Director, Build UP**

Finding and Thriving in a Career that Aligns with Your Values

Far too many times, those entering the professional world start fast but get bogged down quickly in seemingly passionless and unfulfilling careers. This session will be a panel discussion with Fellows and Advisory Board members from different fields discussing how they found their dream jobs and flourished in careers that honor their principled approach to their professions. If you are uncertain about where your career or true calling passion will ultimately take you, but want tips and guidance on developing a plan, this session is for you!

- Moderator: Mr. Mike Spivey (Blackburn Fellow) - Founder and CEO, Spivey Consulting
 - Panelist: Dr. Kia Boyd (Blackburn Fellow) - School Psychologist, Metro Nashville Public Schools
 - Panelist: Mrs. Hallie Bradley (Blackburn Fellow) - Community Initiatives Manager, Alabama Power
 - Panelist: Mr. Kyle Fox (Blackburn Fellow) - Doctoral Student in Humanities and African American Studies, Clark Atlanta University
 - Panelist: Mrs. Meredith Riley Stewart (Blackburn Fellow) - Actor, Producer, and Content Creator
 - Panelist: Mr. Will Tucker (Blackburn Fellow) - Investigative Reporter, Southern Poverty Law Center
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9:00 - 11:50 a.m. Special Extended Time Block

Community Action Poverty Simulation - *Sponsored by the Center for Service and Leadership*

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. But unless you've experienced poverty, it's difficult to truly understand. The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) bridges that gap from misconception to understanding. CAPS is an interactive immersion experience. It sensitizes community participants to the realities of poverty. CAPS is not a game. It is based on real Community Action clients and their lives. CAPS exists to promote poverty awareness, increase understanding, inspire local change, and transform perspectives. During the Poverty Simulation, you will take on the identity of someone living in poverty. You will work together with your family to live a month in poverty and then process the experience together as a group. *This session is open only to Fellows, Advisory Board members, and non-Blackburn students.*

10:30 - 11:50 a.m. Time Block 4

Alabama Prison Re-Entry Program: Former Inmates to Productive Citizens

In this session, the presenters will provide a progress report on the Prison Re-Entry Program introduced at the 2018 Annual Symposium. This program is an effort to improve the prison re-entry process, transitioning those released from incarceration to productive and contributing members of society. Among the partners involved in the endeavor are Church of the Highlands, Alabama Department of Corrections, Tuscaloosa Chamber of Commerce, and local industry, including ZF Corporation, Phifer Industries, and others. Updates will also be shared on the how the same process is being used in the Tuscaloosa Youth Detention Center and in a Section 8 apartment complex in Eutaw, Alabama.

- Co-Presenter: Mr. John Covington (Blackburn Advisory Board Member) - President, Chesapeake Co-Presenter: Mr. Brad Newman - Plant Manager, ZF Chassis Systems

The Future of HIV Research: An Inter-professional and Multi-disciplinary Discussion on Current and Planned Work

Open to All UA Students

Blackburn Fellows are working to alleviate the burden of HIV in the state of Alabama and around the world through research, advocacy, and outreach. This group of professionals from a variety of fields will provide an overview of each of their work and collaboration before beginning a panel discussion with significant audience participation. The audience will not only ask questions, but also be asked to explore potential resolutions with the panelists/investigators.

- Co-Presenter: Dr. Jason Farley (Blackburn Fellow) - Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Johns Hopkins University
- Co-Presenter: Mr. Landon Nichols (Blackburn Fellow) - Division Manager, Medical Advocacy and Outreach
- Co-Presenter: Dr. Becky Reamey (Blackburn Fellow) - Program Director of Training Academy, Center for Clinical and Translational Science, The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Honoring our 25-Year Calling to be Change Agents: Facilitating Individual, Organizational, and Social Change in the 21st Century

This session will bring together a panel of academic and practitioner experts on how to facilitate individual, organizational, and social change. During the first half of the session, panelists will present the most significant principles of change that they teach or apply, as well as the most common mistakes made in facilitating change. The second half will address change strategies needed to solve common organization problems that the audience will have the opportunity to submit on cards at the beginning of the session. Depending on the audience size, the session will conclude with small groups identifying change strategies or the panelists will work with the audience as a whole in identifying change strategies.

- Co-Presenter: Dr. J. Norman Baldwin (Blackburn Advisory Board Member) - Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Science, The University of Alabama
- Co-Presenter: Dr. Meredith Bagley - Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, The University of Alabama
- Co-Presenter: Dr. Ronald Dulek - Professor, Culverhouse College of Business, The University of Alabama
- Co-Presenter: Mrs. Rashmee Sharif (Blackburn Advisory Board Member and Fellow) - Change Manager, Cigna

Access to Justice: Expanding Access to Civil Legal Services for Rural and Under-served Populations in Alabama

This panel will discuss the work that organizations are doing to address the civil legal needs of rural and under-served populations in Alabama. Panelists are representatives from the non-profit, judicial, and academic communities who are working to address systemic issues and develop innovative approaches to improve access to justice. Topics will include outreach to rural and under-served populations, telelegal services, disseminating legal information to pro se litigants, and recruiting lawyers to work in rural areas.

- Moderator: Ms. Lita Waggoner (Blackburn Student) - Law Student, The University of Alabama
- Panelist: The Honorable Henry Callaway - Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge, Southern District of Alabama
- Panelist: Ms. Farah Majid - Coordinating Project Attorney, Rural Economic Improvement Project, Legal Services of Alabama
- Panelist: Ms. Glory McLaughlin - Assistant Dean for Public Interest Law, The University of Alabama School of Law
- Panelist: Mr. Steve Rygiel - Director, HIV Legal Services, Birmingham AIDS Outreach

2:00 - 2:50 p.m.

Time Block 5

Under Pressure: The Impact of Court Fees and Fines on Alabama Residents

Each year, Alabama's courts assess millions of dollars in court costs, fines, fees, and restitution. Most of this money is sent to the state General Fund, government agencies, county and municipal funds, and used to finance pet projects. This hidden tax is disproportionately borne by poor people, particularly by poor people of color. The system is a perfect setup for conflicts of interest, as courts and law enforcement agencies weigh the fair administration of justice against their own financial viability. Alabama Appleseed administered detailed surveys to more than 1,000 Alabamians who pay court debt in 41 of the state's 67 counties. Together, we will dig into the data, the stories, and what we learned with the Blackburn community.

- Co-Presenter: Ms. Leah Nelson - Researcher, Alabama Appleseed
- Co-Presenter: Mr. Dana Sweeney (Blackburn Fellow) - Organizer, Alabama Appleseed

A Conversation on Post-Graduate Service Programs and Civic Health

The 2017 Civic Health Index Update, sponsored by the National Conference on Citizenship, suggested expanding national service opportunities to encourage civic engagement from America's young adults and work to solve public problems at a lower cost to government. This study argues, "Millennials have emerged as a civic force, volunteering at higher rates than Boomers did when they were the same age, connecting through online technologies to share interests and organize civic and political engagement, and believing in the ability of community action to affect positive social change." These experiences hold powerful lessons for us as we strive to work together to build capacity and increase agency within our communities. In this content session, panelists who participated in post-graduate service programs will speak to the innovative initiatives that engage recent graduates in community by building relationships and responding to challenges with an asset-based mindset. These initiatives provide opportunities for people to experience working in a helping profession such as an educator, a healthcare provider, or a community advocate. Learn how these individuals embrace Blackburn values in their daily work during and after these post-graduate experiences as they grow their personal civic health and the civic health of their home and work community.

- Moderator: Mrs. Katherine Zelif (Blackburn Fellow) - Civic Fellow, David Mathews Center for Civic Life
- Panelist: Mr. Bob Boylan (Blackburn Fellow) - Director, Annual Campaign, United Way of Central Alabama
- Panelist: Mr. Zavier Carmichael - Fellow, Project Horseshoe Farm
- Panelist: Ms. Ninna Mendoza - Fellow, Project Horseshoe Farm
- Panelist: Mr. David Simpson (Blackburn Fellow) - Doctoral Student, Columbia University

We the People: Alabama's Six Constitutions

Open to All UA Students

Over the course of its statehood, Alabama has had six constitutions, all established via State Conventions: 1819 (converting Alabama territory into a state), 1861 (Secession), 1865 (End of Civil War), 1868 (Reconstruction), 1875 (End of Reconstruction) and the current 1901 constitution. In providing context to the constitutions, the Alabama legislature shares, "While Capitals and the administrations of governors are often utilized as political benchmarks in Alabama history, no study of legislative history in Alabama can be deemed complete, without a full understanding of the powers and limitations provided the legislative branch of Alabama government by the various Constitutions and Constitutional Amendments. Moreover, each of these documents charts the progressive decline of the constitutional power of the legislative branch." The presenter will discuss the six constitutions – the circumstances of their adoption, their provisions, and their effect on the history of Alabama.

- Presenter: Mr. Julian Butler - Shareholder, Sirote & Permutt

Fellows Involvement Network (FIN) Meeting

In this session, Fellows Involvement Network (FIN) officers will discuss all the newly implemented and continuing initiatives of the network, including the Soft Landings Program, Fellows Mentorship Program, and regional gatherings. Fellows will have the opportunity to set goals for the future of the FIN, brainstorm new ideas, and network with other Fellows. Fellows will also meet Kathryn Drago, Coordinator of Blackburn Alumni Programs, and learn more about her support role for the FIN and individual Fellows.

- Co-Presenter: Mr. James Kemp (Blackburn Fellow) - Chairperson, Fellows Involvement Network
 - Co-Presenter: Ms. Caroline Shook (Blackburn Fellow) - Internal Vice-Chairperson, Fellows Involvement Network
 - Co-Presenter: Mr. Ben Jackson (Blackburn Fellow) - External Vice-Chairperson, Fellows Involvement Network
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