

Former Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean to speak at Alfred University

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ALFRED, NY Howard Dean, former governor of Vermont who last year sought the Democratic nomination for president, will speak as part of a new speaker series at Alfred University. Dean's appearance on the Alfred University campus at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 22, is funded by the AU Student Senate and coordinated by the Student Activities Board. In his presentation, Dean will discuss "Youth Involvement in the Political Process." Maurice Myrie, a senior at AU and student coordinator of the Student Activities Board Speaker Series, expects Dean will be a big draw. "He's a well-known figure, of the same caliber as (U.S. Senator) Hillary Rodham Clinton (who spoke at AU in 2000) and (U.S. Supreme Court Justice) Clarence Thomas (who spoke on the AU campus in 1998)," Myrie said. "Look at what he's achieved: he's a doctor, a former governor and a former candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination." Last year, Dean, 56, sought the Democratic nomination for president, which ultimately went to U.S. Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts. Dean recently announced he would seek the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee. Dean is founder and honorary chairman of Democracy for America, a political action committee that, according to its website, is "dedicated to supporting fiscally responsible, socially progressive candidates at all levels of government from school board to the presidency." A physician by profession, Dean began his career in politics in 1983 as a member of the Vermont House of Representatives. He was elected lieutenant governor in 1986 and was re-elected in 1988 and 1990. He became governor of Vermont in 1991, when then-Gov. Richard Snelling died, and was elected to his first full term as governor in 1992. He served four more terms before leaving office in 2003. "This is truly an event that everyone can come to and enjoy, no matter where they're from, because it deals with something that affects everyone: politics," Myrie said. Dan Napolitano, AU director of student activities, praised student organizers, Myrie in particular, for their work in securing Dean's appearance on campus. "I think the Student Activities Board did an outstanding job getting someone we feel will appeal to students. (Dean) is someone who is very relevant on a national scale," Napolitano said. "Maurice deserves all the credit in the world for getting him to come to AU." Myrie said Dean's presentation will be the first in a series that will bring at least one "significant speaker" to the AU campus each year. Admission to Dean's presentation, which will be held in Holmes Auditorium, Harder Hall, is free. Napolitano said tickets will be made available beginning Feb. 1, with seating priority given to Alfred University students.