



IdeaFestival Bowling Green 2019: *The Future Is Now*
February 13, WKU Campus
Speaker Information Packet

SARAH BELLOS, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF STONY CREEK COLORS



Sarah developed Stony Creek Colors to help lead the sustainable transformation of the textile dye industry and build the most transparent and profitable bio-based chemical company on earth. A recognized leader in efforts to bring bio-based colorant production to farmers in the southeastern U.S., she was given the Young Entrepreneur Award by the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists in 2015 and named an *Inc.* 100 Female Founders in 2018. A 2004 graduate of the Cornell University Agriculture School, she has over ten years of leadership experience in the textile, agriculture, and sustainability

industries.

Questions for the audience:

Before the talk

- Why do you think clothing manufacturers have been using synthetic dyes that are harmful to the environment when a natural plant can do the same thing?
- What are attributes that can go into making a crop sustainable?

After the talk

- What ideas do you have for a business that could also improve the environment?
- Why is it important to be able to increase the scale of production for indigo plant growth?

Quotation: “I want to change where I think farming could use a change, and where those farmers agree.”

Fun fact: Before Stony Creek Colors, Sarah ran a business with her sister that was called Artisan Natural Dye Works.

Video: <http://bit.ly/this-tenn-company>

Articles: <http://bit.ly/our-jeans-are-ruining>

<http://bit.ly/jeans-industry>

<http://bit.ly/stony-creek-forbes>

<http://bit.ly/this-tenn-company>

Website: stonycreekcolors.com

ROBERT BOWDEN III, FOUNDER AND CEO OF SPARTAN 4X4 LLC



Originally from Atlanta, Robert is a sophomore at WKU studying entrepreneurship. In 2015 he founded Spartan 4x4, a Bowling Green company involved in many areas of the automotive aftermarket industry. It offers a line of off-road lifestyle apparel, its own brand of off-road lighting and accessories, the online and physical retail and installation of automotive aftermarket parts, and personal-build consulting.

Questions for the audience:

Before the talk:

- What is a dream?
- Why do we dream?

After the talk

- Will you chase your dream, or will you always let it be a dream?
- How will you focus your dreams going forward?

Quotation: “I take a lot of small steps because that’s how they add up to your big goals.”

Fun fact: According to the *WKU Herald*, Robert’s career started when he “began using Instagram to market businesses in hopes of receiving free or discounted aftermarket car parts so he could transform his Jeep.”

Articles: <http://bit.ly/bowdenwkuherald>
<http://bit.ly/bowdendailynews>

Website: spartan4x4.com

ARIA L. BYRD, PHD CANDIDATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF TOXICOLOGY AND CANCER BIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY



A native of Atlanta, Aria received her B.S. in biology with a concentration in biotechnology from Albany State University and her M.S. in biology from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Her growing fascination with understanding how the body responds to both voluntary and involuntary environmental exposures has led her to pursue a doctoral degree in toxicology at the University of Kentucky. Aria has a passion for science communication and aspires to play an integral role in influencing national and global health policy by serving as a liaison for scientists and nonscientists.

Questions for the audience:

Before the talk

- What is your ideal career and why?
- What is your ideal journey to reaching this career goal?

After the talk

- What are the possible challenges that could arise during your aforementioned journey? How would you overcome these challenges?
- As one aspires for greatness, is the journey or the destination more important? Why?

Quotation: “I’ve constantly been in environments that have motivated me to refine my passions and find my niche in the science world.”

Fun fact: Aria started playing the tenor saxophone in middle school and played in the marching band throughout high school and college.

Articles: <http://bit.ly/candidate-selected>

Websites: asbmb.org/advocacy/atp
fillmorebrainsonlab.uky.edu

BRIANNA HARLAN, MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST & ACTIVIST FROM LOUISVILLE



Brianna uses creativity and radical vulnerability for good. She works to engage and support community at Center For Neighborhoods and uses visual art as a tool to create reflective and constructive experience. Recently she has been part of the Creative Capital-affiliated CFL Hadley Creatives, served as the Artist-in-Residence at Ox-Bow School of Art, and received a Great Meadows Foundation grant and the Kentucky Foundation for Women's FireStarter Award for art and social change. The first step of her work is always to break down the barriers of performative culture to reach a place that serves collective healing.

Questions for the audience:

Before the talk

- What do you wish you had more space for in your life?
- What's the biggest impact on a person or an event that you've ever made?

After the talk

- Pick your favorite anything. Now, why do you enjoy it so much? Be specific.
- If you could do a project with anyone that you know or have access to, whom would you choose?

Fun fact: Her grandmother, Mattie Jones, was inducted into the KY Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Quotation: “The greatest things that we get from life, we have to go to a vulnerable place to get them.”

Articles: <http://bit.ly/harlan-whas>
<http://bit.ly/harlan-insider-louisville>
kfw.org/firestarter-award-kfw/

Websites: briannaharlan.com/
centerforneighborhoods.org/
clouisville.org/grants-partnerships/hadley-creatives/

JOSIAH NELSON, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF TROLYSIS



Josiah is an engineer and entrepreneur specializing in renewable energy and emerging technologies. He studied at MIT and the Stanford Graduate School of Business before starting Trolysis, a company developing technologies to create renewable hydrogen from aluminum. He also serves as an advisor to Silicon Valley Bank and mentors founders from around the world.

Quotation: “I have been given tons of great advice in the past and whether I took it or not, outside perspectives always proved valuable.”

Fun fact: When he was in ninth grade, his family moved from Minneapolis, MN (population 400,000) to the town of Dublin, GA (population 16,000).

Podcast: <http://bit.ly/nelsonpodcast>
Articles: <http://bit.ly/nelsonhackernoon>
<http://bit.ly/nelsonusaweekly>
<http://bit.ly/nelsonmarketwatch>
<http://bit.ly/nelsonfuturist>
Website: trolysis.com/

PAIGE HALPIN SMITH, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AT FAYETTE ALLIANCE



Raised in the rural Midwest, Paige was actively involved in 4-H and loved following her grandfather's local government career. Paige moved to Kentucky to work on political campaigns after earning a Master's degree in U.S. History at Loyola-Chicago. She previously served as the Associate Director of Development for her beloved alma mater, Monmouth College. She has spent the past three years at the Fayette Alliance, a coalition of citizens dedicated to achieving sustainable growth in Lexington-Fayette County through land-use advocacy, education, and research.

Questions for audience:

Before the talk

- What are your core values? How do you describe yourself?
- Does how you define yourself reveal what you value? If yes, how so?

After the talk

- How can you create space in your life to learn, grow, and build bridges?
- What is one way you can invite someone to the conversation who might never have been included?

Quotation: “Growing up in the rural Midwest, I was taught to respect the land. Spending my twenties in Chicago, I learned to respect the diversity of all the people who called Chicago home. Now, making my home in Lexington, I value and am motivated to care for the land and all her people — that’s what makes our community extraordinary!”

Fun fact: In graduate school, she wrote a paper called “Caught in the Crossfire: Chicago Women’s Clubs, Public Health, and the Anti-Spitting Campaign in the Progressive Era.”

Website: fayettealliance.com

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