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NEWS

For Immediate Release

2016 *Ouachitonian* yearbook earns top national awards from ACP and CSPA

By Katie Smith

January 25, 2017

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's 2016 *Ouachitonian* yearbook earned an All-American ranking from the Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) for the second consecutive year. The Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) also recognized the 2016 *Ouachitonian* as a Gold Medalist in its College Yearbook Critique. These are the highest awards given for yearbooks in the two organizations' critiques.

When judging a yearbook, the ACP looks at five areas: concepts/essentials; content; writing and editing; layout; and photography, art, graphics and typography. To receive the All-American ranking, a yearbook must earn high scores and at least four Marks of Distinction.

In her comments, an ACP judge praised the *Ouachitonian*, saying the book "truly reflects the year at Ouachita Baptist University." She added that "you can feel the sense of community throughout your yearbook." Other comments described the *Ouachitonian* as "strong," "unique" and "very good."

"The award was a huge surprise," said Amber Easterly, co-editor-in-chief of the *Ouachitonian* and a senior business administration and mass communications double major from Alexander, Ark. "I honestly had no idea we would be getting a critique back from the Associated Collegiate Press. When the critique came in with this award of four marks of distinction, I was so happy."

The CSPA critiques a yearbook extensively in three categories: reference, verbal and visual. The 2016 *Ouachitonian* scored highly in each of these and also received All-Columbian Honors in the reference and visual categories. All-Columbian Honors are awarded when a yearbook scores above a specified number of points in each category.

A CSPA judge congratulated the *Ouachitonian* staff in her comments, saying, "Great job on another solid gold metal rating. You do a great book."

"The critiques themselves are helpful; they show us how to improve writing and design," said Dr. Deborah Root, the *Ouachitonian*'s faculty sponsor and chair of Ouachita's Rogers Department of Communications. "The comments are very valuable because they improve the yearbook as a piece of journalism."

The staff spends much of its time seeking to create an award-winning yearbook. They are able to work on the book through its entire production, from concept to publication.

"To receive these awards is quite an honor because they are very reaffirming for the work and time the staff spends producing this book," Root noted. "The editors almost have a full-time job because they are responsible for developing the theme and concept, making writing assignments, editing and meeting deadlines."

According to Easterly, all the time put into producing the yearbook "was all so worth it. I have never been more proud of something in my life."

In addition to Easterly, members of the 2016 *Ouachitonian* staff include Co-Editor-in-Chief Robert DeSoto, a senior mass communications and Spanish double major from Sheridan, Ark.; Student Life Editor Abbey Little, a senior mass communications major from Hot Springs, Ark.; Sports Editor Ian Craft, a senior mass communications major from Celina, Texas; Sports Editor Zach Parker, a 2016 mass communications graduate; Academics Editor Robin Kelley, a sophomore elementary education major from Glenwood, Ark.; Clubs and Organizations Editor Taryn Bailey, a junior mass communications and speech communication double major from Kyle, Texas; Community Editor Blaine Surber, a 2016 mass communications graduate; Jacob Sorrow, a former mass communications student from Hot Springs, Ark.; Caitlyn Barker, a 2016 mass communications graduate; Kelsey Bond, a 2016 mass communications graduate; Sarah Hays, a senior mass communications major from Van Buren, Ark.; Erin Jackson, a senior mass communications major from Roland, Ark.; Laken Livingston, a 2016 mass communications graduate; and Haley Martin, a 2016 mass communications graduate.

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