

Whether your wonders are about art, health, society or changing the world, we all have ideas worth sharing that we wonder about.

On Thursday, in an event from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., TEDxGreensboro held a forum at Triad Stage showcasing 13 speakers from Greensboro who gave sensational, mind-expanding TED talks that celebrated curiosity and new ideas.

The talks covered a wide range of topics: cryptocurrency, ghost hunting, a neuroscientific heart meter, new cancer treatment, art and dementia. Mayor Nancy Vaughan also presented an empowering talk on Greensboro. Throughout the day there were various kinds of entertainment.

Skip Moore, the curator of TEDxGreensboro, welcomed the audience of around 300 people Thursday morning with the important message that the event aims to explore, “the awe of the world and the wonder that we can accomplish something.”

The first talk opened with Mayor Vaughan who told the rich history of Greensboro. Vaughan shared with the audience the great progress that Greensboro has made over time – from prospering during the Great Depression, the construction of the railroad that gave Greensboro the nickname “Gate City,” to the Greensboro Four and the sit-in movement. Vaughan also mentioned the repurposing of Cone Mills and the fact that Greensboro is home to five colleges and universities, calling Greensboro “the wonder of the South.”

Jumping into the theme of wonder and exploring the new, the next talk entitled “Visualizing Data Leads to Better Local Decisions” was given by Stephen Sills. Sills explored how health issues like asthma are concentrated in low-income communities with substandard housing. “Housing is related to the health of the community,” Sills said.

Exploring health in a different way, the next talk entitled “Art and Dementia,” was given by Jessica Kay Ruhle. Ruhle founded the program “Reflections” where patients with dementia are invited to Duke University’s Nasher Museum of Art to engage in art on a regular basis. Ruhle explained how art helps patients form short-term memory, where one dementia patient even

asked, “is today a Nasher day?” This talk wowed the audience as it explored the mind through art.

The first entertainment act was a dance piece called “Hero Complexities,” performed by the Theatre of Movement, and led by director Duane Cyrus. Cyrus explained “Hero Complexities” is “investigating a confluence of questions that arise around themes of rescue, self-sacrifice and heroism.” In a riveting performance by six African-American male dancers, the audience was captivated by an exploration of history told through art.

The next two talks were given by Elizabeth Wayne, Ph.D. and Joseph Starobin. In Wayne’s talk entitled “Everything You Need to Fight Cancer is Inside You,” he gave an alternative way of thinking about and fighting cancer. Wayne discussed how we personify cancer like it’s a person to fight, but that it’s more personal. “When I say personal, I want you to understand that I mean using the cells inside of you and trying to get them to fight better for you,” Wayne said. In Starobin’s talk titled “Monitoring the Heart with a Miniature Sensor,” he explores how we can improve the quality of monitoring and predicting heart activity.

The day delved more into exploring what’s possible and the wonder of the unknown with other various talks, such as one titled “Ghosts are a Metaphor for Letting Go of Certainty,” by Deonna Kelli Sayed, where her main message was to follow the uncertainty. One talk entitled “Five Million Photographs from Space,” by Stephen van Vuuren, gave the audience a glimpse of the universe with a mind-bending film he created using millions of photographs of space.

Other entertainment throughout the day included an Irish music band called Shared Madness, with a step performance by Walsh Kelley School of Irish Dancing. One performance by Graymatter, an acoustic band that has a passion for “re-imagining and re-creating the songs of the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s.” Then, finally, the performance: “My Son, Miss Daisy, and the Road to Empathy” by Shelley Stolaroff Segal, LaShon Hill, Derrick Parker and MaryAnne Luedtke.

TEDx is all about the “spirit of ideas worth spreading.” Human fascination of the unknown leads us to think new ideas every day – ideas that can help change and empower our lives. The TEDxGreensboro’s theme of “Wonder” this year sparked powerful conversations about what it means to wonder and how we can change the world through our curiosity.

For more information on TEDxGreensboro visit: tedxgreensboro.com