

Student Activities Council announces 2013-2014 lecture series

The Student Activities Council at Northwest Missouri State University has announced its SAC Speaks lecture series for the 2013-2014 academic year. The lineup includes a former NFL player who became an ESPN analyst and survived cancer, a sixth-grade teacher who ran for a Congressional seat, and the leader and co-founder of a legendary rap group that redefined rap music and the hip-hop culture.

"We try to bring in people who can touch multiple groups," said Lucas Clark, director of lecture programming for the Student Activities Council. "SAC chose these speakers not only because of their stories, but because they are diversely inspirational and knowledgeable and they have overcome obstacles to be successful."

All lectures are free and open to the public. They begin at 7 p.m. and take place in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom.

The mission of the Student Activities Council is to plan and administer activities for Northwest students, in order to contribute to a more well-rounded social, recreational and cultural life for the campus and community. SAC provides entertaining alternatives to students with late night activities and events throughout the year including concerts, lectures, movies and comedians.

For more information, contact the Student Activities Council at 660.562.1226 or sacga@nwmissouri.edu.

A complete schedule of this year's SAC lecture series appears below with more information about each guest.

Merril Hoge: Former NFL star, ESPN analyst and cancer survivor (Tuesday, Oct. 15)

After graduating from Idaho State University, Merrill Hoge was drafted into the National Football League by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1987. Hoge played with the Steelers until 1993 and led the team in rushing and receiving in four of his first five years. That year, he went to the Chicago Bears as a free agent, but he

was forced to retire after one year due to post-concussion syndrome.

Two years later, Hoge joined ESPN as a football analyst, where he currently works with Ron Jaworski on the highly acclaimed "NFL Match Up" show. Hoge has distinguished himself through his in-depth knowledge of both offense and defense and his strong relationships with coaches and players in the NFL. He is also an analyst for four other ESPN shows.

In 2010, Hoge published his first book, titled "Find A Way." Throughout his life, being able to find his way has helped him attain his goals such as playing in the NFL, as well as overcoming challenges and setbacks, from the death of his mother when he was young, to having to end his football career and being diagnosed with Lymphoma in 2003. Hoge is a long sought-after speaker, hoping that sharing his story will help others find a way to achieve their goals and overcome their setbacks and challenges.

Chuck D: Founder of the legendary group Public Enemy (Monday, Feb. 24)

Chuck D is the leader and co-founder of the legendary rap group Public Enemy, the author of two critically acclaimed books and a political activist, publisher, radio host and producer.

The release of Public Enemy's debut album in 1987 redefined rap music and the hip-hop culture. Between 1987 and 2009, Public Enemy released 13 albums, toured 63 countries and influenced hip-hop communities throughout the world. In 2004, Chuck D and Public Enemy were included in Rolling Stone magazine as one of the "50 most important performers in rock and roll history." Since then he has received other various awards and been featured in many documentaries.

In the past five years, Chuck D has hosted "On the Real/Off the Record" for Air America, on which some of the most important musical and political figures have been interviewed. Chuck D continues to make music and write prolifically on technology, politics, rap and soul music and race in the U.S.

Tierney Cahill: Teacher and former congressional candidate (Tuesday, March 18)

Tierney Cahill is a sixth-grade teacher at Sarah Winnemucca Elementary School in Reno, Nev. While teaching her students a simple civics lesson on how elections and the government works, Cahill informed her students that any American can run for political office. Her students did not believe that any “normal” American could run for office, and in order to inspire them, she dedicated herself to running for the District 2 Congressional seat.

Cahill began her campaign and ran as a Democrat. To her surprise, she beat the other Democratic candidates. Due to lack of funding for her campaign, Cahill threw herself whole-heartedly into the race, talking about the important issues including education, mental health and nuclear waste. Cahill received an unexpected 34 percent of the votes and although she lost, she succeeded in teaching her students the value of civic duty through project-based learning.

Cahill’s classroom experiment is a lesson in 21st century education. She utilized practical skills, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity and problem-solving, creating a memorable, real world project.