
ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Schedule of Events

Friday, August 23, 2024 – Bryant Conference Center

11:00 – 11:45 am Advisory Board/Fellows Meet and Greet in Sellers Lobby

Blackburn Society, Advisory Board and Fellows Only

12:00 – 1:15 pm Advisory Board/Fellows Lunch in Rast B

Blackburn Society, Advisory Board and Fellows Only

1:30 – 4:15 pm Advisory Board Meeting in Rast A

Blackburn Society and Advisory Board Only

1:30 – 2:45 pm Breakout Content Sessions

Fellows and Students

- **Session I: Alabama's Latinos: Where They Are, Who They Are, And Where They're Going**
 - Panelists: Mrs. Andrea Hayes (Blackburn Fellow) - Project and Grants Manager, Tuscaloosa Latino Coalition, Mrs. Julia Sosa - Chairman, Tuscaloosa Latino Coalition, Mr. Carlos Javier Torres - Programs and Community Partnerships Director, Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama (¡HICA!), Señora Judith Zambrano - Community Member, Señora Teresita Flores - Volunteer Leader, Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice
- **Session II: Ethical Leadership In K-12 Education: How Past Victories are Still Relevant Today**
 - Panelists: Ms. Nancy Boyd (Blackburn Fellow) - Librarian, Percy Julian High School, Dr. Melvin Brown - Superintendent, Montgomery Public Schools, Mr. Ibrahim Lee - Principal, Percy Julian High School, Dr. Monte Linebarger - Chief Academic Officer, Montgomery Public Schools
- **Session III: Building Transcendent Relationships in the Affirmation Age**
 - Presenter: Mr. Cameron Smith (Blackburn Fellow) - Senior Vice President of Operations, Thanks

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3:00 – 4:15 pm Breakout Content Sessions

Fellows and Students

- **Session IV: Alabama's Emerging Federal Contracting Economic Developer**
 - Presenter: Mr. Mal McGhee - Executive Vice President, PCI Federal Services
- **Session V: Parenting as Ethical Leadership: The Influence of Blackburn Values on Future Generations**
 - Presenters: Judge Samarria Dunson (Blackburn Fellow) - Municipal Court, City of Montgomery, Mr. Zac Riddle (Blackburn Fellow) - Senior Account Manager, Medical Properties Trust, Mrs. Julie Smith (Blackburn Fellow) - Trustee, Tuscaloosa Academy
- **Session VI: Unity Group: History, Impact, Future**
 - Presenters: John Covington (Blackburn Advisory Board Member), Joe Eatmon (Blackburn Advisory Board Member)

5:00 – 6:30 pm Plenary Session with Coach Sarah Patterson and Keynote Speaker Sen. Katie Britt in Sellers Auditorium

Open to the Full UA Community

Hotel Capstone

6:45 – 8:00 pm Opening Reception with Heavy Hors d'oeuvres in Ballroom

Members of the Blackburn Community Only

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Saturday, August 24, 2024 – Bryant Conference Center

Members of the Blackburn Community Only

8:00 – 8:45 am Breakfast with Mimosas in Rast A/B

9:00 – 10:15 am Breakout Sessions

- **Session VII: Exploring the Landscape of Immigration and Asylum in Alabama and the Nation**
 - Presenters: Mrs. Olivia Bensinger (Blackburn Fellow and Advisory Board Member) - Attorney, Shaheen & Gordon, Mrs. Catherine Alexander-Wright (Blackburn Fellow and Advisory Board Member) - Associate Director for Clinical Oversight, Global Refuge, Ms. Vel Lewis (Blackburn Fellow) Attorney Advisor, Department of Justice
- **Session VIII: Juvenile Justice 101: How Alabama's System Works and How You Can Help**
 - Panelists: Mrs. Caroline Smith Dean (Blackburn Fellow) - Associate Attorney, Baker Donelson, Ms. Shelly Hood Standridge - Referee, Tuscaloosa County Juvenile Court, Ms. Jenny Ryan - Senior Staff Attorney, The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program, Ms. Susan Mason Donovan - Professor and Director of Mediation Law Clinic, University of Alabama School of Law
- **Session IX: Partnership and Advocacy for Success: The Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences**
 - Presenter: Dr. Rebecca Reamy (Blackburn Fellow)- Director, Alabama Area Health Education Program
- **Session X: Legislating While LGBTQ+ In Alabama**
 - Panelists: Mr. Landon L. Nichols, Jr. (Blackburn Fellow) - Chief Advocacy Officer, Five Horizons Health Services, Hon. Patricia Todd - Southern Policy Manager, Jobs to Move America, Hon. Neil Rafferty - Member, Alabama House of Representatives

10:15 – 10:35 am Coffee Break in Balcony

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Saturday, August 24, 2024 – Bryant Conference Center

10:40 – 11:55 am Breakout Sessions

- **Session XI: Advocacy Through the Arts: The Kemba Movie Impact Campaign**
 - Presenters: Mrs. Kemba Smith Pradia - Founder, The Kemba Smith Foundation, Mrs. Akiesha Anderson (Blackburn Fellow and Advisory Board Member) - Advocacy and Partnerships Manager, Represent Justice
- **Session XII: Charting the Course for the Next 30 Years: Strategies for Serving Adult Learners in a Changing Higher Education Landscape**
 - Presenter: Dr. Matt DeMonbrun (Blackburn Fellow) - Research Director, Michigan Center for Adult College Success
- **Session XIII: Herding Elephants and Driving Donkeys**
 - Presenters: Mr. Mike House (Blackburn Society and Advisory Board Member) - President, Oak Grove Strategies, and Mrs. Gina Rigby-House (Blackburn Advisory Board Member) - 2nd Vice President, Aflac
- **Session XIV: Finding Common Ground to Restore and Preserve Alabama's Natural Environment**
 - Panelists: Mr. Seth Self (Blackburn Fellow) - Juris Doctor Candidate, University of Alabama School of Law, Mr. Bradley Davidson (Blackburn Society, Fellow, and Advisory Board Member) - Principal, Boll Weevil Strategies Ms. Jilisa Milton (Blackburn Fellow) - Executive Director, GASP

12:00 – 1:30 pm Blackburn Community Lunch in Rast

1:45 – 3:00 pm Closing Session: 30th Anniversary Panel Discussion moderated by Dr. Cheree Causey, with Dr. Kathleen Cramer, Mrs. Marjorie K. Nix, Mrs. Carol Patterson, Mr. Tom Patterson, Mr. John Saxon, Mrs. Bobbi Siegal, Mr. Donald Stewart, and Mr. Pat Whetstone in Rast

6:00 – 9:00 pm 30th Anniversary Black Tie Gala in Sellers Auditorium