

UAP launches pathways to success series

By Victoria Cruz
News Writer

On Thursday, April 16, University Access Programs hosted the first installment of a three-part dining and educational series. Titled Pathways to Success, the goal of the series is to engage students in a new and unique way.

"We wanted to do something that could directly impact the students. These are all skills that will transfer into their future careers," social work major and event organizer Alyssa McGregor, a senior, said.

The first installment, *Legendary: How Any Student Can Become a Legendary Leader*, was presented by Lamarr Womble.

Womble is a nationally acclaimed speaker and life coach whose expertise is in becoming the best version of yourself.

His message has been shared with over 60,000 educators, students and professionals since 2008.

Womble opened the event by stating that passion, mindset and leading others impacts leadership.

He encouraged students to look inward to figure out how passion manifests into a mindset.

Statistics shared during the event stated that 79% of Generation Z youth have experienced loneliness or are currently lonely.

Womble believes this number is significantly high because many young people struggle with self-esteem issues.

"Unless you believe you are worthy of that love, that you are deserving of that love, then none of that will matter," Womble said.

Womble outlined that the basis of leadership



Students listening to speaker Lamarr Womble lead his seminar, *Legendary: How Any Student Can Become a Legendary Leader*, in Connecticut Hall Seminar Room on Thursday, April 16.

PHOTOS | VICTORIA CRUZ



Attendees of the event standing with speaker Lamarr Womble.

should be reflected by students' passion and drive.

"Define yourself by who you are, not what you do. What you do is part of who you are; it is not who you are," Womble said.

Womble said that his upbringing in Nebraska

allowed him to develop this mindset. Growing up, he was not accepted by his peers, and that influenced how he had to overcome his challenges.

"All it takes is one question about who you are to impact your confidence," Womble said.

Womble said that finding his passion led him to discovering a welcoming community and ultimately built his confidence.

Womble also revealed that his passion saved him, even when it was not what he pursued in his career.

"You never know what you're going to get on the backside of that opportunity. Sometimes, you got to go to see what you might learn that can possibly change your life," Womble said.

Womble said that sharing his story made it

easier to confront how it impacted him.

Womble underlined that vulnerability became a strength to overcome negativity.

"Until you start taking accountability for the things that have happened, your part in those things, you'll never be able to move on mentally," Womble said.

Womble said that security in his identity helped him move past things that have happened both emotionally and mentally.

He then transitioned the event into a workshop. Students used the lessons from Womble's seminar and applied it to their own lives.

Attendees were asked to reflect about who they are based on their values, philosophies, boundaries, impact, fears and goals.

Sociology major Jade Rose Robinson, a freshman, said that she learned a lot from Womble's advice.

"I'm definitely going to be taking away the emphasis on values. I feel like I haven't really been focused on that a lot because I have so many classes," Robinson said.

Robinson said that she plans to showcase the most important parts of herself.

The second installment will be held on Thursday, April 23, at 3:00 p.m. in the School of Business Community Room, featuring speaker and consultant Chris Collins.

The last session is April 30 at 3:00 p.m. in the Connecticut Hall Seminar Room, hosted by financial literacy speaker MJ Bridges.

"If you're just looking for a place to support you, affirm you and accept you, UAP is it for you," McGregor said.

Students share their own sustainability initiatives

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

Honoring Earth Day, students across campus found meaningful ways to give back to the environment through recycling, community cleanups, outdoor engagement and everyday sustainable habits that reflect a shared commitment to protecting the planet.

For computer science major Kerri-Ann Marshall, a sophomore, environmental responsibility begins with the choices she makes in her daily routine. Marshall said she focuses on reducing waste by reusing materials and recycling whenever possible.

"I recycle my water and juice containers," Marshall said. "I reuse my mason jars to store food and drinks."

Marshall explained that she also makes an effort to reduce her reliance on single-use plastics by choosing reusable alternatives.

"I am conscious about reducing waste by bringing reusable bags to the grocery store and refusing plastic bags for trash cans," Marshall said. Marshall said that small steps like these add up over time and help reduce unnecessary waste in the environment.

Beyond her personal habits, Marshall said she also tries to spread awareness about sustainability within her community by encouraging others to adopt environmentally friendly practices.

"I teach my family and friends about recycling

and ways to reduce," Marshall said.

Apart from going green, other students like accounting major Jayden Newell-Kemp, a junior, plan to take advantage of the Earth by stepping outside and reconnecting with nature.

"I'm going to sit outside and really soak it all in," Newell-Kemp said.

Newell-Kemp said that spending time outdoors is a way to appreciate the environment and reflect on its importance.

He also shared his participation in campus activities that promote environmental awareness.

"I recently attended a Resident Adviser event that allowed us to plant flowers," Newell-Kemp said.

Not only do activities like these help build a stronger sense of community, but they also allow students to contribute directly to improving their surroundings.

Other students took a more direct approach with their environmental responsibility.

For biotechnology major Ny'ela Porter, a sophomore, Earth Day is centered around action and service.

Porter said she has been actively involved in recycling initiatives and environmental cleanup projects throughout the year, including work focused on restoring damaged ecosystems.

"This year, I'm doing some community service by cleaning up a park," Porter said.

Porter said that in her Honors 300 Intro to Service class, she has

been researching and conducting invasive species removal.

"We've been removing knotweed vines, as they are invasive and suffocate the trees," Porter said.

Through these efforts, Porter and other students reflected on the broader responsibility people have toward the planet.

"We live on this Earth, and we inherited this planet and everything that comes with it," Marshall said.

Porter also connected her experiences to her coursework, noting that her service has helped her to better understand environmental challenges and the urgency of addressing them.

"This is the only Earth we have, and I feel like we're already seeing the effect of not taking care of it," Porter said.

She addressed that protecting the environment requires thinking beyond today's choices and taking responsibility for the long-term impact.

"Even if we aren't able to see the effects of it in our lifetime, we need to pave the way for a cleaner Earth for a future generation," Porter said. "It's going to be a mess if we continue on the path we're going by not taking care of the Earth."

Together, these students demonstrated that Earth Day is not limited to a single celebration, but a reminder of the ongoing responsibility that everyone has.

Through recycling, outdoor appreciation and hands-on environmental service, students show how individual actions can contribute to a more sustainable future.



Biotechnology major Ny'ela Porter, a sophomore, standing outside in the West Campus Quad on Friday, April 17.

PHOTOS | BRIANNA WALLEM



A succulent at the Adopt a Plant event on April 8.