

**Arkansas Tech University  
Student Government Association**

*Resolution 012  
March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018*

**RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING IN ARKANSAS**

WHEREAS: Only 25% of Arkansans currently have a college degree, and the state legislature intends to double that percentage to 50% by 2025 with the passage of Vision 2025 (Act 1082) and,

WHEREAS: The average debt of Arkansas graduates is \$26,859.00, and the percent of Arkansas graduates with college loan debt is 56% and,

WHEREAS: The Arkansas Challenge Scholarship has been reduced from \$5,000.00 for first-year students at four-year institutions during the first year of the scholarship in the 2010-2011 school year to only \$1,000.00 for first-year students in 2016-2017 school year and,

WHEREAS: The Arkansas Challenge Scholarship has also been reduced from \$5,000.00 each year to only \$4,000.00 for the second and third years and \$5,000.00 for the fourth year for students entering four-year institutions in the 2016-2017 school year and,

WHEREAS: Arkansas is among the lowest in the nation for college graduation and degree attainment rates, and

WHEREAS: Funding sources in addition to the Arkansas lottery may be necessary to maintain the Arkansas Challenge Scholarship and continue to support Arkansas students pursuing degrees and,

WHEREAS: Tuition and fees for all four-year institutions has risen by 36.2% from the 2005-2006 school year to the 2009-2010 school year, while state higher education funding has only increased by 14.9% during that same time and,

WHEREAS: The Arkansas Department of Higher Education has created and implemented Closing the Gap 2020, a master plan for higher education in Arkansas that redistributes funds allocated to institutions of higher education but does not add any additional funds and,

WHEREAS: Students of Arkansas Tech University would like to see an equitable distribution of these funds from the state legislature to reflect the size and performance of institutions, and

WHEREAS: Tax-free textbooks, alternative work-study programs, or other ways to assist Arkansas students in obtaining an affordable education should be explored and taken into account and,

WHEREAS: The student governments of the four-year public higher education institutions of Arkansas have united under the Arkansas Association of Students to advocate on behalf of their constituents in support of increased affordability of higher education in Arkansas,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Student Government Association of Arkansas Tech University strongly supports a necessary increase in higher education funding for four-year institutions and the preservation of the Academic Challenge Scholarship at the current amount, while efforts are made to restore the scholarship back to previous amounts, other methods of making higher education affordable and obtainable are thoroughly researched and considered, and an effort is made for equitable funding distribution for institutions of higher learning in the state.

Signed: Matthew Smith

Matthew Smith, President

Attest: Jayson Simmons

Jayson Simmons, Vice President

