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Spring Forward draws record alumni attendance to share insights with current App State students

BOONE, N.C.— The App State Department of Communication recently brought home nearly 100 alumni from various fields to share powerful insights with current students during Spring Forward, an annual alumni and student networking event hosted in Walker Hall.

“Spring Forward is special because it creates an environment that connects students with alumni, giving them a chance to learn, network and gain real-world career advice,” said Logan Rogers, a student intern who helped plan the event.

Students heard from alumni working at news stations, creative advertising agencies, corporate PR firms, those who created their own path through self-employment and many other industries on interactive panels. In addition to the panels, this year, three alumni local to North Carolina served as guest speakers, providing students with focused insights and information.

“Attending Spring Forward is always so inspiring, but I feel being a senior adds much more meaning to the event. I had an amazing time connecting with the alumni and hearing what they have accomplished since graduation. Spring forward is an amazing opportunity I’m glad I have been able to take advantage of before I graduate!” said Abigail Bosner, a senior pursuing a degree in communication, public relations.

Inviting alumni to return to campus fosters strong alumni engagement with the department and allows students to learn valuable information from those who walked the same halls and are now experiencing success in their careers.

“As the signature event of The Department of Communication, Spring Forward celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. We marked that huge milestone in two unique ways. First, we featured three alumni keynote speakers, Kristine Panuski, Vice President of Marketing for Lowe’s Companies, David Jackson, President and CEO of Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, and Chad Campbell, Senior Director HR and Business Communications of Duke University Health System. Second, and perhaps most importantly, we selected five student interns that planned, organized, and executed the entire event,” said Ginger Hansen, senior lecturer of advertising and faculty advisor for Spring Forward.

The Department of Communication is looking forward to welcoming many more alumni and students back next year on March 26 and 27, 2026, for another exceptional Spring Forward event.

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Contact: Spring Forward Project Manager Erin Rice at springforward@appstate.edu