



Elon students gathered in 1889 for College Coffee and Campus Kitchen's grand opening Feb. 8. Leo Lambert and Smith Jackson addressed the audience, along with student director Amber Mathis. BRIAN ALLENBY | Staff Photographer

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## Students gather for opening of Campus Kitchen

Anderson said. "She really embraces the Burlington community."

At the event, Jackson addressed the audience gathered for the opening, and said the value of service has been a part of Elon since its founding.

Referencing former President Jimmy Carter's visit to Elon in 1989 following the creation of Habitat for Humanity on campus.

Jackson said he feels the "same

sense of excitement breaking new ground with the Campus Kitchen Project."

Lambert, who also spoke, said the kitchen serves as a teaching moment for undergraduates to experience service learning.

"Every once in a while, something new comes along that refreshes the soul and spirit of Elon University and that is this project," he said.

Following the remarks from Mathis, Jackson and Lambert, members of Elon faculty, donned in red aprons, prepared the first meal of lasagna.

The first year of Campus Kitchen's operation at Elon will be funded by a donation of \$50,000 from ARAMARK, which marks the 50th year they have partnered with Elon.

"They've been with Elon for a very long time and Elon has the (highest)

number of facilities per student," Mathis said. "Campus Kitchen was starting and they felt it was a good place for their money to go."

The Office of University Advancement is currently looking for donors for future years.

One class sponsored a "Minute to Win It" event, Mathis said, and donated about \$525 that benefited Campus Kitchen's pantry.

## Brian Williams to lead panel discussion of national events at spring convocation

Caitlin O'Donnell  
News Editor

NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams will moderate a panel discussing five issues facing the nation at the spring Convocation for Honors April 7. The annual event recognizes students on the Dean's and President's Lists, faculty members, the upcoming graduating class and members of the Elon Society.

The idea for the panel originated among Elon University's senior staff after discussing issues facing the nation and talking to students about what they felt was important.

"There seemed to be a confluence of nagging issues that are eating away at society," said Dan Anderson, assistant vice president and director of university relations. "The early concept was 'Our Children's Children' and the kind of world we're leaving for (them)."

President Leo Lambert held discussions with Brian Williams, an Elon parent, about his involvement in convocation, according to Anderson. After presenting the concept of moderating a panel discussion, Williams said he would like to participate.

Based on discussion with senior staff members and with future generations in mind, Lambert led the effort to develop topics addressing major challenges to come.

This included environmental and economic challenges, problems of terrorism and religious intolerance as well as political instability.

Sophomore Lyssa Gremminger, an engineering major, said she is particularly interested in hearing both Williams and the panelists take on science and technology initiatives within the United States.

"(It's) all things that threaten the very fabric of our society," Anderson said. "Let's find ways we can attack these systemic problems and really make a difference."

After introducing the panelists, questions will be posed by Williams and answered by the panel, which will include David Gergen, David Walker, Shirley Ann Jackson, Eboo Patel and David Levin.

"The idea was to find people who weren't partisan and didn't come in with any political agenda," Anderson said. "People who were well-informed authorities in these issues and have been doing significant work and could bring a level of expertise."

Williams has expertise as a moderator of town hall meetings and presidential debates, according to Anderson, and is well-suited for the event.

"He has a great deal of knowledge on world issues and years of experience working at the highest levels," he said.

More than 150 faculty, staff and students are involved on the day of convocation, according to Jeff Clark, executive director of cultural and special programs. This includes ushers, campus security, television services, first aid and environmental services, among other roles.

"My responsibility is to pull all of this together, make sure that all areas and contingencies are covered, make sure that the event looks great and is well rehearsed so that it all goes smoothly and begins on time," Clark said. "We have a great cultural and programs staff who carry many of the areas of responsibility and many of the faculty and staff assignments have been handled by the same people for several years."

In the past, convocation has typically been structured around one primary speaker or been performance-based with a musical element, Anderson said.

"All of our main campus events are meant to encourage community dialogue about big issues," he said. "It's important to the intellectual life of the university."

"I'll probably attend convocation because I need to

stay informed," she said.

Currently, there are plans to potentially involve panelists in smaller events prior to convocation with people more specifically involved with the issues discussed.

While this may not necessarily include people from campus, Anderson said local business or community members could be involved.

Anderson said all panel members are impressive, well-spoken authority figures who have worked with Lambert extensively prior to convocation.

"Some of these panelists will surprise people who might not be familiar with them," Anderson said. "I think with every single one of them, people will go 'wow.'"



Brian Williams, anchor of NBC Nightly News, will host a panel discussion concerning five national issues for Elon's annual spring convocation April 7. PHOTO COURTESY WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

### Who are the panelists and what will they be discussing?

*Question 1: How can we move beyond partisan gridlock and find the will to solve our nation's problems?*

Speaker 1: David Gergen, senior political analyst for CNN, adviser to four U.S. presidents, director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School and chair of the Elon University School of Law Advisory Board.

*Questions 2: How can we promote fiscal responsibility by government and not mortgage our children's and grandchildren's future?*

Speaker 2: David Walker, former U.S. Comptroller General and head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), and founder, president and CEO of the Comeback America Initiative.

*Question 3: What investments in science and technology must we make to show economic leadership, environmental stewardship and greater energy independence?*

Speaker 3: Shirley Ann Jackson, a physicist and president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, former chair of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

*Question 4: How can we promote reconciliation and understanding in an era of religious extremism that often fuels strife around the world?*

Speaker 4: Eboo Patel, an American Muslim of Indian heritage who is an author, journalist, member of President Barack Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-Based Neighborhood Partnerships and founder and president of the Interfaith Youth Core, which promotes religious pluralism.

*Question 5: What are the most effective measures we can take to improve the quality of K-12 public education in an era of declining government support and changing demographics?*

Speaker 5: David Levin, co-founder of the "Knowledge is Power Program," a network of high-achieving KIPP charter schools that serves 27,000 mostly low-income minority children in 20 states and Washington, D.C.