

ChessFest News



Teacher creating brighter futures for rural children through chess to speak at ChessFest

Dr. Jeff Bulington, a chess teacher who established an award-winning, nationally-recognized chess program in rural Mississippi, will speak at the [Eugene McDermott Library](#) on the topic: “Chaos and Order: Towards a Philosophy of Early Chess Education.” Bulington, chosen as the 2018 recipient of the UT Dallas Chess Educator of the Year, is the featured speaker at the annual ChessFest awards ceremony to be held Feb. 27.

The awards ceremony is an integral part of ChessFest, a celebration of chess organized by the renowned [UT Dallas Chess Program](#) and the UT Dallas [Eugene McDermott Library](#).

Bulington’s inspirational story of how he created the first-ever school-centered chess culture in a rural community in the United States has been featured in many news stories and articles, including the television show “60 Minutes” and *Chess Life* magazine in 2017. Recruited for his creative approach to teaching children chess, Bulington started the first chess program in rural Franklin County, Miss. in 2015, and in less than two years, turned out numerous skilled champions.

Bulington grew up on the outskirts of Toledo, Ohio and rural Monon, Indiana. He learned to move chess pieces from his first grade teacher in 1972, but was introduced to tournament chess by a local farmer after moving to Indiana as a junior high school student.

Bulington earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree in philosophy from Purdue University. He also has a master’s degree in teaching and a PhD in curriculum studies from the Purdue University College of Education. He worked as a public school chess teacher in Memphis, TN. He is currently the executive director and lead teacher of the Southwest Mississippi Chess Foundation in Franklin County, Miss.



Jeff Bulington is using chess to change kids’ lives in rural Mississippi. He will speak at the annual ChessFest Awards ceremony at UT Dallas on Feb. 27.

A reception with refreshments will be held at 6:15 p.m. in the McDermott Suite in the library on Feb. 27. The awards ceremony and talk will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. **To attend, please RSVP with Luis Salinas at luis.salinas@utdallas.edu.**

“Blindfold Chess” to be held during Chess Fest Feb. 28

UT Dallas students have a chance to watch and even play some of the best chess players in the world — blindfolded! As part of ChessFest 2018, UT Dallas Grandmasters Angel Arribas from Spain and Dani Raznikov from Israel will play chess in the lobby of the Eugene McDermott Library from noon to 2 p.m. on Feb. 28. During the games, the Grandmasters will either sit with their backs to the board or be blindfolded, making it impossible to see the position of the pieces or touch them. The event is free and open to the public. **For more information, contact Jill McDermott at jill.mcdermott@utdallas.edu or 972-883-4951.**

