Spring 2012

Newsletter Spring 2012

Grant Center for International Education
Ouachita Baptist University

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This year’s men’s tennis team earned the inaugural Great American Conference Championship and advanced to the quarterfinals in the NCAA tournament, falling to the eventual national runners-up. The team earned a 15-7 record for the season and boasts three All-GAC players. Head Coach Craig Ward was also named Coach of the Year by the GAC and the Jim Verdieck College Coach of the Year by the Professional Tennis Registry.

“One of the great privileges of my life has been coaching the men’s tennis team at Ouachita,” Ward said. “Since 1990, approximately 100 young men from countries across the world have chosen play tennis for the Tigers. During this time, we have become a nationally respected team that has often been in contention for a national championship.”

During Ward’s tenure, the Tigers have earned two No. 1 rankings, two final four appearances and six elite eight appearances in the NCAA championships. The team has also featured 25 All-American players, 23 Academic All-Americans and six players named to Academic-All American teams.

The 2011-12 eight-member team includes players hailing from Spain, Romania, Serbia, Brazil, Barbados and Germany.

“Their support and encouragement is something that we truly cherish,” said back-up doubles player Kenny Brazil. “They push us every day to be better players.”

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“These young men usually chose Ouachita because of our tennis team,” Ward said. “That only lasts four years. But the education they acquire and relationships made during their OBU experience last forever. They may come here as foreigners but they leave as proud and devoted Ouachita alums.”
From the desk of Director
Ian Cosh...

International education embraces the power of experiential learning. At the heart of this approach to learning is the simple realization that concrete reality properly reflected upon provides a powerful and transformative way to help people learn, grow, and develop.

This summer I had the privilege of leading 18 Ouachita students to South Africa to work with a Christian organization called PreventionTime SA. This organization is using the message of the gospel to help children to avoid becoming infected with the HIV/AIDS virus through discipleship and consistent mentoring using the world’s first HIV/AIDS Bible. Our students were given the opportunity to hear the heart-rending stories of those sufferings and then given the chance to participate in an effective ministry effort to address the challenge.

Engaging the heart and mind in active ministry during the day and following it up with adequate time of reflection in the evening gave each student the opportunity to reflect upon the common experience of the group. We live in a needy world in which most of us have been blessed with a good education and more than adequate provision for our physical needs. It is vitally important that we continue to encourage students to see themselves as global citizens who have the capacity to understand our modern world and participate in it with confidence and compassion.

Study around the world participants*

Austria: 3
Costa Rica: 11
England: 2
France: 1
Indonesia: 1
Italy: 2
Scotland: 1

Huckabee School tours United Kingdom

Ouachita’s Michael D. Huckabee School of Education took its second annual tour of the United Kingdom earlier this summer, a program that evolved out of OBU’s new partnership with Liverpool Hope University. The trip allows Ouachita education students the opportunity to experience the British education system first-hand and to meet with LHU’s education faculty.

Kathy Collins, instructor of education, led the two-week tour of London, Liverpool and Edinburgh. The four early childhood education students who participated include Monica Williams, a senior, and sophomores Kacy Wingfield, McColl Gutteridge and Caitlyn Johnson.

“We are all so tremendously grateful for the opportunity to travel to the U.K., to learn about the British school system and to see such a beautiful part of the world,” Collins said. “The people are wonderful over there, and we all had a fabulous trip.”

In London, the group toured the city and absorbed the culture, taking the opportunity to “get accustomed to hearing the English accents, learn about English money and eat traditional English breakfasts — and fish and chips, of course,” Collins said.

The group saw Wicked performed at the Apollo Victoria Theater and also witnessed preparations around the city for the Queen’s Jubilee and the summer Olympics.

The group stayed on the LHU campus in Liverpool and had the opportunity to visit with the school’s education faculty. Professor Bart McGetrnick, dean of education and professor of educational development at LHU, served as the group’s host and arranged for visits to several local schools for the Ouachita students. These visits “allowed us to see first hand what the British school system is like,” Collins noted.

Following their stay in Liverpool, McGetrnick led the group, along with two professors from St. Xavier’s University in India and another professor from LHU, to see Clifton Hall School in Edinburgh, Scotland. “That school was one of the highlights of our trip,” Collins said, because the Ouachita students were each placed in specific classes and given the opportunity to work with the children there. The group later attended the school’s production of Oliver and also toured the University of St. Andrews.

With a marketplace theme, the event featured vending stalls offering up food from nearly every continent as well as fair trade goods for purchase. A new addition to the festival, the fair trade market in the lobby of the conference center featured handmade crafts and jewelry made by women from all over the world. The festival partnered with OneMaker, Women’s Missionary Union WorldCrafts and OBU’s Students in Free Enterprise chapter to make this market available to benefit individuals and families in poverty around the world.

In addition to food and crafts, the festival featured culturally diverse entertainment from the Lyon College Pipe Band, which also performed in Ouachita’s weekly chapel program that morning. Several international students performed as well by playing the piano, singing and dancing.

The festival, which has become a hallmark event on campus, is an opportunity “to let our community and campus know who our international students are and a bit about their culture and, in particular, the food that they eat,” said Sharon Cosh, a second-language program coordinator for the event and coordinator of OBU’s English as a Second Language Program. René Zimny, assistant director of the Grant Center and coordinator for the festival, added that the event offers participants a unique “hands-on feel for other cultures.”

Cosh added that the Grant Center and International Club are proud to host the event as “a chance for our community to get to know and appreciate the interesting, intelligent and diverse group of internationals we have on our campus.”

2012 International Food Festival brings “The Marketplace” to Ouachita

McColl Gutteridge, Caitlyn Johnson, Monica Williams and Kacy Wingfield were each awarded $500 scholarships to participate in the Huckabee School of Education trip to Liverpool Hope during Summer 2012. These scholarships are made possible by Friends of the Grant Center membership dues.

The Grant Center for International Education and the International Club once more joined forces to host the 2012 International Food Festival Feb. 21, 2012, in OBU’s Walker Conference Center.

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