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The Gazette

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Newly Rennovated SSC Now Open To Students



By Kierra Pelayo
Staff Writer

During SGA Week Langston University launched a soft opening for its cafeteria on September 30th. Before the soft opening, the main dining area was closed since Spring 2022. Students grabbed their food in a grab-and-go line with limited food options to choose from: the main line, pizza station, grill, and vegan options. Following the soft opening, students were presented with new food options such as a pasta bar, salad bar, dessert bar and now pizza heated in an authentic pizza oven. The seating area also expanded in dining with a multitude of tables and booths along the wall, and seats with plug-in adapters. Now the students have a place to stop and eat their food in between classes, but there is still work to be done in the SSC. Upon completion of the main dining area, now focus can be brought to the lounging area known

as “The Lion’s Den,” which will provide different food options and pool tables. Student-athletes Sam Battle and Kristian Baccus, who are both sophomores and on the men’s basketball team, speak on their dining experience following the soft opening. Battle says, “I’m glad I can finally rest my legs after practice and just enjoy my food,” students no longer must get their food and go home, or hunt for a seat on the SSC Paw Walk. Baccus says “I can eat as much food as I want without having to worry about using up my swipes.” now students can get food, or if they changed their mind after sitting can go back and get food as they please. While there have been improvements made to the cafeteria some students feel like the food still could be used more. Lauren Baldwin, a sophomore agriculture-business major says, “the food is not giving what it gave last year” and “when I used to eat in the café, I used to get

Photos provided by Ciera Agee
seconds, but now I don’t even get firsts.” The grand opening for the completed SSC is said to be held during Langston Universities’ homecoming week. Following the grand opening, offices will be opened for certain organizations, a vending machine area, a gaming area, and The Lion’s Den which will be open to students at all times of the day. This reconstruction has been a long time coming, but there is much to be expected for student life on campus. The upgrades being made to the SSC are just one of the first steps being made on the Campus preceding the universities President Dr. Kent Smiths 10-year plan that was announced earlier in fall 2022. Changes are coming to Langston University and the SSC is just the beginning of what to be expecting.

Kierra Pelayo is a sophomore broadcast journalism major.



A Change in Langston Universities Enrollment Manegment

By Jalen Martin
Staff Writer

Langston University is making a one-stop shop for enrollment-related student services. The departments of recruitment, admissions & outreach, academic advisement and financial aid will now fall under one umbrella for enrollment services. This change is geared towards increasing the number of students enrolled each year.

Heath Burge, head of the recruitment, admissions & outreach, academic advisement and financial aid, is optimistic about the changes in enrollment management at Langston University. The intent for the enrollment management reconstruction was to put all departments dealing with getting first-time, returning, and transfer students enrolled all in one. This change is backed by a strategy created by Burge and his team to increase enrollment rates. "I envision a data-driven model, if you will, with intentionality as the focus. A model that's very similar to what many other schools across the country have adopted," said Burge. The enrollment management team is making efforts to execute the model that is being adopted so the institution can start reaping the benefits. "We are getting out to high school fairs, we are getting out to recruitment fairs that are regional ... We are traveling," Burge said. "Our goal

is 650 first-time entering students. I am confident that there are several implications that went into that number. I think and I believe wholeheartedly that we can meet and we can exceed that goal, but I also believe that it's going to take a collective effort." In the fall 2022 semester, the enrollment for first-time freshmen was 548 students.

Theresa Powell, the vice-president for operations, explained how the enrollment management reconstruction was a strategic decision. "Admissions and recruitment were sort of one silo, and advising was in its own silo ... What we decided to do, as a strategic decision, was to combine those," Powell said. Both Burge and Powell expressed excitement for the new department. The enrollment management team is working on finding ways to increase enrollment. "I think utilizing and leveraging the advisors is going to be a helpful strategy ... Maybe they can go to high schools as well and start to meet with guidance counselors and potentially meet with students," Powell said.

Dr. Carlos Robinson used to be in charge of recruitment and bringing new students to Langston University. He was recently let go from his position at Langston University. Brooklyn Stewart, a senior corrections and criminal justice major, gave insight into how Robinson impacted her. "Recently there has been a lot of staffing chang-

es," said Stewart. "Dr. Robinson was more like a warm presence and he was definitely needed for recruitment. I came here all the way from Atlanta, Georgia and I don't think I would've come had I had a different person recruiting me."

Langston University is headed in a new direction according to an announcement email. This direction, while causing the termination of one employee, has caused people to take on new responsibilities and duties that they hope will increase enrollment by over 100 students.



Heath Burge; photo by Ciera Agee

Jalen Martin is a sophomore broadcast journalism major.

SSS TRIO Offers Help; Heres What Is Available To You

By Kierra Pelayo
Staff Writer

SSS TRIO is a program that can be found at Langston University as well as across the country. SSS TRIO is a Federal based program that offers Student Support Services (SSS) under The Department of Education.

In the past, Langston University received over a million dollars to help fund this program in support of those from low-income backgrounds and first-generation families. Dezz Lewis the Project Director for TRIO as well as a professor here at Langston University says, "This is one of the oldest civil rights movements, that was launched out the civil rights movement in 1965." The main goals of TRIO are advocacy, collaboration, inclusiveness, individual growth and respect. Lewis says, "As a higher education professional it impacts me every day to see the progress we've made, the impact

we've made on this campus period, with campus involvement and academic engagement" and "A lot of the times people come to Langston they get engaged socially but not academically".

A student named E'lise Thompson who is a sophomore accounting major and has been a part of TRIO for about a year says, "TRIO has helped me build leadership skills, networking skills, and they have also helped me grow on a personal level. "TRIO offers a range of opportunities and services that help with internships, leadership, mentoring, tutoring, and according to Thompson "college life in general". TRIO is for students who have been approved for the program and they host events year-round to help students explore opportunities and create bonds. One event hosted by TRIO was a trip to Showbiz Cinemas which was quoted to be Thompson's "favorite" event, where they went bowling and ate food.

Langston University offers a mentoring pro-

gram through TRIO called PAWS which stands for "Preparing. Assisting. Welcoming. Serving" and it helps build leadership and social growth for not only the mentee but also the mentor.

PAWS was created by Dikailyn Toles who is a graduating senior and majoring in elementary education whose reasoning is "They were providing a lot of academic support through their academic mentors, because they have great mentors in TRIO, but we weren't giving our students enough social support, so that was the goal of PAWS". She has seen the benefits of the TRIO program through her time at Langston as well as her time at her previous school thus continuing the program after transferring. These opportunities can help these students build their resumes, network with others in their fields of study, find internships, and pass their classes to be ready for their future careers.

Kierra Pelayo is a sophomore broadcast journalism major.

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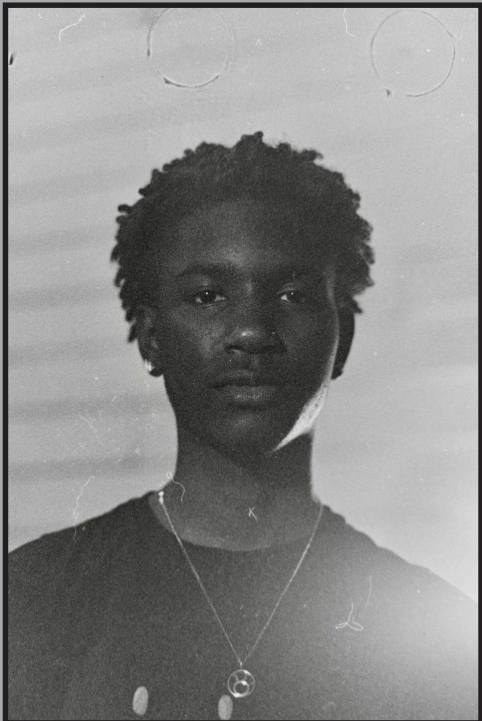
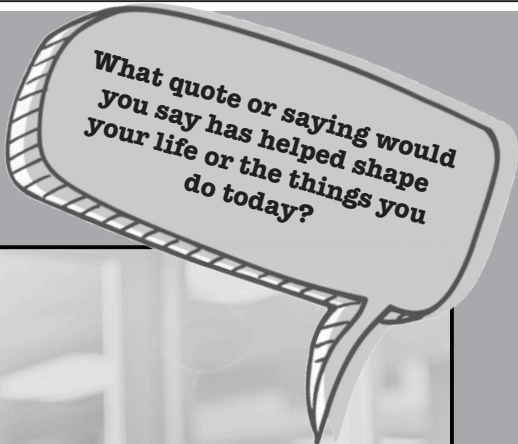
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THE CAMPUS QUESTION

Compiled by Dakim Rivera



Jeremiah William
Sophomore
Animal Science Major

"If your presence doesn't have an impact, then your absence won't make a difference."



Tatitona Harris
Sophomore
Premed Biology Major

"If my mind can conceive it and my heart can believe it then I can conceive it."



D'Artagnan Reed
Junior
Animal Science Major

"I've been training my whole life to be the last one standing."



Lovette Mba
Junior
Business Management Major

"There's power in the pivot."

First Black Female News Anchor in Oklahoma Paves The Way

By Midori Williams
Staff Writer

Joyce Jackson, the first female African American news anchor in Oklahoma, began working as a news anchor for KOCO News 5 in 1973.

When she first started working for Channel 5 she was an assistant to John Harrison, who at the time was the vice president of the network. He encouraged her to become an anchor, and in doing so, she was able to represent the black community of Oklahoma City on television.

"When I realized I was there, and my boss wanted to put me on the air, I brought the community to channel 5... I'm proud of that," Joyce Jackson said.

Throughout her career she faced challenges and experienced racism from both viewers and co-workers. Even though there were some naysayers in the workplace she admits her work environment was mostly positive.

"We had a couple of people who weren't pleased with having me work at the studio, but they eventually knew they had to deal with it to have a job," she said.

She also faced pressure to change her hair in order to portray a certain image in the media. When the president of channel 5 news asked her to change her hair in an effort to not offend viewers, she was vocal about her unwillingness to alter it.

"I don't want to cut my hair, I don't want to change my hair and what does my hair have to do with

my mind?"

She received threats and racial comments from viewers who consistently called into the station and her home phone. Groups of people went to the KOCO news station to express their disdain for Jackson being on the air.

"They were letting the management know that they didn't need to have any more black folk, but that's not what they called me," she said.

Growing up, Joyce Jackson was influenced by her teacher Clara Luper, a pioneer of the American Civil Rights Movement. In order to overcome the racism she was facing in her career, she utilized what Luper had taught her.

"She taught all of us that we were as good as anybody else...she would say to hold your head up, walk like you know where you're going and talk like you know what you are talking about and you can be anything," Joyce Jackson said.

Almost 50 years after the start of Joyce Jackson's career as a news anchor, there are female African American graduates of Langston University working in broadcast journalism careers in Oklahoma. Taelyr Jackson graduated from Langston University in 2020, and is a news reporter at the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority.

She expressed that even though she has not personally experienced racism in the workplace she believes there is still room for improvement when it comes to welcoming black women into the broadcast journal-

ism industry.

"I do feel that as black women in the industry we definitely have to work 10 times harder, unfortunately, even though it is 2022," Taelyr Jackson said.

Some ways that she has been affected by racial stigma is feeling that she has to "code switch" and be mindful of the hairstyles she wears.

"It took me a while to feel comfortable to wear my natural hair, I finally did that a few months ago when I wore my natural curls on set," she said.

Even though she felt that more can be done to promote inclusivity in broadcasting careers in Oklahoma, she has noticed a positive shift in the attitude of news television companies when it comes to offering opportunities to black female journalists. Recently she has observed more media companies asking, "What do black women bring to the table and how can we hire these women because they are intelligent," Taelyr Jackson said.

She felt that viewers at OETA are also encouraging inclusivity.

"A lot of feedback that we've been getting lately was that they were really excited that we have more diversity in the newsroom."

Her motivation for graduating college and becoming a reporter is her grandmother and great grandmother. She realized that she is fortunate enough to have opportunities that they didn't have.

"I am walking in doors and I am in places that they would have nev-

er imagined, I'm doing things that I know would make them proud," Taelyr Jackson said.

Another Langston University graduate, Kaci Ferguson, is a TV Production Operator at OETA where she has worked for nine years. Recently she received a Heartland Emmy Award for her work on the "Tulsa Race Massacre: 100 years later" documentary.

Ferguson expressed that she has never experienced racial discrimination in the workplace, but has felt the need to be conscious of the way she conducts herself while being outspoken.

"Tone and passion can often be misconstrued in an industry where there isn't much diversity inclusion," said Ferguson.

She also noted that sexism within the industry is not uncommon.

"The production field was, and still is, in some places, male dominated ... Sometimes I felt some of my ideas were pushed to the side during projects," Ferguson said.

Overall, she felt there are more opportunities for black women in broadcasting careers than ever before.

"Over the years, I believe diversity in broadcasting careers has improved tremendously, mainly seeing more African American women in the field reporting," said Ferguson.

Midori Williams is a junior broadcast journalism major.



Photo by Carylton Ross: Midori Williams (left), talks with Joyce Jackson (right), the first black female news anchor in Oklahoma.

Langston Contends For Battle of the Bands

By **Jamya Rogers**
Staff Writer

The Langston University Marching Pride Band competed in this year's Battle of the Bands, where they faced off against some of the biggest HBCU bands across the United States. The band has been putting in a lot of time preparing for these competitions. Langston University band's first competition happened last month, where they competed against The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff's Marching Musical Machine of the Mid-South. DeAsia Montgomery, the 2022-2023 Golden Feline dance captain, felt that there is room for improvement for the marching band and the felines. "I know that our organization and our band could do better. This time we're putting our best foot forward and bringing out new material that the fans and school haven't seen before," Montgomery said.

The LUMP Band had fans coming out to watch HBCU bands go head-to-head in battle. Langston competed against other HBCU bands from across the country. In the Battle of the Bands, the audience decides who the winner is, but no award is given. People from every institution attend these battles to see who the best is. "Competing with a big crowd is a great feeling. Just knowing that people around you get to see the things you work so hard for and practice and being able to put your ideas out of the field is another feeling," Montgomery said.

Many LU students watched the Langston University Marching Pride Band in the last competition. One fan, Aaron Wesley, had a few thoughts about their performance, "It was a win for them. As a bystander, something I want to see differently is just more aggression."

They have been working hard and pre-

paring for what is to come next. The band has sacrificed their time by having long late-night practices. According to Montgomery, "The hard work is definitely there, the band and dancers been putting in the time. I don't care what time it is, if we have to meet up early or late, we have to practice."

As the leader of the Golden Felines, Montgomery has a big role to play. "Even on my worst days, I can't be down. I have to always be positive for my team because they might have a bad day. I have to be that positive light to keep the practice going so that we can get things done for things such as battle."

These competitions are competitive because it shows which school has the best band, and every band has something to prove out there on the field. A member of the band's equipment staff, Terrell Haley, said, "It's very competitive, and

people been talking a lot about Langston, we trying to show them we them, people."

The next competition, "The Wake-Up Crank Up," held in Dallas, Texas, was originally set to be held on Oct. 2 but has since been postponed. For this competition, the band will go against TSU, Lane College, and UAPB.

This will be the most competitive, as these are some of the biggest HBCUs in the country. "They're talking trash on social media, so it's like we are coming down to Dallas to show them like yeah, we are coming for yall, we are going to show the lions that are in us," Haley said, "Without a doubt, I feel the band and the dancers are going to come back 10 times harder. I feel like overall, this will be our battle. We're going to take it home," Montgomery said.

Jamya Rogers is a senior Broadcast Journalism major.

By **Jamar Donaldson**
Staff Writer

Sophomore Kevin Allen #11 had a great performance in Langston's blowout win against Lyon College 43-3. "I only played for a quarter before hurting my knee after being tackled, but I felt good about what I did while out there, shout out zone 6 we lit" Allen said post game. Allen had seven receptions for 133 yards and two receiving touchdowns. His longest reception was 43 yards.

Jamar Donaldson is a junior Broadcast Journalism



Photo by Julian Austin

Athletes of the Week

By **Jamar Donaldson**
Staff Writer

Freshman Denae Williams #3 was Langston Lady Lions standout player on the Oct. 1 away lost against the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma athletics. "I think I did pretty good, we played a good team and I believe our team got together and understood we can only go up from here," said Williams. Williams was the leading scorer for the Lions with 11 kills in the 3 sets played and 2 blocks on the defensive end. "Shout out to Sam my libero she's always on top of me and keeping me out my head and also a shoutout to coach for helping me with everything" Williams concluded.

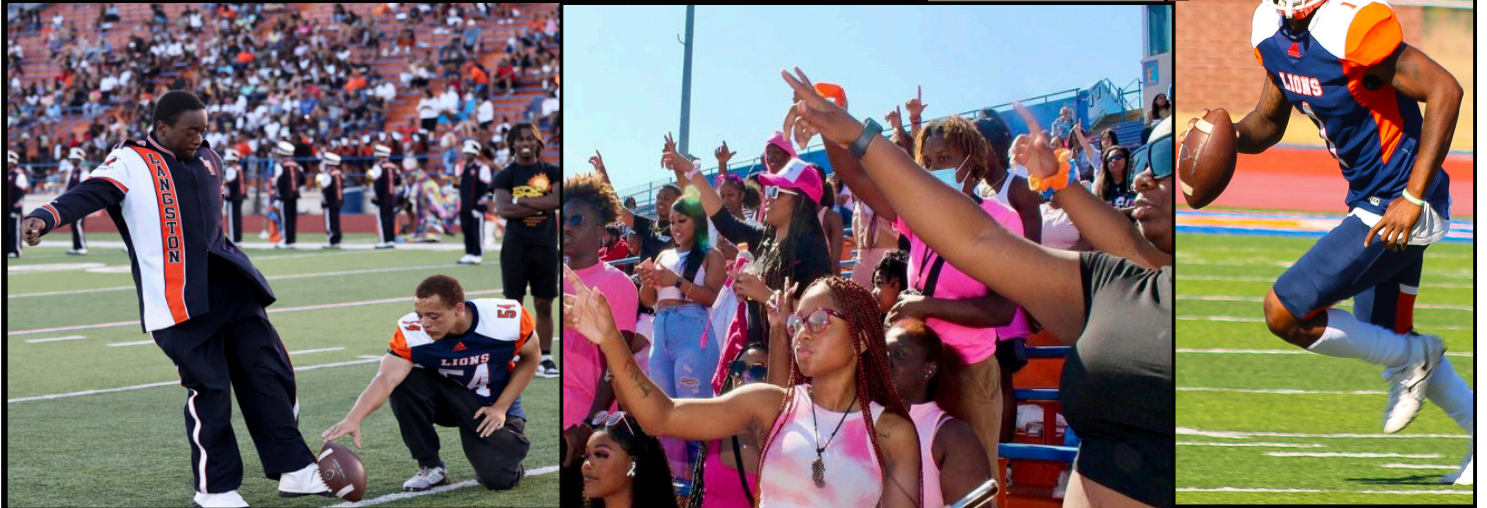


Photo by Krystal Butler

Jamar Donaldson is a junior Broadcast Journalism major.



Langston Sports



Photos via Julian Austin, Krystal Butler, Richard Clifton, and Ananda Ray

Gay Students Share Experiences of Homophobia

By Erin Cotton
Staff Writer

Gay relationships may be accepted in some parts of the US but for some students on the Langston campus, it's still taboo.

Some LGBT students describe their sexual orientation as the white elephant in the room. They say their experiences range from simple interactions to being completely left out of conversations or being denied entrance into organizations due to their sexuality.



Rondarius Lewis

One of those students is Rondarius Lewis, a 19-year-old psychology major from Oklahoma City. Lewis said he initially felt excited about attending and hoped for a normal college experience. "I came here expecting to have a normal experience and just have a big community and network with everyone," Lewis said.

That was quickly shut down when they learned of the attitudes many people hold towards a person who identifies as gay.

"My dreams are shut down quickly because I learned I have a lot of allies that are women, but also the other half of campus are

men and it feels like I'm completely alienated by them," Lewis said. Lewis identifies as non-binary, but if asked they will usually use the word gay.

"I still call myself a gay man because a lot of times it's just easier to say," Lewis said. Because the conversation of gender isn't big on this campus, Lewis said he is viewed as a very feminine gay male. "I'm constantly sexualized and I feel like that may play into a bit of misogyny because if whenever I get into it with people, nine times out of 10 the first insults they throw always has something to do with gay sex." They said,

Sometimes Lewis will notice his female friends being greeted with smiles and conversation while he feels completely ignored. "You don't have to scream, 'you hate gay people' to be homophobic," Lewis said. "It shows in the way they act."

Homophobia can be described as the hatred or dislike of gay people presented through prejudice and discrimination. Being gay or someone within the LGBT community, while it has gotten better, the conversation around it is still taboo in the Black community. The issues the LGBT community faces in today's society are similar to the issues African Americans have to deal with when attending PWIs. "Black people fail to realize the similarities between the oppression of them being Black and the oppression of gay people and they hate to hear that comparison," Lewis said. There is a clear disdain for LGBT life on campus and for more reasons than one, the gay community seems to be the main focus of this discrimination. "I've been blocked for telling someone happy birthday," Lewis said.

Lewis feels safe only because of their friends. "I feel like if I was by myself more, I'd probably encounter more remarks," They said. Lewis explained how simple

things just like that could turn violent, being that he isn't a "push-over." If a situation were to occur, Lewis said "I would like jump on the situation because I don't want other gay people to feel how I feel. An alumnus who previously attended the University from 2015-2022 had similar experiences.



Jorell Smallwood

Jorell Smallwood is the former president of Phi Beta Sigma and the Student Government Association at Langston. During his freshman year, he knew only 3 out gay students, one being himself. "If you were anything other than straight, it was really like you really had to kind of keep it on the hush," Smallwood said.

"Slick stuff was said but it didn't go more than that." Smallwood expressed how the comments never bothered him or his classmates because "they had smart mouths and could fight." A theme of gay men having to come across as aggressive in order to be left alone seems to be a pattern.

When it comes down to one

of the worst encounters Smallwood had to face dealing with homophobia at Langston, it could only be described as "embarrassing," Smallwood said. Smallwood had been interested in joining an organization in his early years here, being that he was friends with some members of that same organization. One of the members of the organization approached Smallwood and told him if he wanted to "be with them," Smallwood said he have to "lose that faggot shit." These are 2 out of many situations where gay students feel a sense of alienation and discrimination.

20-year-old Quency White, a sophomore nursing major from Fort Worth, Texas expressed a different set of experiences than the previous two testimonies. "I haven't had nobody bash me for being gay. They've just been really cool about it." White said. Being more on the masculine side, White believes this is one of the reasons he does not experience hate like Lewis. "That sucks because granted, I'm not as feminine as him but I'm still gay." White said. However, from previous experiences in high school, White was surprised with how his first year turned out. "I was really shocked though. A lot of people were open."

Even with a large presence of gay people at Langston, there still isn't any kind of group to support them. "People who go through homophobia on a day to day basis, they don't have that support," White said. White has always had that support about his sexuality from his family, but that isn't the case for a lot of LGBT youth. According to the National Network for Youth, LGBT youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than any other group.

Erin Cotton is a junior broadcast journalism major.

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