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WKU's Idea Festival moves online

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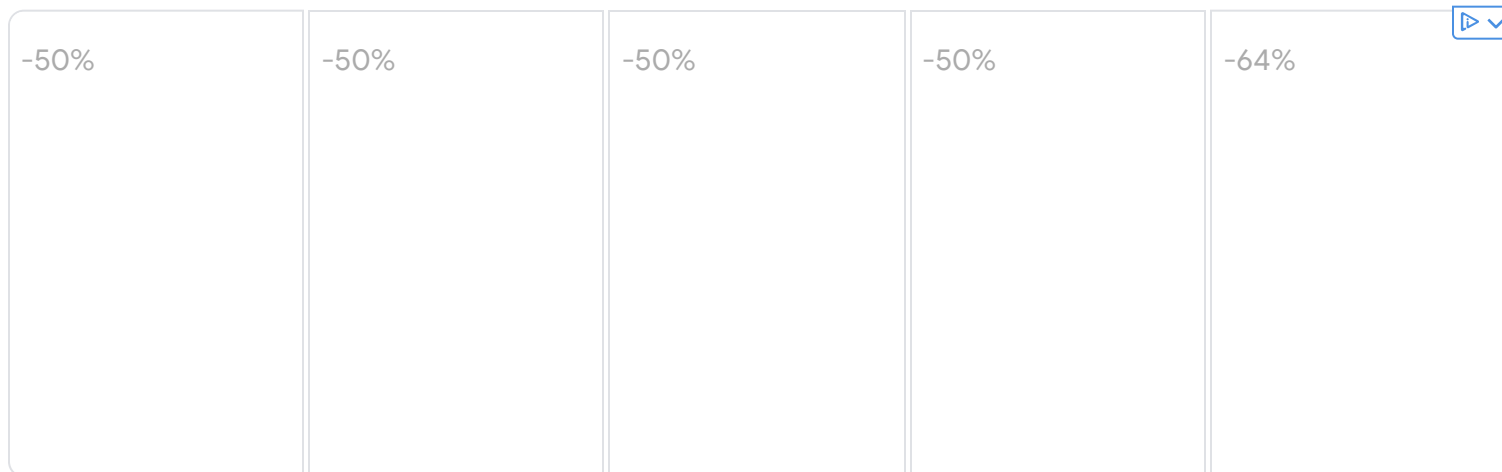


Vivie Johnson (from left) of Winburn Middle School, Skylar Mueller of Franklin-Simpson Middle School and Billie Phemister of Winburn Middle School carve blocks of wood to use in letterpress printing at IdeaFestival on Tuesday at Downing Student Union.

Austin Anthony/photo@bgdailynews.com

Each year, Western Kentucky University's Idea Festival draws students to its campus for a half-day event of engaging talks and activities. This year, however, the festival is moving online with a live-streamed event that will allow students to share questions, comments, photos and videos in real time.

Registration is open for the eighth annual Idea Festival, which will be held online in partnership with Vid Monster Productions on Feb. 17 from 9 a.m. to noon.



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“Our theme this year is ‘Restart, Rethink, Reimagine,’ ” said Erika Solberg, coordinator of special programs for WKU’s Center of Gifted Studies and the event’s main organizer.

“We’re coming into 2021 trying to get going again,” Solberg told the Daily News. “Any time that you’re in a period where you can’t do things the usual way, that actually can be a great time to innovate.”

Solberg said she hopes this year’s event will have a broader geographic footprint than previous years, given that the event is online. It’s featuring speakers from as far away as Los Angeles, and students from out of state have even signed up, she said.

The online event promises to offer students a half day of participatory talks and activities that will “provide insider access to places where ideas come alive and will inspire the

next generation of creators, thinkers and innovators,” according to a news release.

Students will get to virtually visit labs, studios and workspaces and hear from a slate of speakers during the event.

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They include Louisville native Frankie Lewis, a fashion designer and participant on season 17 of “Project Runway,” Amy Samples of agricultural technology startup AppHarvest and Bowling Green resident Janessa Unseld, a Gatton Academy student and finalist in the 2020 Breakthrough Junior Challenge, the release said.

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