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The Ouachita Circle: The Alumni Magazine of  
Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita Alumni


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Spring 2016

# The Ouachita Circle Spring 2016

Ouachita Baptist University

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Q&A: GET TO KNOW PRESIDENT SELLS

| COMMENCEMENT HONORS 331 GRADS

| BIOMEDICAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM: YEAR ONE

# THE OUACHITA CIRCLE

Spring 2016



## *LEADERSHIP*

DR. BEN SELLS,  
16<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT  
OF OUACHITA



## Leadership & OBU go hand-in-hand

Leadership is a vital element in fulfilling Ouachita's overall mission. Whether it's faculty providing academic leadership in the classroom, staff members serving as leaders in their respective areas of expertise or student leaders gaining valuable leadership skills as they prepare to become lifelong leaders in their careers, churches and communities, the principle of leadership is woven into the very fabric of Ouachita.

But what does effective leadership look like on a practical level? A great starting point is emblazoned on our university seal which features the watchwords: vision, integrity, service. As this issue of *The Ouachita Circle* explores the theme of leadership, consider how vision, integrity and service are essential traits of true leadership.

The biggest news on campus this spring was the election of Dr. Ben Sells as Ouachita's 16<sup>th</sup> president. (See coverage on page 10.) His election followed an in-depth, nine-month national search process by the university's presidential search committee. The vision of that group, led by chairman Gene Whisenhunt, involved seeking to discern and affirm God's will for the person to become Ouachita's new president. That vision was nurtured and achieved through extensive prayer, research and discussion. As we look toward the future, Ouachita is indebted to the vision of the men and women who faithfully served on the search committee.

Integrity is another key to successful leadership. Among countless individuals who have served Ouachita with integrity over the years, Dr. Charles Wright is high on the list. In addition to serving as a beloved and respected professor, dean and development officer over 40-plus years, he was called on this past year to guide Ouachita as interim president during a season of transition. The integrity with which he led Ouachita is a worthy example for anyone to follow. Thank you, Dr. Wright, for a job well done! (Read his reflections on page 36.)

Service is a leadership trait that is virtually synonymous with Ouachita. This issue of *The Circle* is filled with examples of genuine servant leadership ranging from longtime Ouachita trustee Larry Kircher, who was awarded an honorary doctorate at commencement, to Dr. Hal Bass, who was named professor emeritus after 40 years of dedicated, inspiring service in the classroom and beyond.

Leadership and Ouachita are inseparable, especially authentic leadership that reflects vision, integrity and service.

**Trennis Henderson**  
*Vice President for Communications*

# LEADERSHIP

The supreme quality of leadership is integrity.

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*

A good leader takes a little more than his share of the blame, a little less than his share of the credit.

*Arnold H. Glasow*

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.

*Peter F. Drucker*

The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.

*Harvey S. Firestone*

Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers.

*Proverbs 11:14*

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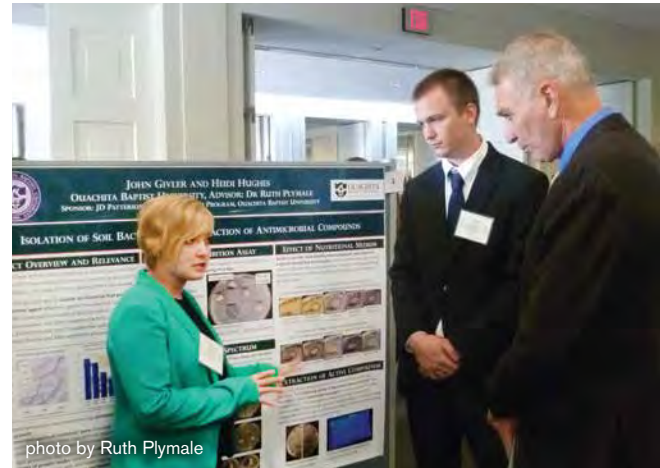
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# CAMPUS NEWS



## SENIOR BIOLOGY STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH FINDINGS ON CAPITOL HILL

A Ouachita research team presented its findings to members of Congress at the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Posters on the Hill event in Washington, D.C. Heidi Hughes and John Givler represented OBU on Capitol Hill among 60 undergraduate research groups from across the nation. Among the participating schools, Ouachita was the only university selected from Arkansas.

Posters on the Hill is hosted by the Council of Undergraduate Research, a national non-profit organization that promotes “high-quality undergraduate student-faculty collaborative research and scholarship.”

Hughes, a senior biology major from Hot Springs, Ark., and Givler, a senior biology major from Monroe, La., conducted research on antibiotic-producing bacteria alongside Dr. Ruth Plymale, associate professor of biology.

While in Washington, Hughes and Givler had the opportunity to discuss their work with Sen. John Boozman, Sen. Tom Cotton and Rep. Bruce Westerman of Arkansas as well as Sen. Bill Cassidy and Rep. Ralph Abraham of Louisiana to promote continued funding of undergraduate research.

“Presenting to members of our government was very exciting,” Givler said. “Seeing congressmen and senators excited for undergraduate research was encouraging and made all of our effort seem worthwhile.”

Plymale said her students’ acceptance into Posters on the Hill is just one example of how Ouachita is “a big school in a small school package.”

# UPDATE

## FOUR NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS TO BE INTRODUCED THIS FALL

New degree programs ranging from music business to biophysics are scheduled to debut this fall at Ouachita.

Interim President Charles Wright reported to trustees that university administrators and faculty have approved adding four new degree programs: a Bachelor of Arts degree in music business, Bachelor of Arts degrees in applied physics and physics/mathematics with a teaching emphasis and a Bachelor of Science degree in biophysics.

“There are demands for these,” Dr. Wright explained, adding that such degrees should help increase enrollment “and ultimately our mission” as a private, Christian liberal arts university.

According to the proposal approved by faculty for the music business degree, “enrollment in music business programs has steadily increased throughout the U.S., and we have had numerous students inquire about the possibility of a music business major at Ouachita.” The degree will be introduced this fall pending approval by the National Association of Schools of Music.

The BA in applied physics, which requires a co-major, is designed for “students who want more than a minor and desire the problem-solving skills a physics major develops but have designs of pursuing other career paths.”

The BA degree in physics/mathematics with a teaching emphasis involves a partnership among Ouachita’s physics, math and education departments. It is designed for students interested in being licensed to teach math and physics at the secondary level. Pending approval from the Arkansas Department of Education, Ouachita will be the first private university in the state to offer the degree.

The new Bachelor of Science degree in biophysics will be combined with a minor in chemistry or mathematics. The biophysics degree is designed to provide students “unique abilities to combine their science knowledge and various career opportunities after graduation.”



photo by Grace Finley

## ELROD AWARDS HONOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Ouachita’s Elrod Center for Family and Community honored Rachel Wicker with the Cargill Leadership Fund Award at its annual University Community Service Awards banquet April 19. The Cargill Award is presented to a student who has shown exceptional leadership and service during his or her time at Ouachita.

“The award was really special to me because, during my time at Ouachita, I have loved learning about serving others well,” Wicker said. “Getting the chance to do some of that through the Elrod Center has been so rewarding.”

Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president-elect, congratulated the students on their “amazing service.” Encouraging them to “give yourself to serving God’s purpose in your generation,” he added, “You will do a lot of good. You will honor the Lord. You will point people to Jesus.”

Other honors for community service and leadership included America Counts, America Reads and Peake Partnership Tutors; Campus Ministries Leadership Awards; ElderServe; International Student Service Awards; Kluck Student Enrichment Grants; TaxServe; Tiger Serve Day Leadership Awards; and TranServe.



## WILSON FELLOW DELIVERS CAMPUS LECTURE

Ouachita hosted retired U.S. Ambassador David Greenlee as a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow April 4-6. During his campus visit, Greenlee led discussions in both honors and faculty colloquiums, spoke in several classes and presented the Birkett Williams Lecture.

The Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellows, a program that brings prominent and diverse professionals to college campuses, coordinated Greenlee’s visit. Greenlee served as U.S. ambassador to Bolivia (2003-06) and Paraguay (2000-03) and spent a total of 32 years in foreign service. A graduate of Yale University and the National War College, he also served as a U.S. Army first lieutenant in Vietnam and as a Peace Corps volunteer to Bolivia.

Affirming that Greenlee’s visit to Ouachita “enriched our community,” Dr. Hal Bass, professor of political science, said, “He provided us with access and expertise that will enhance our ability to prepare our students for international opportunities that await them.”

## '99 HC QUEEN GOES VIRAL AS CHEWBACCA LADY

Candace (Sharp) Payne, Ouachita's 1999 Homecoming Queen, became an overnight Internet sensation when her Chewbacca Mask Lady video went viral. The video shattered the previous Facebook Live record with more than 140 million views – and counting. Her story has been featured on BBC News, BuzzFeed, *Good Morning America*, NPR, *The New York Times*, *USA Today* and more.

Payne shot the video as she donned a Star Wars Wookiee mask she bought at Kohl's. Her infectious laugh paired with such quips as "Oh, I'm such a happy Chewbacca" and "It's the simple joys" took the Internet by storm.

In a live interview on *Good Morning America*, host Robin Roberts told Payne, "You just make us happy, Candace. Bless you for that."

"In all honesty, the best part of all of this is being able to share joy with people," Payne said. "To see a child laugh that you haven't seen laugh, those are the stories I'm going to take with me every day."



photo courtesy of Candace Payne

## JPAC HOSTS FAMED CANADIAN BRASS

Ouachita's School of Fine Arts hosted Canadian Brass, dubbed "the world's most famous brass group," in a campus concert March 9 in Jones Performing Arts Center.

Canadian Brass, established in 1970, is considered a pioneer in bringing brass music to mass audiences. It was the first brass ensemble from the West to perform in the People's Republic of China and the first brass group to perform on Carnegie Hall's main stage.

"To have that caliber of musicians performing for our Ouachita community is an incredible joy," said Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of the School of Fine Arts.

"This world-renowned ensemble has played a major role in the popularity of the brass quintet."

Canadian Brass has sold more than two million albums, performed in front of sold-out audiences worldwide and made numerous major television appearances including *The Tonight Show* and *Today*.

According to the Canadian Brass website, "The hallmark of any Canadian Brass performance is entertainment, spontaneity, virtuosity and, most of all, fun – but never at the expense of the music. Whatever the style, the music is central and performed with utmost dedication, skill and excellence."



photo courtesy of Bo Huang

## ARKANSAS INTERCOLLEGIATE BAND INCLUDES NINE OUACHITA MUSICIANS

Nine members of Ouachita's Wind Ensemble were selected for the 2016 Arkansas Intercollegiate Band (AIB). The band performed in February at the Arkansas Music Educators Convention in Hot Springs.

Student musicians from universities around the state were selected for the ensemble by recommendation of their band directors. "It is an honor for the students to be selected to perform with the AIB," noted Dr. Craig Hamilton, Ouachita's Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music and director of bands. "Students learn from an outstanding guest conductor and enjoy the experience of performing with their colleagues from around the state."

Dr. Steve Peterson, director of bands at the University of Illinois, served as the guest conductor/clinician. The concert repertoire included "Shortcut Home" by Dana Wilson, "October" by Eric Whitacre and "Sound and Smoke" by Viet Cuong.

OBU students selected for this year's AIB include: Becky Bloodworth, a junior instrumental music education major from Arlington, Texas, on clarinet; Rachel Clifton, a sophomore instrumental music education major from Alma, Ark., on euphonium; Jason Potts, a junior instrumental music performance major from Springdale, Ark., on trombone; Wes Savage, a junior worship arts major from Rudy, Ark., on bassoon; C.J. Slatton, a freshman instrumental music education major from Paragould, Ark., on saxophone; Kaden Sosebee, a senior Christian studies/Christian theology and Biblical studies major from Fort Smith, Ark., on bass trombone; Blake Turner, a sophomore music major from Fort Worth, Texas, on trumpet; Sierra Westberg, a freshman instrumental music education major from Arkadelphia, Ark., on saxophone; and Hailey Whitham, a freshman instrumental music education major on horn.

## STATE VOCAL COMPETITION: OBU PLACES 10 FINALISTS

Ten Ouachita students were named finalists at the 2016 Arkansas National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) conference held recently at Henderson State University. Among the finalists, four Ouachita students earned first place awards.

Approximately 200 students from universities across the state of Arkansas attended the conference. Participants auditioned in classical or music theatre divisions.

“I think it is fair to say that our team of OBU voice professionals are extremely pleased and proud of all our students,” said Dr. Jon Secrest, coordinator of OBU’s vocal studies program and professor of music. “Not only those who were fortunate to win awards, but also those who are building on their performance skillset by participating in activities such as NATS.”

First place winners from Ouachita included Jessie Brunson, a freshman vocal performance student of Dr. Jon Secrest, freshman women division; Michaela Finley, a sophomore musical theatre student of David Stanley, lower college music theatre women division; Jacob Hemsath, a sophomore musical theatre student of David Stanley, lower college music theatre men division; and Kayla Walker, a junior musical theatre student of Dr. Glenda Secrest, upper college music theatre women division.

Second place winners from Ouachita included Aaden Jones, a sophomore musical theatre student of John Alec Briggs, upper college music theatre men division; Rachel Mack, a freshman musical theatre student of Dr. Jon Secrest, lower college music theatre women division; Alexis Morgan, a junior choral music education student of Dr. Glenda Secrest, upper college music theatre women division; Zach Myers, a freshman musical theatre student of Dr. Glenda Secrest, lower college music theatre men division; and Scotty Scott, a freshman musical theatre student of Dr. Jon Secrest, freshman men division.

Third place winners included Alexis Morgan in the junior women division and Scotty Scott in the lower college music theatre men division. Libby Villegas, a freshman musical theatre student of David Stanley, placed fourth in the freshman women division.



photo courtesy of Arkansas Capital Corporation

## BUSINESS TEAM WINS TOP AGRICULTURAL AWARD

L.B. Hudson and Evan McKinnon earned first place in the agricultural division of the Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup Collegiate Business Plan Competition with their entry, AGcorp. Two other Ouachita teams also competed in the statewide event.

Prior to the state competition, Hudson and McKinnon won OBU’s Business Plan Competition and the annual Henderson State University/Ouachita Baptist University Business Plan Competition with their plan for AGcorp. Ouachita teams claimed the top three awards in the HSU/OBU competition.

Hudson, a senior accounting and business administration/finance major from El Dorado, Ark., and McKinnon, a junior accounting and business/finance major from El Dorado, Ark., earned a \$5,000 cash prize for their Governor’s Cup victory.

“The Agriculture Award is unique in that it is given to the winner of a division comprised of both undergraduate and graduate teams,” said Dr. Chris Brune, assistant professor of finance and faculty mentor for Hudson and McKinnon. “I could not be more proud of the work they have done and the way they represented Ouachita.”

“Winning the agriculture division meant a lot to us because we knew that the set of judges that were judging the division knew a lot about agriculture and what it takes to have a successful business in the industry,” McKinnon said. “Knowing that they believed our business would be successful meant a lot more to us.”

.....

## FOUR STUDENTS EARN “SPEAK SIMPLY” AWARDS

Ouachita students won four of the 15 “Speak Simply” awards in the Undergraduate Research Poster Contest at the American Chemical Society (ACS) national meeting held in March in San Diego, Calif. Approximately 1,400 students from across the nation were eligible to compete in the contest, which requires participants to clearly present their research in around two minutes, using language free of technical jargon.

Students who won the award included Jessica Compton, Emily Harris, Nathan Hall and Rachel Tucker. A total of 12 Ouachita students representing the Patterson School of Natural Sciences and the Ouachita ACS student chapter had the opportunity to present their research at the meeting.

Over the four years that the ACS has held the “Speak Simply” contest, Ouachita students have built up a reputation of success, earning 18 of the 60 awards distributed. This year they upheld that reputation, receiving more awards than any other institution, representing nearly a third of the “Speak Simply” award winners.

“Our students’ strong communication skills and passion for research are a strong testament to their own individual talents as well as the collective efforts of all Ouachita faculty who mentor and instruct them,” said Dr. Marty Perry, professor of chemistry at Ouachita.





## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS HONORED AT ACADEMIC AWARDS BANQUET

More than 100 Ouachita students were honored at the university’s 2016 Academic Awards Banquet. The annual banquet is sponsored by Ouachita’s Student Senate.

Griffin Peeples, a senior accounting and business administration/finance double major from North Little Rock, Ark., was awarded Ouachita’s highest academic honor as the university’s Overall Academic Achiever.

Ouachita’s Senior Outstanding Woman and Man, selected by faculty and staff, are Sara “Cat” Williams, a senior psychology and biology double major from Roland, Ark., and Ben Lange-Smith, a senior psychology major from Harare, Zimbabwe.

Dr. Hal Bass, who recently was named professor emeritus of political science, was chosen by students as the Lavell Cole Most Inspirational Professor.

The Rotary Club Service-Above-Self Award was presented to Stephanie Westberg, a junior elementary education major from Arkadelphia, Ark. Numerous other awards were presented by the Carl Goodson Honors Program and Ouachita’s seven academic schools.

## STUDENTS & FACULTY EARN TOP HONORS AT ALPHA CHI CONVENTION

Ouachita students and faculty earned numerous top honors at the recent Alpha Chi national honor society convention in Alexandria, Va. An OBU student research team won the Collaborative Research Award, the largest prize of the convention, for the second consecutive year.

Junior Jace Bradshaw earned one of two national Edwin W. Gaston, Jr. Scholarships for undergraduate research as well as the Region II Scholarship and was elected as a Region II student delegate to the national council. Dr. Lori Hensley, holder of the J.D. Patterson Chair of Biology, earned one of two national Outstanding Sponsor Awards and was elected president of Region II.

Jace Bradshaw, Stoni Butler and Rebekah Davis were members of the research team that won the Collaborative Research Award, earning a \$5,000 prize for the chapter. The competition required students from at least three different majors to design and implement an interdisciplinary research project that fit a theme determined by the Alpha Chi national office; this year’s theme was “Transcending Boundaries.”

Dr. Hensley said she believes the reason Ouachita students have won the Collaborative Research Award for the second year in a row is because “they are not only creative and hard-working, but they are also excited about research and communicating what they learn.”

“I’m incredibly proud of them for representing Ouachita so well at the convention,” said Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs. “It’s a testament to the excellence and hard work of both our students and faculty that they were able to walk away with the top prize.”

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## OUACHITONIAN RECOGNIZED AS TOP COLLEGIATE YEARBOOK IN ARKANSAS

The *Ouachitonian* yearbook was recognized by the Arkansas College Media Association (ACMA) as the top yearbook in the state with the first place award in General Excellence for yearbooks. The publication was recognized at ACMA’s annual convention, hosted this year by the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. The *Ouachitonian* and Ouachita’s student newspaper, *The Signal*, earned a total of 40 group and individual awards.

ACMA is an organization of collegiate newspaper, yearbook, online, magazine and television staffs from across the state. In addition to first place in General Excellence, the 2015 *Ouachitonian* staff won 32 awards for individual entries. Aly Smith, a 2015 OBU graduate from Sherwood, Ark., and editor of the 2015 *Ouachitonian*, earned 14 individual awards for her work. *The Signal* received honorable mention in General Excellence and six awards for individual entries.

“I am proud of last year’s staff and the excellent publication the students produced,” said Dr. Deborah Root, chair of OBU’s Rogers Department of Communications and faculty adviser of the *Ouachitonian*. “It’s great to see the creative and critical thinking skills taught through our courses executed through the production of our yearbook and newspaper. We have very talented students who take pride in what they do, and I’m proud for them to be honored for the work they have done.”

## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM EARNS 11 STATE & NATIONAL AWARDS

Honoring diverse communications projects produced over the past year, Ouachita's Office of Communications staff recently earned 11 state and national awards from three professional communications organizations.

This year's honors included seven national awards from Baptist Communicators Association and one from Collegiate Advertising Awards as well as three statewide awards from the Arkansas chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators. Among this year's awards:

- *The Ouachita Circle* earned a Bronze Quill Award of Excellence from IABC/Arkansas and a national Silver Award from Collegiate Advertising Awards. This is the third year in a row that *The Circle* received a Bronze Quill Award of Excellence, IABC/Arkansas' highest recognition.
- René Zimny, assistant director of graphic services, received three national BCA second place awards for *The Ouachita Circle's* fall 2015 cover design, as well as the design of a Chinese recruiting brochure for the Grant Center for International Education and the Festival of Christmas poster for the School of Fine Arts.
- Brooke Zimny, director of communications and marketing, received a BCA second place award for the design of the Bill Vining Legacy Wall in Sturgis Physical Education Center. (See related article on page 20.)
- Trennis Henderson, vice president for communications, received a BCA third place feature writing award for an article in *The Circle* highlighting the "While We're Waiting" grief ministry established by Ouachita alumni Brad and Jill Sullivan. The communications staff also received an IABC/Arkansas Bronze Quill Award of Merit for writing in *The Circle*.
- The Office of Communications staff received two awards, an IABC/Arkansas Bronze Quill Award of Merit and a BCA third place design award for the #OuachitaBound Acceptance Packet designed in partnership with the OBU Office of Admissions Counseling. The communications staff also received a BCA second place award in specialty item design for Dr. Jack's Coffeehouse packaging.



photo by Wesley Kluck

## FOOTLOOSE THE MUSICAL CUTS LOOSE IN JPAC

Bringing the fictional town of Bomont to life on the Jones Performing Arts Center stage, Ouachita's School of Fine Arts presented *Footloose the Musical* as its 2016 spring musical.

Scotty Scott, a freshman musical theatre major from Russellville, Ark., played Rev. Shaw Moore. Scott described *Footloose* as "a story of perseverance through adversity and grief," noting that "many characters in this show have experienced pain at a high level, and they work to overcome all obstacles put in front of them in order to do what they believe is best for the people around them."

Other students playing lead roles included Garrett Sayers, a senior musical theatre major from Greenwood, Ark., who played Ren, a city slicker teen who moves to a small town, and Hailey Weiner, a senior musical theatre major from Maumelle, Ark., who played Ariel, Rev. Moore's daughter.

Drew Hampton, Ouachita's assistant professor of theatre arts and director of the musical, said the production's appeal is designed to span generations. "It has the fun, the big laugh-out-loud stuff, but it also has some very still, dramatic moments," he noted. "For me, it's a very rounded theatre experience."

.....


## MUSE PROJECT SHOWCASES STUDENT WORK

Ouachita's Department of Theatre Arts presented its second annual Muse Project Feb. 18-22. This year's student-produced shows included "Render" and "Alone Together."

"Render" was written by Natalie Williams, a senior music and theatre arts major from Little Rock, Ark., and directed by Kyle Osmon, a senior musical theatre major from Rogers, Ark. "Render" is a fun musical comedy with a bit of a fantastical twist," Williams said. "It's quirky, romantic and fun to watch."

"Alone Together" was written by Walter Dodd, a senior theatre arts major from Little Rock, Ark., and directed by Stacy Hawking, a senior musical theatre major from Sherwood, Ark. Describing "Alone Together," Dodd said, "I feel like everyone can relate to searching for personal identity and understanding friendships, and that's what the show is about."

"The important part of this year's Muse Project is that student writers are getting to see their work produced with the help of other students," explained Eric Phillips, chair of the Department of Theatre Arts. "The collaboration of playwrights and directors is where a lot of new work for students is happening."

A stone lion statue is perched on a large, textured stone pedestal. The scene is set at night, with the statue and pedestal illuminated by warm, ambient light, possibly from streetlights or building lights in the background. The background is dark, with some blurred lights and foliage visible. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

# Effective servant leadership requires integrity, determination and focus

*By Tim Knight*

Over the years I've made it a point to read quite a bit about leadership from many different authors – from both secular and Christian perspectives. Though I've gleaned a lot from these authors, I've learned more from life's experiences. Often it's the things that humble us that help us to grow the most. When our daughter Ashley was about 6 years old, I overheard one of her friends ask her if I was a doctor. Ashley responded, "Yes, he's not a doctor for your body, he's a doctor like Dr. Seuss!" How's that for a humbling experience? So maybe the best leaders should start with humility.

Humility is a key, but when we think of a leader, we also think of someone who naturally brings others along. They think things through and plan well. Good judgment is a strength. They have a confidence that gives them courage to step out and do the right thing. Psalm 20:7 says, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." As believers, we want a leader's confidence to be fueled by trust in God.

Leaders commit themselves in areas that have long-term impact. Of course, true leadership begins in the home. Our influence on those who live within the walls of our homes can't be overstated. Parents, our words and actions matter. Obviously other places where lives are influenced include service in our churches, communities or charitable organizations. This extends to teachers and coaches because they also are setting an example and guiding development during the formative years. We need to remember that we're all leaders in many ways. These places of leadership may not be "official" or obvious, but we all have someone looking to us to step up and lead the way in life. We shouldn't let this overwhelm us. Instead we should thank God for the influence He's given us and ask Him to meet the challenges through us. Leading by example is a good place to start.

As individuals, we're not all able to lead from the top in each area of life, and often these leadership roles change with the stages of life. At times, a good leader is a follower. A good soldier follows orders but in doing so is often developing leadership skills along the way. Life has a way of giving us things to help mature us if we pay attention and learn from them. Good leaders are willing to learn and grow and mature personally and in the places of responsibility that God gives them.

Many life experiences have prepared me for today. It's a testimony to God's sovereignty that He prepares us the way He does. We also see this in the Bible. Joseph is a great example of someone who experienced hardships that he allowed God to use to develop his patience and leadership ability. Another inspiring example is Esther. A verse we hear often is Mordecai's challenge to her in Esther 4:14, "And who knows whether you have attained royalty for a time such as this." Let's lead from where we are in this particular stage of life.

It is human nature to over-value our contribution to whatever endeavor we might be involved in but this is especially true in our vocation. The truth is we all can be replaced regardless of our position. However, leaders go to work each day determined to make it hard for them to be replaced. This isn't in a selfish "look at me" kind of way but with an attitude that asks, "What's best for the team?"

Colossians 3:23-24 states it very clearly. "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve." Work ethic is important for a leader. Knowing when to rest is important but taking care of important details in our work is also a mark of

integrity that we look for in those who lead us. Work that gives purpose and meaning to our lives is a gift and trust from God. Let's be trustworthy.

During my time at Ouachita, one of the things that gives me a lot of pleasure is seeing alumni involved in their church and community – leading. We're involved in guiding students with a focus on content in their major, developing thinking skills, teamwork and myriad other things but one of the overarching goals is to develop leaders. The final section of Ouachita's Vision, Mission and Values statement specifically cites "committed to leadership." We place a great emphasis on servant leadership and encourage this by events such as Tiger Serve Day, the day each semester when hundreds of our students go out into the

community of Arkadelphia and serve people. We want our students to be successful, and a part of this success is in the leadership of serving others. People matter. Making a difference in this world will involve serving them with no expectation of reward or payment. This service in leadership takes on many facets, but one we've enjoyed seeing is the many alumni who have led the way and involved others in a "Serve Day" for their own communities.

When we think of leadership, many terms and concepts come to mind; character, integrity, determination, commitment, focus and passion, just to name a few. We

want to see evidence of these traits in our leaders – from our kids' teachers, their coaches, our pastors, our new president at Ouachita and our elected officials. These traits are sometimes difficult to measure, but they're what the world looks for in our graduates. These traits (and more) are also what God's Word instructs us to strive for. It is my desire to aim at cultivating Biblical leadership in our few years with students. It is my hope and prayer that we're helping students fully develop their Christian worldview that is so needed in our world today.

As alumni, you are an important part of our mission at Ouachita. You represent us in the world as you lead others and serve the Lord. We need you to help us think big, dream big, set higher goals and then achieve them with current and future students. We need your commitment to help us lead well into the future.

*"As believers,  
we want  
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*Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the Patterson School of Natural Sciences and professor of biology, served as vice chairman of Ouachita's recent presidential search committee. A 1984 Ouachita graduate, he also holds master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Texas at Dallas.*

# NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP



## *Trustees unanimously elect Dr. Ben Sells as 16<sup>th</sup> president of Ouachita Baptist University*

*By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications*

**P**ledging to help Ouachita “dream a larger dream” for the future, Dr. Ben R. Sells was elected Ouachita’s 16th president effective June 1. “Dreaming a larger dream is not new for you,” he told OBU trustees, faculty and staff. “It’s part of your heritage.”

Dr. Sells, who has extensive leadership experience in higher education, fundraising and missions involvement, was unanimously elected by Ouachita’s Board of Trustees during a special called meeting April 7. His election capped an in-depth nine-month presidential search process by a 12-member search committee, including 10 Ouachita alumni, chaired by Gene Whisenhunt, immediate past chairman of the OBU Board of Trustees.

Serving the past several weeks as president-elect, Dr. Sells previously served more than nine years as vice president for university advancement at Taylor University in Upland, Ind. Directing record fundraising efforts during his tenure at Taylor, he also had responsibilities for university strategic planning.

Dr. Sells “has vast experience in many leadership positions and a passion for Christian higher education,” said Whisenhunt, a 1983 OBU alumnus. “We believe Dr. Sells will provide exceptional leadership of Ouachita Baptist University.”

“Dr. Sells has a broad base of Christian, liberal arts experience and shares the values of our university honed by serving at a similar campus in a small town setting,” agreed Board of Trustees Chairman Jay Heflin, a 1993 OBU alumnus who served as an ex officio member of the search committee. He added that Dr. Sells’ “experience and giftedness is a wonderful complement to the unique set of needs that Ouachita has at this time in her history.”

Telling trustees he is “deeply honored and humbled” by the opportunity to serve as president, Dr. Sells affirmed “my solidarity with you in an unwavering commitment to steward, to sustain and to strengthen Ouachita’s mission.”

Citing “a confident call specifically to Ouachita,” Dr. Sells told trustees, “I don’t come to Ouachita with a specific agenda for the future. I believe that such a plan will emerge as we seek the wisdom of the Lord, listen to the voices of the Ouachita family and engage in candid and respectful conversations.”

With many of those conversations already under way on campus, Bryan McKinney, dean of the Hickingbotham School of Business, said, “I am excited about the future of OBU under Dr. Sells’ leadership. He brings new and fresh ideas and perspectives while also grasping the essence of Ouachita.

“During his first few weeks on campus, the first thing that struck me was his remarkable recall of names,” McKinney noted. “He is a tremendously personable leader. I expect he will quickly develop

**At our core, we are focused on forming people ... and that must remain foremost.**

## LEADERSHIP

meaningful relationships with students, faculty, staff, alumni and other OBU stakeholders.”

Dr. Sells holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and two degrees, a Master of Arts and a PhD in higher and adult education, from the University of Missouri in Columbia. As an undergraduate, he participated in the Oxford Overseas Study Program and in 2012 he earned a certificate from Harvard University’s Institute for Educational Management.

Other higher education experience includes serving as vice president for admissions and student life and director of university ministries at Southwest Baptist University and as an English instructor at Huaiyin Teachers College in China. He also has served as vice president for Avis Industrial Corporation, senior vice president of development for Enactus, coordinator of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board’s International Learning Center and director of the IMB’s International Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

Dr. Sells’ wife, Lisa, is the co-founder and executive director of Lift, an after-school faith-based initiative for elementary school students. They are the parents of four children: Emily (husband, Ben) Kenney, Patrick (wife, Sarah) Sells, Abby (husband, Tim) Miller, and Tyler, 14, who will be a high school sophomore this fall.

Looking to the future, Dr. Sells said, “At our core, we are focused on forming people – what Ouachita so importantly describes as ‘fostering a love of God and a love of learning’ – and that must remain foremost. We must not be tempted to do only what it takes to survive when it is possible to thrive. That is not our calling as Christians and that is not the character of this university.

“I cannot imagine a better time, a better opportunity for Ouachita Baptist University to lead the way in creating a more viable, more substantive and more enduring model of education,” he declared. “This is Ouachita’s opportunity to further define, to differentiate and to distinguish itself as a Christian university, as a Baptist college, that will provide to students unparalleled value over time.”

“Dr. Sells has already reached out to a number of faculty, staff, students and alumni to begin the process of planning for the future,” said Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs. “This collaborative approach, along with his deep commitment to promote academic excellence in a Christ-centered learning community, will serve the university well as we seek to advance its mission.

“Dr. Sells fully understands the challenges faced by Christian colleges and universities, but he isn’t intimidated by them,” Dr. Poole added. “On the contrary, I’ve been struck by the optimism, creativity and energy he brings to the task. I believe he will inspire all who love and value Ouachita to step up their support in order to meet these challenges and move the institution forward. I’m grateful to the search committee, the trustees and, above all, to God for bringing Ben Sells to Ouachita.”



photo by Jim Veneman



photo by Wesley Kluck



photo by Grace Finley

**Seeking to help alumni get better acquainted with Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita's new president, The Ouachita Circle held a recent question-and-answer session with him. Reflecting on initial impressions of his new leadership role, as well as future challenges and opportunities, Dr. Sells emphasized that he is "very optimistic about Ouachita's future."**

**Q:** You have described feeling called specifically to Ouachita. What are some of the key aspects of this process that God used to confirm your sense of call?

**A:** My call to Ouachita has been an unexpected journey. Though I strongly felt God was preparing me to be a college president, I didn't even know that Ouachita was searching for a president until someone reached out to me last September. I was initially very attracted to this university, but the clear sense of God's call developed after withdrawing from the presidential search process. I became incredibly unsettled and couldn't get Ouachita off my mind and heart. Those weeks became a pivot point in our lives. When the search committee allowed me back into the process and eventually recommended me as president, I had a sense that God had prepared me for this moment in Ouachita's history. I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to help lead this special community.

**Q:** During a recent faculty meeting, you officially were declared a Ouachitonian. What does being a Ouachitonian mean to you as you begin your new role as president?

**A:** Ouachita is a Christian liberal arts university, a place distinctly committed to academic excellence in a Christ-centered learning community. But we are more specifically *Ouachita* – rooted in Arkadelphia and related to Arkansas Baptists. This special place has a unique heritage, traditions and stories. To be a Ouachitonian is to embody both the larger global vision of what it means to be a Christian liberal arts university as well as the more specific traits and values of this place and its incredible heritage.

**Q:** You have explained that you are beginning your service at Ouachita "not with a plan but with an approach." How is that initial approach being shaped as you visit with students, faculty, staff, alumni and other constituents of Ouachita?

**A:** I began serving full-time as president-elect on April 11 to take advantage of the many opportunities to engage students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends during the final weeks of the school year which is filled with so many campus

activities. During these weeks, I've met hundreds of people, asked questions and listened to gain a better understanding of Ouachita. It's especially helpful to hear people respond to two questions: "What shouldn't ever change about Ouachita? And, what should change?" In August, we will launch a new strategic planning process that will invite the extended Ouachita family, including all alumni, to share their voice as we seek to sustain and strengthen Ouachita's mission for the future.

**Q:** This issue of *The Ouachita Circle* is highlighting the theme of leadership. How do you describe your personal leadership style and how will that impact your work at Ouachita?

**A:** In the Old Testament, it is said of David, the shepherd leader, that "he cared for them with a true heart and led them with skillful hands" (Psalm 78:72). That image of a shepherd with a true heart and skillful hands very much embodies what I aspire to be my leadership style. I want to intentionally and purposefully shepherd the Ouachita community – seeking the wisdom of the Lord and the counsel of those who care deeply about this college, helping dream a larger dream for this university and then mobilizing people and marshaling resources to translate that vision into reality.

**Q:** As Ouachita begins a new academic year this fall under your leadership, what are a few specific opportunities and challenges you look forward to addressing?

**A:** Building upon the search process and from the early weeks of listening to and learning from the people of Ouachita, I sense an emerging consensus to both deepen and expand the impact of Ouachita. This includes a clear understanding of what makes Ouachita, *Ouachita*. I want to help make those characteristics better and even more distinctive so that we deepen our impact. Expanding that impact includes growing enrollment in appropriate and strategic ways (e.g., we have just initiated a formal feasibility study for a nursing program). There will be other opportunities to emerge as well as challenges to face, but I'm very optimistic about Ouachita's future.



# FIRST OBU AT NLC GRADUATES MAKE UNIVERSITY HISTORY

*By Rachel Gaddis*

*Making Ouachita history during commencement on May 14, the first graduating class of Ouachita at New Life Church was awarded the university's first Associate of Arts degrees. Among the 14 graduates, four will be attending Ouachita's main campus in the fall, six will be entering full-time ministry and others will be transferring to other schools or starting work.*



OBU at NLC is located on the Conway campus of New Life Church. The program opened its doors for classes in August 2014 after the partnership was approved by Ouachita's Board of Trustees and the Higher Learning Commission. The off-campus degree program offers associate's degrees in Christian studies and general studies, combining Ouachita's liberal arts CORE curriculum with hands-on ministry opportunities through New Life Church.

"I think this graduating class proves this is a good partnership," said Dr. Brandon O'Brien, director of OBU at NLC and a 2004 Ouachita alumnus. "On paper, we have a very old and established university and a relatively young church. There are a lot of ways these two institutions are very different. What we've discovered the past two years is equipping, empowering and launching the next generation of Christian leaders – whether inside or outside of the church – these two institutions are committed to doing this."

O'Brien said combining the strengths of Christian higher education with those of the local church has not only resulted in a successful graduating class but also something new and impactful that others will want to imitate.

"I'm not 100 percent sure we knew what this program was or could be capable of when we started two years ago," he said. "We saw two great organizations with complementary values, but I don't think any of us completely understood what kind of impact it would make. We at OBU at NLC now have a clearer sense of who we are compared to when we started."

As this year's graduates prepare to continue their studies, enter the ministry or begin working, O'Brien said OBU at NLC is even more committed to helping students identify God's call on their lives. "We want to help students no matter what they feel called to and securing them in whatever their calling is," he said.

In addition to studying 46 hours in the same CORE classes offered at OBU's main campus – such as Bible Interpretation, Bible Survey, Composition I and Contemporary World – OBU at NLC students also take 15 elective hours, such as General Psychology or Spiritual Formation. At the same time, all students serve through New Life Church in some capacity.

Dr. Stan Poole, Ouachita's vice president for academic affairs, said he is proud of how the program combines "some of the real strengths of

*See OBU at NLC on pg. 16*

## COMMENCEMENT 2016

### *331 graduates honored; Kircher awarded honorary doctorate*

Celebrating Ouachita's 129<sup>th</sup> spring commencement on May 14, university officials conferred a total of 337 degrees on 331 graduates, including Ouachita's first Associate of Arts degrees earned through the Ouachita at New Life Church program.

This year's graduating class featured 142 honor graduates as well as 14 graduates who completed the Carl Goodson Honors Program and 32 members of the Alpha Chi national honor society. Also honored were three graduates who were commissioned with the rank of Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army: Benjamin Adcock, Joseph Hughes and Noah Myers.

Serving as honorary marshals were Dr. Hal Bass, professor emeritus of political science, and Dr. Charles Fuller, professor emeritus of music, who were honored during the commencement ceremony. Ouachita Interim President Charles Wright also recognized Nathan Lowman, a history major from Little Rock, who is a fourth-generation Ouachita graduate dating back 95 years to his great-grandfather's graduation in 1921.

Dr. Wright presented Larry Kircher, a longtime member of the Ouachita Board of Trustees, with an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree on behalf of fellow trustees. Board members voted to honor Kircher, a 1965 OBU graduate, in recognition of his "outstanding labors in business, civic and church life, as well as his generous and loyal service to his alma mater."

"It is with a very grateful heart that I stand in front of you today," Kircher responded. "Ouachita has meant a great deal to me and has made the difference in my life over the years."

Encouraging graduates to give their alma mater "your undying support," he said, "One of your obligations will be to always give a cheer for Ouachita. You need to speak highly of Ouachita. Who better to recruit new students to Ouachita than those who have just finished their education here?"

Kircher, who began serving at Citizens Bank of Bald Knob, Ark., in 1969, retired as president of the bank in

*See Commencement 2016 on pg. 16*





photo by Andy Henderson

2014 after 45 years of service. In addition to serving eight terms on the Ouachita Board of Trustees, he has served nearly 50 years as a deacon and treasurer at Central Baptist Church of Bald Knob

He and his wife, Molly, a 1964 OBU graduate, have two daughters, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The Kirchers have supported numerous projects and capital campaigns at Ouachita, including funding the Kircher Endowed Scholarship, the Kircher International Student Endowed Scholarship and the Kircher Study Abroad Endowed Scholarship. He was named a 2015 OBU Alumni Milestone Award recipient.

Jay Heflin, chairman of the Ouachita Board of Trustees, introduced Dr. Ben Sells, named OBU's 16<sup>th</sup> president effective June 1. Affirming Dr. Sells' unanimous election by trustees, Heflin said Dr. Sells and his wife, Lisa, "are a wonderful fit for our university."

"Graduates, your Ouachita experience has been a special opportunity for you," Dr. Sells emphasized, "and I want to suggest you have a special responsibility.

"Ouachita has prepared you exceedingly well to accept this special responsibility of contributing to God's redemptive purposes through your family, your vocation, your church, your community, this nation, this world," he added. "Your family and your alma mater will stand with you. We believe in you, we love you, we support you and we will pray for you.

"As you begin this transition from students to alumni, Ouachita is better because of you," he said. "As we dream a larger dream for Ouachita, your university asks you to help by living out the Ouachita mission whatever you do and wherever you go."

Dr. Wright told the graduating class, "Not only does this day represent the completion of a significant goal but it also presents a new beginning as you enter the next phase of your life. I say this from our hearts: It has been an honor to know you, to serve you and, most importantly, to love you."

Ouachita with a kind of innovative approach that allows students to have ministry opportunities very closely related with their educational experience."

"Through the partnership with NLC, if students go into a ministry setting after graduating, then they've seen modeled – through their involvement – a contemporary example of how a very vibrant church is doing ministry," Poole said. "They've participated in it, observed it and they've had training in it through the course material. That works well, the theory and the application, and that's what's exciting about the model."

Graduate Ally Brasko, a Christian studies major from Slovak, Ark., has worked on the staff of NLC's creative team. She said working alongside the pastoral staff has helped her learn more about herself, her capabilities and her gifts.

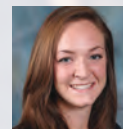
"It has been a blessing to see all that God has done with the students in partnership with the pastoral staff," said Brasko who will be transferring to Ouachita's main campus in the fall and plans to earn her bachelor's degree in Christian studies.

"There are many students who feel the call to be a pastor or be a part of the church in a significant way, and New Life has provided a way for them to grow in that calling while still being able to earn a degree from Ouachita," she added. "What you end up seeing is students being developed spiritually and intellectually, working toward a single goal: to best be who God has called them to be."

Tanner Bezet, a general studies major with a concentration in ministry from Conway, Ark., has worked with the Real Life student ministry at NLC Conway. He will be entering ministry full-time as youth pastor for NLC Conway before pursuing a bachelor's degree in business.

"These past two years have been a growing experience," Bezet said. "They have flown by, but I think the main reason is because I am attending classes in the same place where I am serving – all in the same four walls of the church. And now to be graduating, I couldn't be happier to use my degree to help further the kingdom of God."

O'Brien said the innovative partnership "is very consistent with the things that make Ouachita great and New Life Church great. I think it has helped both find strengths they didn't know they had."



*Rachel Gaddis, a mass communications major from Cabot, Ark., is a member of Ouachita's 2016 graduating class.*

# TOLLETT HALL DEDICATION HONORS FAMILY'S "VISION & GENEROSITY"

By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications

Expressing appreciation to Leland and Betty Blew Tollett "for their vision and for their generosity," Ouachita Interim President Charles Wright affirmed that the men's residence hall in Ouachita's Student Village "will forever be known as Tollett Hall."

The announcement came during a March 10 dedication service held in conjunction with the university's spring Board of Trustees meeting. Tollett Hall is part of the Student Village residential housing complex constructed in 2009. Tollett Hall, which features five four-story houses, can accommodate up to 148 male students. Amenities include a spacious first-floor lobby, upper-level terraces and two- and four-bedroom suites as well as study, fitness and theatre rooms.

Leland Tollett is the former president, CEO and chairman of the board for Tyson Foods. Among their ties to Ouachita, he and his wife, Betty, are the parents of one daughter, Terri Tollett Mardis, and one son, Gary Tollett, both of whom are Ouachita alumni.

"It is our great honor to recognize the Tollett family for their longstanding support of Ouachita and her mission," said Jay Heflin, chair of the OBU Board of Trustees. He noted that the Tollett family "exemplifies a steadfast and long-term commitment to the institutions and the values that they hold dear. At Ouachita, we're thankful that they hold dear to and have a commitment to our mission of loving God and loving learning. We greatly appreciate all that you have done for Ouachita and continue to do."

Mary Pat Anthony, secretary of the OBU Board of Trustees, thanked the Tollett family for the opportunity to "name and bless this part of the Student Village" in their honor. She invited those attending the dedication service to tour the facilities "to see the benefits Tollett Hall allows for our students today."

Concluding the ceremony held in the lobby of Tollett Hall, Dr. Wright described the Student Village and Tollett Hall as "beautiful, totally functional and unique."

"When we bring people over here who have not been on our

campus and they get the opportunity to see this," he added, "they're blown away by it because it is so wonderful and our students get to enjoy it."

Leland Tollett, who earned his bachelor's degree and master's degree in poultry science and nutrition from the University of Arkansas, started his career at Tyson Foods in 1959 in Springdale, Ark. He became chief operating officer in 1981 and was named to Tyson Foods' Board of Directors in 1984. He served as president and CEO from 1991-1995 and was chairman of the board and CEO from 1995-1998. He also served as interim CEO in 2009.

Tollett also has served on the Board of Directors of J.B. Hunt Transport Services and Worthen Banking Corp. Among his many

honors, he was named Man of the Year by the Poultry Federation in 1989 and was inducted into the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame in 2011 and the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2012.

Betty Tollett holds a degree in elementary education from the University of Arkansas. In addition to teaching elementary school, she taught third grade Sunday school for more than 25 years. As a breast cancer survivor, she was named honorary co-chair of the 2008 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

The Tolletts are active members of Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas (formerly First Baptist Church of Springdale) where they have been involved for more than 45 years.

Their daughter, Terri, is a 1984 *cum laude* graduate of Ouachita and a member of the Ouachita Board of Trustees. She holds her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law. She and her husband, Jimmy Mardis, are the parents of two children: Tracey Mardis, a 2015 *magna cum laude* graduate of Ouachita, and Nathan Mardis.

The Tolletts' son, Gary, a 1989 graduate of Ouachita, played basketball for the Ouachita Tigers. He is married to Michele Rector Tollett, also a 1989 Ouachita graduate. They are the parents of four sons: Trenton, Travis, Turner and Truitt Tollett.



photo by Andy Henderson



# BIOMEDICAL SCHOLARS

*Innovative program lays groundwork for students' future medical careers*

*By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications*

They call themselves the Biomed. They are the first 10 students in Ouachita's innovative Biomedical Scholars Program, an accelerated three-year program that was launched last fall in the university's Patterson School of Natural Sciences.

Graduates of the program will earn a Bachelor of Science degree in biomedical sciences with a minor in chemistry. Key components of the high-intensity program include clinical shadowing, experimental research, study abroad options, community service and mentoring.

"The program has allowed me a rare early glimpse into the medical field," said Morgan Lynch, a junior biomedical sciences major from D'Harris, Texas. "Being able to shadow during boot camp, participate in the streamlined course selection and study in classes tailored to prepare us for the medical field has been vital in encouraging my goals.

"The Biomedical Scholars Program has taught me the value in challenging myself," she added. "During the boot camp section of the program, I shadowed an OB/GYN and was able to observe live surgeries before I even began my studies. I know I still have a lot to learn before I'm a doctor, but seeing those doctors with their patients made it real and achievable for me."

"Science and medicine have always been my passion, what I want to spend the rest of my life doing," reflected fellow Biomed Matt Savage, a sophomore from Arkadelphia, Ark. "This program gave me the chance to pursue that more than I could have through a regular four-year track. The exposure to shadowing hours and the enthusiasm of the faculty here at Ouachita about the program really sold me on the idea."

The competitive academic program, which is limited to 10 incoming students per academic year, is the first of its kind in the region, according to Dr. Lori Hensley, Ouachita's J.D. Patterson Professor of Biology. Application requirements include a 30 ACT or higher and at least six hours of transferable college credit prior to admission at Ouachita.

Hensley described the program as "a strategic initiative designed to attract high-achieving students." She said it was developed "to address emerging public concerns about the cost of higher education, student loan debt for graduates and time to degree completion. These students will be going on to graduate and professional programs, and if we can help get them there a year sooner, we are happy to do so."



Detailing the boot camp aspect of the Biomedical Scholars Program, Hensley said, “Students are introduced to the clinical side of medicine before they even take their first class on Ouachita’s campus. Biomedical scholars are placed in clinical shadowing rotations, allowing them to see firsthand what it is like to work in a doctor’s office, a dentist’s office or a hospital.

“While other freshmen were moving in this past year, our biomedical scholars were at the UAMS simulation lab delivering babies and saving heart attack victims!” she emphasized. “Beyond this early exposure to the clinical side of medicine, biomedical scholars develop confidence and compassion as they study abroad. We hope to produce the future leaders of healthcare, and we believe that the distinctive experiential learning components of the Biomedical Scholars Program will help us accomplish that.”

In addition to the academic side of the program, the Biomed students quickly bonded personally and socially.

“The best benefit has been the other students,” Lynch affirmed. “The connections I have made with these like-minded students and the relationships we have formed are my favorite part about college. We support each other, challenge each other, keep each other focused on our academic goals and definitely learn from each other.”

“The major benefit for me, one I did not foresee, is the family I have built through the program,” agreed Kesley Brown, a sophomore biomedical studies student from Springdale, Ark. “My fellow Biomed students are my confidants. They are a constant in the chaotic college life.

“Our advisor, Dr. Hensley, is like a mom to us,” she added. “We actually call her ‘Dr. Mom.’ The support system here is one not easily replicated elsewhere.”

“I have never been surrounded by such like-minded individuals,” Savage said. “Our goals unite us and our personalities differentiate us. Their support keeps me going in any hard time.”

Hensley agreed that the personal relationships are a significant part of the program’s overall success and impact. “The students are the personal highlight for me,” she said. “I have thoroughly enjoyed spending time with the biomedical scholars, participating in events with them and watching them bond as a cohort. It is fun and amazing to see the support they provide one another and the friendships they share.”

As they complete their first year as Ouachita’s inaugural biomedical scholars, Brown and her fellow students already are looking to the future with eager anticipation. “Our professors all know our goals so they are able to give us very directional guidance in all our pursuits,” she said. “The biomedical scholars are going to leave Ouachita with an amount of preparation we would receive at few other institutions.”

Encouraging prospective biomedical scholars to explore the benefits of becoming a Ouachita Biomed, Hensley said, “If you think that the Biomedical Scholars Program may be a good fit for you, please come visit campus, schedule a meeting with me and talk to our current biomedical scholars.”

To learn more about the Biomedical Scholars Program, visit [www.obu.edu/biology/biomed](http://www.obu.edu/biology/biomed).



*The Biomedical  
Scholars Program  
has taught me  
the value in  
challenging myself.*

– Morgan Lynch



## LEGACY WALL HONORS STORIED CAREER OF LONGTIME TIGERS COACH BILL VINING

**H**onoring the life and legacy of longtime men's basketball coach Bill Vining, Ouachita officials dedicated the Bill Vining Legacy Wall in the lobby of Sturgis Physical Education Center Jan. 30. The display was dedicated at halftime of a men's basketball game in SPEC's Bill Vining Arena.

According to Athletic Director David Sharp, the recognition was designed to honor Coach Vining "for his Hall of Fame career as a player, coach and administrator at Ouachita and for his contributions to the game of basketball."

The legacy wall highlights Coach Vining's life and career in the four areas of Ouachita Origins, Coaching Career, International Impact and Faith & Family. He was joined by his wife, Carolyn, family members, former players and Interim President Charles Wright during the dedication celebration.

Expressing gratitude for the honor, Coach Vining reflected, "I appreciate what's been done. I think it speaks for itself. I had a lot of great things happen here at Ouachita. Hopefully this will be meaningful to some in the past and to the younger ones who come along. It says something did happen here some years ago."

Coach Vining, who enrolled at Ouachita as a freshman in 1947, played basketball and football for the Tigers for four years, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1951. As a student, he was senior class president, treasurer of Sigma Alpha Sigma, captain of the basketball team and a member of Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities.

After earning his master's degree, Vining coached at Ouachita from 1954 to 1989. During his 34 seasons, Ouachita won six Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference (AIC) championships and six National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 17 titles. The 1964-65 Tiger basketball team, which compiled a 27-10

season record and won the AIC championship, finished third in the nation in the 1965 NAIA Tournament.

Vining is a five-time NAIA District 17 Coach of the Year and three-time Area V Coach of the Year. He was inducted into the NAIA Hall of Fame in 1979, the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame in 1986 and the Ouachita Athletic Hall of Fame in 2003.

Along with coaching the Tigers, Vining coached U.S. teams in international competition in Europe, Africa, Central America and South America. During the 1977 World University Games in Bulgaria, he served as an assistant coach for the gold-medal Team USA. He also was head coach for Team USA in the 1978 Yuri Gagarin Cup in the Soviet Union. Among U.S. basketball stars he coached in international competition were Larry Bird, Magic Johnson and Sidney Moncrief.

Coach Vining earned his 500<sup>th</sup> career win in 1985, the first college basketball coach in the state to achieve that milestone. Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton proclaimed Jan. 18, 1986, as Coach Bill Vining Day in honor of his coaching achievement.

Legacy wall funding was provided through gifts from Coach Vining's former players, led by Kevin Crass, a 1981 OBU graduate and Tigers basketball player. The project was a partnership of the offices of Athletics, Communications and Development and the Department of Kinesiology and Leisure Studies in cooperation with the Vining family. Brooke Zimny, director of communications and marketing, designed the legacy wall. The historical display earned a national design award from Baptist Communicators Association.

Check out a video of the Bill Vining Legacy Wall installation at: <http://tinyurl.com/viningwall>

## OBU TIGERS COMPETE NATIONALLY IN BASKETBALL, WRESTLING & SWIMMING

Gaining success on the court, on the mat and in the pool, the Ouachita Tigers competed in national tournaments in three sports this spring.

Men's basketball won its second Great American Conference tournament championship in four seasons, defeating the Harding Bisons 72-56 to secure a spot in the NCAA Division II Tournament. David Berete and Lakee Westbrook were named to the GAC All-Tournament Team and Tirrell Brown was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player

Brown, the 2015 GAC Player of the Year and 2016 All-GAC First Team selection, led all scorers with 24 points. Westbrook, the 2016 GAC Newcomer of the Year, and Mahlon Martin followed with 10 points each. Berete, the 2016 GAC Defender of the Year, added seven points and four rebounds.

The Tigers have won two tournament championships and one regular-season championship during the five-year history of the GAC. With the win over Harding, Ouachita earned its second trip to the NCAA Division II Tournament. The Tigers fell to Northwest Missouri State in the opening round by a score of 78-53, finishing the season with a 19-13 record.

In wrestling, sophomore Blake Clevenger became the seventh Tiger to earn All-America wrestling honors with his third place finish at the NCAA Division II Wrestling Championships in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Clevenger's 6-4 decision win over Corbin Bennetts of Western State gave Ouachita Wrestling its 15<sup>th</sup> All-American in six seasons of competition. The Tigers finished 25<sup>th</sup> overall in the team standings, marking five straight seasons with a Top 25 finish.

The Tigers, led by Head Coach Todd Allen, claimed a Top 10 team finish at the D-II Central Super Regionals where Clevenger earned a spot in the championships with his runner-up performance in the 141-lb weight division. His finish sent Ouachita to the national finals for the fifth straight year.

Clevenger ended the seasons with a 26-10 record. His performance marks the sixth time a Ouachita wrestler has finished third or higher at the NCAA D-II Championships.

In swimming, Alexander Podguzov finished in the top 16 in both the Men's 100 and 200 Backstroke to give the Tigers six team points, good enough to finish in the top 30 of the NCAA Division II Swimming and Diving Championships. This was the Tigers' first trip back to the NCAA finals since 2013.

Podguzov, a freshman from Moscow, Russia, competed in three events at the national tournament. In the Men's 200 Backstroke, he finished 12<sup>th</sup> with a time of 1:47.35. In the Men's 100 Backstroke, he finished 16<sup>th</sup> with a time of 49.64. He finished 32<sup>nd</sup> in the Men's 200 IM.

During the NSISC Championships in Cleveland, Miss., the men's and women's swimming and diving teams sent a combined 31 individuals and relay teams to the medal stand. On the men's side, the Tigers finished fourth overall. The women's team finished seventh overall with 10 top eight finishes.



## INAUGURAL ALL-OUACHITA ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC TEAMS HONORED

Unveiling a new tradition at Ouachita, the university's Athletic Department announced the inaugural All-Ouachita Athletic and All-Ouachita Academic teams during its annual Athletics Award Ceremony April 25.

Athletic Director David Sharp noted that "the coaches came up with the idea of establishing the All-Ouachita Athletic and Academic teams. It's a significant award that reflects the overall excellence and quality of student-athletes at Ouachita."

Among the evening's top awards, Haley Hatcher claimed both the female Athlete and Scholar-Athlete of the Year awards. Tirrell Brown was named male Athlete of the Year and David Wray was named male Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

The inaugural All-Ouachita Athletic and Academic teams are comprised of individual student-athletes selected by their head coaches. Each recipient set the standard for his or her respective sport in competition and in the classroom. Haley Hatcher and David Wray represented their teams on both the athletic and academic squads. Abby Thomas was the only student-athlete named to the academic team in two sports.

**2015-16 All-Ouachita Athletic Team:** Vanja Bogetic, women's tennis; Tirrell Brown, men's basketball; Blake Clevenger, wrestling; Katie Cunningham, women's cross country; Connor Eller, baseball; Rachel Ewart, women's swimming & diving; Suzie Gresham, softball; Logan Hampton, men's soccer; Breanna Harris, women's basketball; Haley Hatcher, women's soccer; Vitor Oliveira, men's tennis; Abby Pickett, volleyball; Michael Russell, football; David Wray, men's swimming & diving.

**2015-16 All-Ouachita Academic Team:** Weston Cronan, wrestling; Dillon Farrell, men's soccer; Camila Ferreira, women's tennis; Haley Hatcher, women's soccer; Katie Kapler, women's basketball; Kailey Madden, softball; Jason Mechali, men's tennis; Javin Prunty, football; Abby Thomas, women's cross country; Abby Thomas, women's swimming & diving; Ashley Wake, volleyball; Justin Weigle, baseball; Jontavis Willis, men's basketball; David Wray, men's swimming & diving.



# CLASS NOTES

..... *connecting the circle* .....

## ..... 1940s .....



**Dr. J.D. Patterson ('47)** of Searcy celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with a luncheon on April 23. Dr. Patterson, a longtime dentist in Searcy, has served on the Ouachita Board of Trustees. Among guests attending the celebration from Ouachita were Dr. Tim Knight (left), dean of the J.D. Patterson School of Natural Sciences, and Phil Hardin (right), assistant to the president for administration. Photo by **John R. Baker ('61)**.

## ..... 1960s .....

**Jim Moore ('68)** retired after 40 years in the real estate business in El Dorado, Ark. He plans to divide time among being a goat herder, grandfather to seven grandchildren and Lake Hamilton.

## ..... 1970s .....

**Rhonda (Wiley '75) Jones** and her husband, Lynn, live in Kerrville, Texas, where they are retired and volunteer at the local university. She has written her coming-of-age travel memoir, *At Home in the World: Travel Stories of Growing Up and Growing Away*, and is now working on her next novel.

**Martin Thielen ('78)** published his seventh book, *Searching for Happiness: How Generosity, Faith and Other Spiritual Habits Can Lead to a Full Life*. He is the senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Cookeville, Tenn.

## ..... 1980s .....

**Jeff Bennett ('81)** recently published a solo piano book, *God Leads Us Along*, with Lillenas Music Publishing. He performs solo piano concerts and also performs with Stephen Nielson as a duo-piano team and with "A Festival of Keyboards," a four-piano concert tour. He serves as the worship pastor at Second Baptist Church of Houston, Texas, where he and his wife, **Sarah ('81)**, live.

**Rex Nelson ('82)** was named the honorary chair of the 2016 Arkansas Cornbread Festival. The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and Our House have been selected as beneficiaries of this year's event, which will be held in October.

**Grady Spann ('82\*)** has been named the division director of the Arkansas State Parks. He previously served as superintendent of Ozark Folk State Park, Historic Washington State Park and Parkin Archeological State Park.

**Robin (Harwell '87) Fleming** was promoted to senior vice president for technology at Angie's List. She previously was vice president of site operations, development operations and quality.

**Sherry (Hendrickson '87) Moore** is in her second year of serving as dean of academic affairs and college advisement at Providence Classical Christian Academy in Rogers, Ark. She and her husband, **Steve ('86)**, have two children, **Garrett ('18)** and Faith.

**Jay McAlister ('88)** relocated to Conway, Ark., where he is serving as senior pastor of Pickles Gap Baptist Church.

## ..... 1990s .....

**Tanya (Sollis '91) Spiva** is working as the controller at the Arlington Hotel & Spa in Hot Springs, Ark. She spent five years in accounting and before rejoining the hospitality industry in 2015. She and her husband live in Magnet Cove and have two sons.

**Rhonda (Warren '92) Williams** released her novel, *The Naming of Girl*, on May 2, published by Upper Hand Press.

**Tom and Christina (Srda) Armstrong ('97)** remarried on May 14, 2015.

**Amy Markham ('97)** was named a partner in the litigation and business law firm Spicer Rudstrom, PLLC. She helped open the firm five years ago and is an experienced litigator in workers' compensation and construction defect cases.

**Rob Crockett ('99)** and his wife, Mariela, recently moved to Mt. Pleasant, Texas. He previously served as the network manager at Ouachita and is now working for Guaranty Bank and Trust as the assistant vice president in the IT department and she will be working for

Mt. Pleasant Independent School District. They have two children, Natalie (11) and Ian (5).

**Dr. Jon McClure ('99)** moved his pediatric dental practice, McClure Pediatric Dentistry, to a new location in Frisco, Texas. He and his wife, Meredith, live in Plano, Texas, where she is an obstetrician and gynecologist in Frisco. They have two children, Quinn (3) and Collin (1).

**Corey McGaha ('99)** founded a new law firm, Crowder McGaha, LLP, in Little Rock, Ark., which will focus on consumer protection.

..... 2000s .....

**Dr. Myles Werntz ('00)** has been named the new T.B. Maston Chair of Christian Ethics at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon's Seminary. He previously served as an associate professor of biblical and theological studies for the School of Ministry at Palm Beach Atlantic University in West Palm Beach, Fla.

**Brandi (Rogers '00) Williamson** and her husband, Bryan, currently are stationed at Little Rock Air Force Base where he is active duty with the U.S. Air Force and she is a speech-language pathologist for a nursing home. They have three children, Emily (16), Peyton (6) and Matthew (4).

**Scott Wozinak ('00)** launched his own leadership development company earlier this year after working for 10 years on leadership development on the executive team of Chick-fil-A. Swoz Leadership delivers interactive workshops, on- on-one coaching and an online training program. He also recently published a teaching fable, *How to Fail as a Leader*.

**Carmen (Thrash '01) Berens** and her husband, Ryan, have moved to Dallas, Texas, where she is a realtor with Ebby Halliday and he is the assistant head of middle school at Trinity Christian Academy in Addison, Texas. They have one daughter, Claire.

**Whitney (Baker '02) White** has been named director of marketing at Pure Barre Little Rock. She began teaching classes there in December 2015 and will continue to teach in addition to her new role.

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**Jamie (Thigpen '03) Pelfrey** returned to church ministry after six years at home and will serve as the assistant director of children's ministry at All Nations United Methodist Church in Nicholasville, Ky. She and her family recently moved to Lancaster, Ky.

**Jon and Sascha (Lowery) Webb ('03)** have accepted a position at Life Church in Overland Park, Kan., where he has launched a new campus as worship pastor and she is serving as the executive director at The Well Counseling Center. They have three children, Isabella (10), Josiah (8) and Viviann (4).

**Beth (Hamilton '03) Reed** works as the communications director and volunteer coordinator for Sight.org, a missions organization that provides eye surgeries in Togo, Africa. She and her husband, **Austin ('03)**, live in Tyler, Texas.

**Chris McKinney ('05)** married **Keisha Pittman ('04)** on March 5 at Berry Chapel. They now live in DeQueen, Ark., where he is the plant manager of Tyson Foods in Broken Bow, Okla., and she is the director of digital media and web administrator for Fellowship Bible Church Northwest Arkansas.



**Dr. TaJuan Wilson ('07)** completed his doctorate of education with an emphasis in higher education administration from Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo., with a 4.0 grade point average. He is now serving as the executive director of multicultural student retention and TRIO program as well as the interim executive director for the multicultural resource center at Missouri State University.

**Sierra (Hagen '08) Laddusaw** received her Master of Library Science degree from Texas Woman's University in December 2015.



..... 2010s .....

**Rachel Griffith ('11)** married Berrick Brumley on Jan. 23 at First Baptist Church of Greenwood, Ark. They now live in Conway, Ark.



**Casie Neal ('11)** married Nate Rayes on Sept. 6, 2015, at Redemption Church in Gilbert, Ariz. They now live in Phoenix, Ariz., where she works for Pearson Education in sales and he works as a middle school science teacher and serves in the Army National Guard.



## FACULTY & STAFF

### PINTADO WINS MAJOR POETRY AWARD

Dr. Margarita Pintado, assistant professor of Spanish, won first prize in the poetry category of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture's (ICP) Literature Awards for her manuscript, "A Girl Who Looks Like Me." She received a \$3,000 cash prize and her work will be published in the ICP Collection of Literature Awards.

### HAMILTON EARNS MENTORING AWARD

Dr. Craig Hamilton, Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music, received the Association of Concert Bands' Herbert L. and Jean Schultz Mentor Ideal Award, which honors instructors who are inspirational figures to their students. Nominees are evaluated based on their resume, recommendations from former students and colleagues and overall capacity as an instructor.

### DEWITT EARNS HALL OF FAME HONORS

Dr. Terry DeWitt, chair of the Department of Kinesiology & Leisure Studies, was inducted into the Arkansas Athletic Trainers Association (AATA) Hall of Fame April 23. Inductees must hold state and national certification for athletic training, be members of AATA at least 15 years and have an achievement meriting recognition.

### MORRISON PRESENTS AT HAWAII EVENT

Dr. Becky Morrison, assistant professor of music and chair of Ouachita's Department of Music Education, presented research on "The Chest Voice Function in the Classically Trained Soprano" at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Hawaii International Conference for Arts and Humanities in Honolulu.

### JONES: SUPPORT STAFFER OF YEAR

Patty Jones was named Ouachita's Support Staff Member of the Year. Jones, who has worked at OBU 17 years, is a student account specialist and veterans affairs certifying officer in Student Financial Services. The award is presented to an individual who demonstrates outstanding job performance; relates positively to students, co-workers and the general public; and supports the mission of the university.

**Cory Epps ('12)** is serving as associate worship pastor at First Baptist Church of Rogers, Ark.

**Adam Hansen ('12)** married **Meagan Beal ('11)** on Nov. 21, 2015.

**Trevor Huxham ('12)** accepted the position of multimedia specialist at KJZZ 91.5 FM in Phoenix, Ariz.

**Amy Vaughan ('12)**

married Chase Wood on April 17 in Celina, Texas. They now live in Euless, Texas, where she is attending Baylor University's Louise Harrington School of Nursing and will graduate with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in May 2017.



**Natalie (Way '14) Burger** is the new owner and operator of CenterStage Dance and Cheer in Stuggart, Ark.

**Rusty Butler ('14)**

married **Jo Casey ('14)** on July 19, 2015, at Cypress Barn in Siloam Springs, Ark. They now live in Miami, Fla., where he serves as the creative arts pastor at Miami Church, a new church plant, and she works as a personal trainer.



**Kelsi (Bodine '14) Daniell** is serving as director of media and political outreach for the Boozman for Arkansas U.S. Senate campaign.

**Katie Hopmann ('14)**

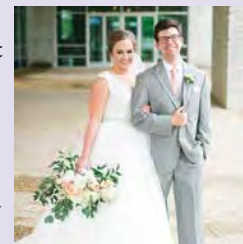
married Patrick Simpson on Jan. 9. They now live in Cypress, Texas, where she is a freelance writer and illustrator and he is a children's minister.



**Michelle Perez ('14)** was chosen as a 2015 McLarty Global Fellow at Vital Voices and Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security. Both of these organizations are based in Washington, D.C., and focus on women's issues internationally.

**Clark Whitney ('14)**

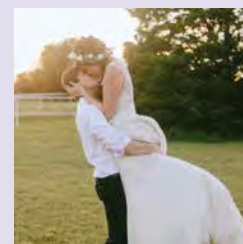
married **Aaryn Elliott ('15)** on June 13, 2015. They now live in Cordova, Tenn., where he is pursuing his Master of Divinity degree at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary and serving as the high school associate at Faith Baptist Church of Bartlett and she is teaching second grade at Dexter Elementary School.



**Michael Rogers ('15)** received a student grant award from EPIC Pharmacies, Inc. He was one of 16 pharmacy students who plan to practice in an independent pharmacy upon graduation.

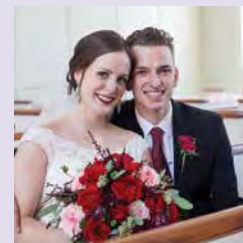
**Jillian Turner ('15)**

married Adam Harrison on July 25, 2015, at Harrison Garden in Boyd, Texas. They now live in Fort Worth, Texas, where she teaches voice and piano and accompanies ensembles at Lake Country Christian School and he works for Cumbie Advisory Services, Inc.



**John David**

**Whitmore ('15)** married **Alayna Rutledge ('15)** on Aug. 15, 2015, at Berry Chapel. They now live in Fayetteville, Ark., where he is preparing to enter the Walton MBA program at the University of Arkansas.



**William Peevy ('16)**

married **Elizabeth Bacon ('16)** on Aug. 8, 2015, at Berry Chapel. They now live in Rogers, Ark., where they both work as interns at First Baptist Church Rogers and are preparing to spend the next two years serving in Japan.



# FUTURE TIGERS

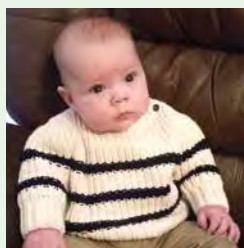
## 1990s

**Stephanie (Latiolais '99) Hall** and her husband, Steve, welcomed daughter Havanna Quinn on Aug. 7, 2015. She joins big brother



Landry. They live in Springdale, Ark., where they own a pediatric speech, physical and occupational therapy clinic.

**Bobby Tedder ('99)** and his wife, Joanna, welcomed son Stetson Stokes on Aug. 24, 2015. He joins siblings Grace (16), Natalie (12), Jack (12) and Emma (4).



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## 2000s

**Amy (Henderson '00) Arnold** and her husband, Neil, adopted two daughters, Alyssa (9) and Harper (3), from China in October 2015. They join siblings Hillary (11), Sophie (9), Julianne (7) and Jonah (6).



**Chad Melton ('01)** and his wife, Amy, welcomed son Matthew Levi on June 30, 2015. He joins siblings Caleb (10), Abigail (8) and Dalton (2).



**Bridget (Stroope '01) Schmidt** and her husband, Paul, welcomed daughter Paisley Abigail on Dec. 21, 2015. She joins big sister Presley (5).



**Dr. David ('02) and Dr. Kristen (Rickett '03) Nelson** welcomed daughter Charlotte Jane on Nov. 30, 2015. She joins big brothers Jonathan (5) and Jack (3). They live in Russellville, Ark., where he is an obstetrician and gynecologist and she is a pediatrician at Millard Henry Clinic.

**Michael Nutt ('04)** and his wife, Kelsey, welcomed son Ezra David on Dec. 4, 2015.



**Mandy (Pierce '05) Asberry** and her husband, Arron, welcomed son Judd Franklin on Dec. 16, 2015.



**Jon ('05) and Katie (McCormack '08) Hardin** welcomed son Charlie Ford on Dec. 21, 2015. Charlie is the grandson of **Phil ('73) and Shirley (Grant '74) Hardin**, both of whom work at Ouachita.



**Jennifer (Jerles '05) Wallace** and her husband, Doug, welcomed son James Levi on Dec. 15, 2015.



**Dr. Josh Moore ('06)** and his wife, Morgan, welcomed daughter Ally Madison on July 13, 2015. She joins big brother Liam.



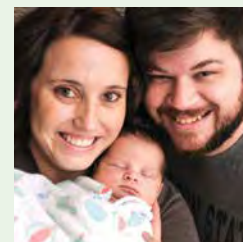
**Nick Riddle ('06)** and his wife, Holly, welcomed daughter Delilah Kate on April 23, 2015. She joins siblings Chloe and Brooks. They live in Hooks, Texas, where he is a video producer with Vertical Alliance Group and is the worship pastor at First Baptist Church of Hooks.



**Thomas ('07) and Christina (Srda '97) Armstrong** welcomed daughter Willa Sloane on July 2, 2015.



**Dustin and Stacy (Callas) Roberts ('07)** welcomed son Oliver Logan on Dec. 7, 2015.



**Matthew and Sarah (Hassell) Clarkson ('08)** welcomed twins Katherine Jane and Claire Elizabeth on Aug. 27, 2015. They join big brother John (2). They live in Forney, Texas, where he teaches at North Forney High School and she works as the care coordinator for the Medical ICU at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.



**Jenna (Woodall '08) Haire** and her husband, John-David, welcomed daughter Royce Lynn on March 7. She joins big brothers Hudson and Carson.



**Marci (Morgan '09) Jeter** and her husband, Hudgens, welcomed daughter Morgan Lynn on Oct. 20, 2014.



**Dillon and Brittany (Cosh) McClain ('09)** welcomed daughter Zoey Tyler on Oct. 3, 2015. She joins big sister Perri. Zoey is the granddaughter of **Ian ('87) and Sharon (Fitt '96) Cosh**, both of whom work at Ouachita.



**Becca (Woodall '09) Owens** and her husband, Chuck, welcomed daughter Annalynn Joye on March 8.



2010s

**Amy (Wentz '10) Burnside** and her husband, Brandon, welcomed daughter Reese Olivia on Feb. 19. She joins big brother Mason.



**Audrey Anna (Harrell '10) Mortenson** and her husband, Jack, welcomed son Jack Walter on Dec. 21, 2015. They live in Conway, Ark., where he works in sales at Nephropath in Little Rock and she is a speech language pathologist with Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative.



**Jake ('10) and Hannah (Pfeiffer '12) Sligh** welcomed daughter Ava Kate on Jan. 7.



**Grant Turner ('10)** and his wife, Ashley, welcomed son Gideon Thomas on Jan. 7.

**Eric and Blair (Phelps) Varner ('10)** welcomed daughter McKinley Blair on March 18. She joins big brother Mason. McKinley is the granddaughter of **Bill and Sherri (Greer) Phelps ('81)**, both of whom work at Ouachita.



**Eric ('11) and Katie (Fisher '09) Mahfouz** adopted sons Josiah (2) and Walt (1) in 2015.



**Bryan ('12) and Kate (Cash '10) Davis** welcomed daughter Norah Jane on Aug. 13, 2015.



**Taylor and Jessica (Scoggins) Lamb ('13)** welcomed daughter Everly James on March 1.



**Turner and Meredith (Reeves) Roberts ('13)** welcomed son Finn Scott on Oct. 19, 2015. He joins big sister Norah Kate.



**Asaf ('14) and Wesley (Henson '16\*) Moreno** welcomed daughter Johanna Lilian on Oct. 21, 2015. They now live in Little Rock.



..... Faculty & Staff .....

**Dr. Margarita Pintado** and her husband, Eric Morelli, welcomed son Milo Ignatius Morelli on Jan. 27. Pintado is an assistant professor of Spanish.

**Kerra Stanley** welcomed son Noah William on Feb. 24. Kerra works as a building services employee in Harvey Jones Science Center.

**Kenny and Tawana Williams** welcomed daughter Kenslei Marie on Dec. 22, 2015. The Williamses both work in the TRIO program at Ouachita.

# IN MEMORIAM

## 1930s

**Kathreen (Haynie '39\*) Thomas** of Mountain Home, Ark., passed away on June 20, 2015. She is survived by her two sons, Steve and Frank Thomas; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## 1940s

**Marjorie (Allen '42) Bishop** of Bradley, Ark., passed away on March 15. She is survived by her children, **Dickie Bishop, Jr., ('65\*), Ann (Bishop '79) Rogers, Sally (Bishop '81) Jones, Margie (Bishop '83) Van,** Jeanne Rothwell, Jim Bishop and John Bishop; 20 grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

**Sarabel Leech ('42)** of Benton, Ark., passed away on May 1. She is survived by her step-children, Jack Leech and Janet Kinkaid.

**Thelma (Crutchfield '42\*) Rice** of Waldron, Ark., passed away on Feb. 3. She is survived by her children, **Jalene (Rice '67) DeVorak, Fran (Rice '70\*) Chisum,** Larry Rice and Sen. Terry Rice; eight grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren.

**Sara (Moore '43) Cromer** of Pine Bluff, Ark., passed away on Aug. 27, 2015. She is survived by her children, Tom Cromer, Bill Cromer and Ann Miller; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

**Jimmie (Stewart '43) Hill** of Tucson, Ariz., passed away on Jan. 23.

**Burton "Lynn" Stout ('43\*)** of Southaven, Miss., passed away on Jan. 13.

**Marilyn (Henning '45) Howlett** of Oconomowoc, Wis., passed away on Dec. 16, 2015. She is survived by her children, John Howlett, Carol Foss and James Howlett; eight grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

**Sarah (Myatt '47) Major** of Jonesboro, Ark., passed away on Dec. 11, 2015. She is survived

by her children, Fred Major and Elizabeth Fitzgibbons; and three grandchildren.

**Carolyn (Caskey '47) Nelson** of Arkadelphia passed away on Nov. 22, 2015. She is survived by her brother, Mike Caskey; two children, **Lynda (Nelson '72) Samons** and **Rex Nelson ('82)**; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**O. Ray Gardner ('48)** of Birmingham, Mich., passed away on July 26, 2015.

**Robert "Bob" Gladden ('48)** of Little Rock passed away on April 4. He is survived by his siblings, Larry Gladden and Jessie West; daughters, Gay Pappin and Beth Coulson; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Otis Burns ('49)** of Beebe, Ark., passed away on Jan. 24. He is survived by his children, Richard and Cheryl; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Charlena (Edmondson '49\*) Midkiff** of Walnut Ridge, Ark., passed away on Jan. 29. She is survived by her sister, Aleen Cochran; five sons, Paul, Dr. David, **Lt. Colonel Stephen ('75), Phillip ('72\*)** and Daniel Midkiff; 16 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Patsy (Webb '49) Rhodes** of Houston, Texas, passed away on April 23. She is survived by her son, Ronnie Rhodes.

**Charlene (Williams '49\*) Steinbeck** of Little Rock passed away on March 27. She is survived by her sisters, Mabel Thompsen and Joan Overton; children, Debbie Roe and Greg Steinbeck; and one granddaughter.

## 1950s

**Austin Ingram ('50)** of Texarkana, Texas, passed away on Feb. 6. He is survived by his children, **Marla (Ingram '80) Gentry,** Reeves Ingram and **Melinda Ingram ('83)**; two grandsons; and one great-granddaughter.

**Rev. Harold O'Bryan ('50)** of Cabot, Ark., passed away on April 27. He is survived by his children, Joe O'Bryan, Jon O'Bryan, Jeff O'Bryan and Judy Springfield; and six grandchildren.

## THREE RETIREES WITH 70 YEARS OF SERVICE HONORED

Three retiring faculty and staff members with a combined total of more than 70 years of service to Ouachita were honored during a recent campus retirement reception.

The honorees included Dr. Hal Bass, professor emeritus of social sciences, who taught 40 years at Ouachita; Kathy Fendley, who served 14 years in building services; and Suzetta Glenn, who served nine years as a lecturer in music.

Noting that Dr. Bass has served at Ouachita since 1976, Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs, said, "It's not just that Hal has served for four decades. He has developed a distinguished career here and he's made an indelible impression on thousands of students and on the university."

Dr. Bass has been honored several times with the Student Senate Outstanding Faculty Member Award and received the Ouachita Purple and Gold Heart Award for outstanding service to the university. He has served as chair of the Department of Political Science, director of the Maddox Public Affairs Center and founding dean of the W.H. Sutton School of Social Sciences. He and his wife, Mitzi, are active members of First Baptist Church of Arkadelphia.

Kathy Fendley has worked in building services since 2002, working in Daniel Hall and more recently in Tollett Hall in Ouachita's Student Village.

John Hardman, director of facilities management, noted that Fendley "took the job to heart." He voiced appreciation to her "for your service, your friendship and, more importantly, the impact that you made on a lot of lives since you've been here."

Suzetta Glenn has served as a lecturer in music since 2006 in the School of Fine Arts.

Glenn "has been a constant source of inspiration to her voice students," said Dr. Poole. "She is loved and respected by the music faculty and, of course, will be very much missed. Thank you, Suzetta, for all that you've done for the vocal area, the Division of Music and Ouachita Baptist University."

**Tresa (Moore '50) Ross** of Little Rock passed away on Jan. 7. She is survived by her children, Kay Smith, Jane Bolen, Susan Lilly and Timothy Ross; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**George Tippin ('50)** of Ola, Ark., passed away on Feb. 26. He is survived by his sons, Ritchie and Dr. Philip Tippin; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**Rev. Charles Tope Sr., ('50)** of San Antonio, Texas, passed away on Dec. 13, 2015. He is survived by his wife, LaVerne Tope; two daughters, Cindy Jensen and Noelle Merritt; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**William "Russell" Miller ('52)** of Mountain Home, Ark., passed away on April 21. He is survived by his wife, **Ina (Smith '51) Miller**; two children, **Carol (Miller '76) Gresham** and **Ray Miller ('78\*)**; and one granddaughter.

**Harold Taylor ('52)** of Blacksburg, Va., passed away on July 19, 2015. He is survived by his wife, Carol Taylor; siblings, Peggy Beason, Mary Spalinger and Don Taylor; children, Laura, Joel and Todd Taylor; and four grandchildren.

**Jerald "Wayne" Eskridge ('53)** of San Antonio, Texas, passed away on March 6. He is survived by his wife, Verna Eskridge; brother, Robert Eskridge; children, Jeff, Jeri, Kay and John; step-children, Sue, Barbara, Mary, Cliff and Donald; 14 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Margaret (Neal '53\*) Myers** of North Little Rock passed away on March 10. She is survived by her children, **Bob Myers ('67\*)** and Judy Logan; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Retha (Moseley '53) Reed** of Darien, Conn., passed away on Jan. 15. She is survived by her daughter, Deborah Travers; two brothers, Robert and Charles Moseley; two grandsons; and one great-grandson.

**Martha (Moreland '53) Dewbre-Ryan** of Little Rock passed away on Dec. 18, 2015. She is survived by her sister, Carolyn Moreland; four children, **Steve Dewbre**

**('79), Laura (Dewbre '78\*) Wilson, Mark Dewbre ('81) and Monte Coyle ('82)**; 11 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

**Dalton Barnes ('55)** of Alma, Ark., passed away on Jan. 26. He is survived by his wife, **Krysteen (Lewis '54\*) Barnes**; two daughters, Cathy Rollinson and Sheila Barnes; three grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

**Ruby (Garrett '55) Reynolds** of Bismarck, Ark., passed away on Jan. 9. She is survived by her husband, **Alfred Reynolds ('55)**; brother, Sammy Garrett; three sons, Robert, William and John Reynolds; 10 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Rev. Jim Tillman, Sr. ('55)** of North Little Rock passed away on Jan. 16. He is survived by his wife, Margaret Bailey-Tillman; sister, Becky Scott; children, Jim Tillman, Jr., Cindy Parker and Vickie Burton; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Edward "Eddie" Blackmon ('56)** of De Kalb, Texas, passed away on Jan. 8. He is survived by his siblings, **Ella Reed (Blackmon '58) Braden, Tom Blackmon ('62) and Jim Blackmon ('62)**; four daughters, Margaret Freeman, Molly Blackmon, Kate Blackmon and Anne Payne; and three grandchildren.

**Lt. Col. Chaplain David White ('56)** of Louisville, Ky., passed away on Feb. 17. He is survived by his sisters, Julia Carlyle and Nancy White; children, David White, Rebecca White and Susan Wells; and two grandchildren.

**Dr. Raynal (Bell '57) Barber** of Dallas, Texas, passed away on Nov. 23, 2015. She is survived by her sister, **Joanna (Bell '51) Thompson**; three children, Anna Barber, John Barber and Grace Jordan; and two grandchildren.

**Donald Bowman ('57)** of Texarkana, Texas, passed away on Nov. 29, 2015. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Bowman; two daughters, Ruth Ciganinero and Lindsay Crain; six grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

**Rev. Billy Holmes ('57)** of Steelton, Pa., passed away on March 10, 2015.

**Thelma (Conant '57) Trout** of Bismarck, Ark., passed away on Jan. 27. She is survived

by her husband, **Rev. Ollie Trout ('56)**; siblings, Ross Conant, Lloyd Conant and **Velma (Conant '54\*) Seale**; two daughters, Pamela Hurley and Anita Douglas; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Carolyn (Jordan '58) Byrum** of Carlisle, Ark., passed away on March 22. She is survived by her husband, **Rev. Jim Byrum ('58)**; children, Dr. Jerry Byrum, Jim Byrum, Mary Jane Byrum, Nancy Posey and Ruth Ann Blair; 13 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Dwight Clark ('58)** of Independence, Mo., passed away on Jan. 31. He is survived by his wife, **Ann (Salter '58) Clark**; and step-brother, Arthur Trussell.

**Sgt. Donald Gwin ('58\*)** of Mayflower, Ark., passed away on Feb. 14. He is survived by his wife, Tommye Evans Gwin; children, Donald Gwin Jr., and Elizabeth Homsley; five step-children, Randall Evans, Craig Evans, Bobby Evans, Todd Evans and Pam Hensley; 25 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

**Ann (Seward '59) Barber** of Sacramento, Calif., passed away on Nov. 28, 2015. She is survived by her sisters, **Jean (Seward '55) Cahill, Helen (Seward '67) Davis and Patty (Seward '63) Mace**; and children, Deborah and Donald Barber.

**Matthew Coad ('59)** of Highlands Ranch, Colo., passed away on Dec. 16, 2014.

**Shirley (Hite '59) Davis** of Lincoln, Neb., passed away on July 12, 2015. She is survived by her husband, Charles Davis; children, Becky Davis, Mark Davis, Lisa Davis-Kovarik, Dena Marco and Cheryl Davis; and six grandchildren.

..... 1960s .....

**Dr. Doyle Smith ('62)** of Bryant, Ark., passed away on Oct. 20, 2015. He is survived by his wife, **Carol (Wenzel '65) Smith**; three sisters, Thelma Hall, Patty Stertz and Darlene Smith; four sons, Brian, Todd, Barry and **Lane ('05) Smith**; and six grandchildren.

**William "Skip" Wofford ('62)** of Alma, Ark., passed away on Feb. 19. He is survived by his wife, **Nancy (Magby '60) Wofford**; two

sisters, **Gwen (Wofford '66) Woodhull** and Gay Moore; children, **Wade Wofford ('88)** and **Wendy (Wofford '90) Johnson**; and five grandchildren.

**Nabeel Kteily ('63)** of Nazareth, Israel, passed away on Dec. 14, 2015.

**Martha (Barnes '63) Smith** of Mountain Grove, Mo., passed away on Oct. 3, 2015. She is survived by her husband, Basil Smith; siblings, **Dr. Larry Barnes ('68)**, Judy Fogle, Jane Green and Ruth Franks; and five children, Jennifer, Sean, Joe, Lisa and Tracy.

**Gloria King ('65)** of Hot Springs, Ark., passed away on March 28. A longtime educator, she served several years at Ouachita as an advisory specialist, visiting instructor and field consultant for the Arkansas Technical Assistance and Consultative Center.

**Edwin Franklin "Frank" Spainhour ('66)** of Hot Springs, Ark., passed away on Jan. 9. He is survived by his brother, Furman Spainhour; three children, **Frank Kipton "Kip" Spainhour ('92)**, **D. Scott Spainhour ('92)** and Amy Simmons; and nine grandchildren.

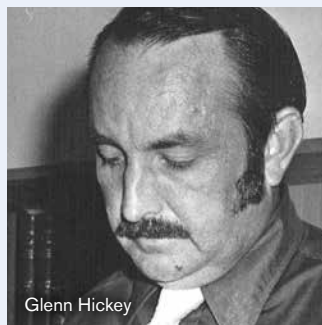
..... 1970s .....

**Willie Harris ('70)** of Little Rock passed away on Feb. 14. He is survived by his children, Dennis Harris, David Harris and De'Monde Shannon; and four grandchildren.

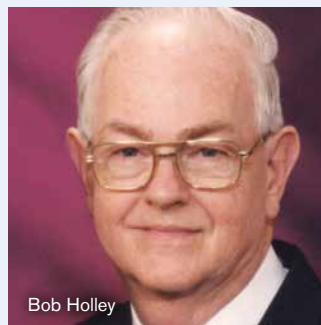
**Ava (Breashears '71\*) Abernathy** of Mt. Ida, Ark., passed away on Jan. 29. She is survived by her husband, **Alton Abernathy ('71\*)**; and siblings, Oweita Ledbetter, Mary Laird and G.A. Breashears.

**Joe Edds, Jr., ('71)** of Little Rock passed away on Dec. 15, 2015. He is survived by his mother, Ethel Edds; sister, Olivia Cary; son, Mark Edds; and three grandchildren.

**Bruce Swinton ('71\*)** of Little Rock passed away on Jan. 19. He is survived by his wife, Jeanette Jackson-Swinton; sister, Sharyn Swinton; four children, Darryl Swinton, Bruce Swinton, Jr., Brenda Day and Brianna Swinton; and six grandchildren.



Glenn Hickey



Bob Holley



John Knight

## OUACHITA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS OPENING HONORS HICKEY, HOLLEY AND KNIGHT

**H**onoring the lives of three longtime Arkansas leaders, Ouachita's Riley-Hickingbotham Library recently hosted the opening of special collections that reflect each of the three men's life work. The collections include papers and other memorabilia donated in honor of Glenn Hickey, Bob Holley and John Knight. A fourth collection features extensive government records from the city of Arkadelphia.

The three honorees, who all have ties to Ouachita, served in diverse leadership roles throughout their careers. Hickey was a former missionary to Brazil and director of missions for Pulaski Baptist Association, Holley was the longtime director of Discipleship Training for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and Knight was director of the Arkansas Department of Aeronautics.

Welcoming guests to the special collections opening, Interim President Charles Wright said, "On behalf of Ouachita Baptist University, we are grateful to receive the papers of these great gentlemen, these godly men. I can't tell you how significant and how important it is for a university like Ouachita to receive papers of this quality."

Dr. Ray Granade, OBU's director of library services, expressed appreciation to "the folks who were generous enough to donate" materials for the collections as well as the library and archives staff and student workers "for their hard work in making the collections available."

Dr. Byron Eubanks, professor of philosophy, voiced gratitude for the Hickey family providing papers in memory of Dr. Hickey, who passed away in 2013. Dr. Hickey graduated from Ouachita in 1949, where he

sang in a barbershop quartet and met his wife, Dorothy.

Noting that one of Dr. Hickey's missionary colleagues described him as "a Renaissance missionary because of his pursuit and use in ministry of a wide variety of interests including preaching, teaching, writing, counseling, learning languages, singing, ham radio, snow skiing and cycling," Dr. Eubanks said, "I think it's safe to say Glenn was a person of great mental and physical energy and talent."

Dr. Jeff Root, dean of OBU's School of Humanities, spoke on behalf of his father-in-law, Bob Holley, who was not able to attend the opening due to health issues. He and his wife, Lucille, currently live in an assisted living retirement community in Arkadelphia.

"It is my pleasure and honor to say a few words about my father-in-law, Bob Holley," Dr. Jeff Root said. "He did a tremendous amount of work all over the state, including training churches in discipleship, deacon care and marriage and family ministry. That training continues to bless people all over the state."

John Knight retired in 2014 following 27 years with the Arkansas Department of Aeronautics. He and his wife, Rose, are the parents of Dr. Tim Knight, dean of Ouachita's Patterson School of Natural Sciences, and Todd Knight, OBU's head football coach.

Concerning his father's collection, Dr. Tim Knight said, "It's history, it's aviation, it's agriculture, it's industry, it's the small towns in Arkansas that may not have had an airport that now have one or have one that is now better quality. If you start thinking about how all of those things are connected, you can see the uniqueness of this type collection."



**Susan (Yaeger '72) Gadberry** of Hot Springs, Ark., passed away on Feb. 19. She is survived by her husband, Lowell Gadberry; mother, Ella Mae Yaeger; two sisters, **Linda (Yaeger '67\*) Holt** and Kay Dunlap; and son, David Gadberry.

**Bruce Efird ('74)** of Mena, Ark., passed away on March 13. He is survived by his wife, **Susan (Lindsey '72\*) Efird**; two sisters, Lou Ella Gilchrist and Sharon Walters; children, **Anthony Efird ('99)**, **Neila (Efird '99) Schell** and Emily Heath; eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Rev. James "Jim" Horton ('76)** of Las Cruces, N.M., passed away on March 22. He is survived by his wife, Patricia; sister, Rosemary Griffin; brother, Lynn Horton; two sons, Chris and Todd Horton; and four grandchildren.

**Janet (Gates '76) Lane** of Sweet Home, Ark., passed away on March 7.

**Clifford Ray ('78\*)** of Crossett, Ark., passed away on Feb. 17. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn Ray; brother, Lonnie Ray, Jr.; children, Bill Ray, Fran Blankenship and

Pamela Oliver; seven grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

**Steve Dillard ('79\*)** of Little Rock passed away on April 8. He is survived by his wife, Kim Dillard; mother, Virginia Dillard; and two children, Clark Dillard and Kathryn Dillard.

..... 1980s .....

**Leon Biddle ('80)** of Little Rock passed away on Feb. 21. He is survived by his wife, Bessie Biddle; sister, Clara Biddle; and two daughters, Patricia and Crystal Biddle.

**Barbara (McMenis '80\*) Teaster** of Benton, Ark., passed away on Dec. 26, 2015. She is survived by her siblings, **James McMenis ('70)**, **Robert McMenis ('73)** and **Debbie (McMenis '75) Jeffcoate**; daughter, Susan Davis; and two grandchildren.

**Kimberly (Zachary '83) Hubbard** of Conway, Ark., passed away on Dec. 24, 2015. She is survived by her husband, **Tiffin Hubbard ('84)**; parents, Barbara Turner and Dalton Zachary; three sisters, Tammy Cable, Tracie Layton and Beth Turner; and nine children, Micah Hubbard, Whitney Hubbard, Tanner Hubbard, Anna Woods, Kaitlyn Swan, Tiffany Hubbard, Laurelise Hubbard, Jillian Hubbard and Sarah Hubbard.

**Karen (Spencer '84) Gilmore** of El Dorado, Ark., passed away on April 25. She is survived by her husband, Bruce Gilmore; mother, Janette Spencer; and sister, **Gail (Spencer '82) Margis**.

**David Green ('84)** of Fort Smith, Ark., passed away on Dec. 1, 2015. He is survived by his wife, **Majetta (Hundley '84) Green**; mother, Carolyn Nelson; siblings, Jody Wein and Jim Green; two children, Michelle Smith and Jonathan Green; and one step-sister, Beth Lefevre.

**Bobbie (Tiner '84) Joyce** of Pine Bluff, Ark., passed away on Jan. 6. She is survived by her sister, Mary Elizabeth Mobley.

**Retha Kilmer ('84)** of Malvern, Ark., passed away on May 5. Active in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention music ministry, she served as state handbell consultant and was involved in

## TWO EMERITI FACULTY MEMBERS REMEMBERED FOR DECADES OF FAITHFUL SERVICE TO OUACHITA

**D**r. Richard O. Mills and Russell W. Hodges, both named Ouachita emeriti faculty members in 2012, passed away in recent months. The two colleagues had a combined total of more than 70 years of service to the university,

Mills, professor emeritus of sociology, died Dec. 24, 2015, at age 69. Mills taught at Ouachita for 39 years, including 36 years as chairman of the sociology department. He earned both bachelor's and master's degrees from Ouachita as well as a doctorate in education from East Texas State University.

Mills is remembered by family members, colleagues and friends as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, professor and mentor to thousands of students.

Dr. Hal Bass, who was named professor emeritus of political science earlier this year, recalled that it was his "honor and privilege to work alongside Richard," adding that "faith and family were foremost for Richard, and both were fully demonstrated in his lifetime of service and commitment to his alma mater."

Mills is survived by his wife, Pam (Harrington '68) Mills; two daughters, Kara (Mills '96) Oosterhous and Jenny (Mills '98) Williams; and five grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to Ouachita's Mills-Harrington Scholarship Fund.

Russell Hodges, associate professor emeritus of music, taught 34 years at Ouachita. He took early retirement in 2011 due to health concerns. He passed away on March 16 in Oklahoma City at age 62.



Russell Hodges



Richard Mills

Hodges earned a bachelor's degree in organ from Oklahoma Baptist University in 1975 and a Master of Music degree in organ from Oklahoma University in 1976. He joined the Ouachita faculty in 1976, where he taught organ, piano and other courses. He earned a second master's degree in library science from North Texas State University and served as music librarian for OBU's Division of Music in addition to teaching. He also served as organist/choirmaster for First Presbyterian Church of Arkadelphia.

"Russell had a profound impact on the educational and musical development of the organ students while at Ouachita," said Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of the School of Fine Arts. He added that Hodges' former students "continue their love for the organ" in a variety of ministry and performance settings.

Hodges is survived by his father, Dan Hodges, and sister, Terri Pickering, and her husband, Jerry. A campus memorial service to honor his life was held April 15 in McBeth Recital Hall. Memorial gifts may be made to the Music Needs Fund at Ouachita.

the Master Singers, JoyWorks, PraiseWorks and PraizFest. She is survived by her brother, Randy.

**William “Bill” Wood (’84\*)** of Voorheesville, N.Y., passed away on Jan. 24, 2015. He is survived by his siblings, Bonnie Buddenhagen and Donna Susi; and three children, Justine, Adam and Emily Wood.

**Ether (Logan ’88) Bruce** of Little Rock passed away on Dec. 15, 2015. She is survived her children, Charlie Bruce, Ellna Givens and Dr. Sandra Nichols; 13 grandchildren; and 22 great-grandchildren.

..... 2000s .....

**Craig Strickland (’09\*)** of Springdale, Ark., passed away in January. He is survived by his wife, Helen Strickland; parents, Randy and Julie Strickland and Joanne and Larry Rhodes; sister, **Katie (Strickland ’10) Ryburn**; step-siblings, Jordan Jones, Jenna Jones, Ashley Harry and Shannon Rhodes; and grandparents, Elva Strickland and Bill and Mae Craig.

..... 2010s .....

**Kiley (Burnett ’10) Stuesse** of Wildwood, Mo., passed away on March 5. She is survived by her husband, Curtis Stuesse; parents, **Bruce and Sheri (Grober) Burnett (’83)**; sister, Megan Burnett; and grandparents, Johnny and Barbara Burnett and Marce Gray.

**Haley Olmsted (’14\*)** of Little Rock passed away on March 8. She is survived by her parents, Jon and Susan Olmsted; brother, Garrett Olmsted; paternal grandparents, Robert and Nell Olmsted; and maternal grandparents, Fred and Kathy Quick.

..... Faculty & Staff .....

**Leon Herrin** of Bismarck, Ark., passed away on April 27 at age 80. He served 18 years as a maintenance employee at Ouachita. He is survived by his wife, Maureen; two daughters, Renea Gosnell and Earlene Smith; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**Dr. Gilbert Morris** of Foley, Ala., passed away on Feb. 18 at age 86. Morris, a former professor of English at Ouachita, was a Christy Award-winning author who wrote more than 200 books of Christian fiction. He is survived by his daughters, Lynn Morris and Stacy Smith; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Jimmy “Red” Parker**, the Ouachita Tigers head football coach in 1996-1998, passed away on Jan. 4 at age 84. Parker, a member of the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame, also coached at The Citadel and Clemson University. He is survived by three children, Vicki Wallace, Cindy Yoos and Jim Mack Parker; six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

**Dr. Thomas “Tom” Turner** of Greenville, S.C., passed away on Feb. 5 at age 89. He was a former vice president for academic affairs and professor of physics at Ouachita. He is survived by his wife, Marie; four children, Debbie Little, Rev. Tom Turner, Jane Turner and David Turner; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

\* denotes former student

## OBU TRUSTEE BETTY OLIVER REMEMBERED FOR GENEROSITY & SERVICE

**O**uachita trustee Betty Oliver, a 1958 OBU alumna and lifelong supporter of the university, passed away April 9 at age 79. Mrs. Oliver, who served 58 years in various leadership roles with Arkansas’ Cooperative Extensive Service, was the longest-serving employee across the entire University of Arkansas system.

She began her career with the Cooperative Extension Service in 1958 after graduating from Ouachita. She started as an assistant home demonstration agent in Miller County and over the decades served as Pulaski County extension staff chair for the U of A Division of Agriculture. After retiring from that position, she worked at the extension service headquarters in Little Rock as volunteer coordinator in Family and Consumer Sciences.

Mrs. Oliver, who previously served two three-year terms as a member of the Ouachita Board of Trustees, was elected last fall to serve another three-year term. She also was recognized last fall as the honoree for the 2015 Stepping Up for Ouachita luncheon,

an annual event that has raised more than \$350,000 in scholarships for female students since its inception.

“All who have known Betty Oliver through the years are experiencing the deep loss of a very special lady and a dear friend,” said OBU Interim President Charles Wright. “She was always caring and loving, generous and gracious and always committed to making life better for others.”

Mrs. Oliver served as president of the Arkansas Association of Home Economists and vice president of the national association. One of her most valued awards was for housing work she conducted in Lonoke County. She was one of only three people to receive the award nationally. She also was inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2003.

Other honors included the Arkansas Home Economics Outstanding Education

Award and the Sister Pierre Vorster Award for Outstanding Volunteer. She was a member of the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce

Agriculture Committee and the Arkansas State Fair Board of Directors. A longtime member of First Baptist Church of Little Rock, she sang in the choir and served as a group leader in her Bible study class.

Mrs. Oliver is survived by Robert “Bob” Oliver, her husband of almost 53 years, as well as several nieces and nephews and extended family members. After the death of her twin brother,

Billy Ferguson, the Olivers established the Ferguson-Oliver Twins Scholarship to provide financial assistance to Ouachita students who are twins. They also established the Robert D. and Betty F. Oliver Endowed Scholarship in honor of their parents, Henry E. and Annie E. Oliver and Lester B. and Dora C. Ferguson. Memorials gifts may be made to Ouachita Baptist University or the charity of your choice.



Betty Oliver



# Hal Bass

## *Professor Emeritus of Political Science*

*By Jon Merryman, OBU Director of Alumni*

Since 1976, seven men have served as President of the United States. And there's one man who can tell you nearly everything about each of them – Dr. Hal Bass.

Growing up in Corpus Christi, Texas, Dr. Bass chose to attend Baylor University, where he first learned about Ouachita. Dr. Daniel Grant visited the Baylor campus after being named the new president of Ouachita in 1970. After graduation, Dr. Bass earned his Master of Arts degree and his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. When approached in 1976 about the opportunity to serve at Ouachita, he said the choice was easy. “It was a job! It was a tough market at the time. But as a Baptist, teaching at a small, Baptist, liberal arts institution was attractive to me, and I’ve thoroughly enjoyed serving at Ouachita.”

During four decades at Ouachita, Dr. Bass has served as a professor, chair and founding dean of the Sutton School of Social Sciences. He is loved and well-respected by students and faculty, being chosen by the student body as Outstanding Faculty Member five times, receiving the Purple and Gold Heart Award for Outstanding Service to Ouachita in 2005 and selected by current students as Most Inspirational Professor this academic year.

“If asked to say who had the biggest influence on my life outside of my immediate family, it would be Dr. Hal Bass,” said Amber (Wilson) Bagley ('01), now an attorney at Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, P.C. “His love of teaching went beyond any subject matter or classroom and influenced a generation of students to work hard, think critically and value others’ opinions. Beyond his stellar academic imprint, his legacy will be that he was ‘the students’ champion,’ and his students, who he can remember all by name, will reflect on their days at Ouachita with a deep appreciation as a direct result of his advocacy and service.”

Over the past 40 years, Dr. Bass said there have been many memorable moments. “I have loved leading the Washington Seminar for 20 years, working with Student Senate and teaching CORE classes where I’ve met students outside of the political science majors. But I dearly love political science and the students I’ve worked with. It has been great to watch the success of so many of my students in politics like David Sanders, Matthew Shepherd, Sarah (Huckabee) Sanders – the list goes on. Being a small, tight-knit school in a small state like Arkansas gives our students the connections they need to succeed and make a difference in public office.

“What I’ve enjoyed most these past 40 years is working with students. No question,” Dr. Bass declared. “I’ve also enjoyed working with my colleagues. They’re a nice bunch of folks to work with.”

As the Class of 2016 graduated, Dr. Bass officially retired from Ouachita. “For a generation, Hal Bass inspired students, encouraged colleagues, served the public, contributed to his discipline and courteously critiqued inanity,” said Dr. Randall Wight, dean of the Sutton School of Social Sciences. “He is an irreplaceable stone in the Arkadelphia community and in Ouachita’s academic foundation. But, of course, his gracious humility demurs at that suggestion. We will miss him greatly. May God continue to bless him and all to which he lays his hands.”

“If I could say one thing to the 40 years of Ouachita students I’ve taught, it would be thank you,” Dr. Bass concluded. “You have certainly enriched my life.”

Dr. Bass and his wife, Mitzi, who is also retiring this year from her position in the English Department at Henderson State University, live in Arkadelphia where they are active members of First Baptist Church. They have two children, Jessica and Franklin, and five grandchildren. Dr. Bass will return to Ouachita this fall to teach one of his favorite courses, The Presidency, which he has taught here since 1976.

“What I’ve enjoyed most these past 40 years is working with students. No question.”



# Phil Hardin

## *Assistant to the President for Administration*

*By Jon Merryman, OBU Director of Alumni*

Phil Hardin was just 10 years old when he first stepped onto Ouachita's campus for music camp. With numerous family members attending Ouachita, including his older brother Ray, Ouachita felt like home.

After graduating from Ouachita with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1973, Hardin attended the University of Texas, where he earned a master's degree in music theory. He then served as music minister in four Arkansas Baptist churches over 18 years in Siloam Springs, North Little Rock, Paragould and Magnolia before returning to Ouachita in 1992 to serve as assistant to the president and director of alumni affairs. "I've enjoyed working with students, faculty, staff, alumni and trustees for nearly 25 years now," Hardin noted. "I love working with people who love Ouachita."

Since Hardin's return to Ouachita in 1992, he has served four university presidents – Dr. Ben Elrod, Dr. Andy Westmoreland, Dr. Rex Horne and now Dr. Ben Sells. "It has been a pleasure serving with these men," he said. "Each one is unique, but they shared a common mission – helping students have a great Ouachita experience. Working for each of them has been rewarding and I enjoy coming to work every day."

Over the past 10 months, Hardin has had the opportunity to serve one more president – Interim President Dr. Charles Wright. "I was in Ouachita Singers with Dr. Wright as conductor all four years as a student at Ouachita. It has been fun working with him this year – like old times."

"I believe Phil's success as assistant to the president is a result of his commitment to do the best job possible in any situation," Dr. Wright affirmed. "Of course, one is quickly aware of his intellect, his ability to relate to people of all walks of life, his gracious demeanor and his love for his alma mater. Ouachita is blessed to have this man of great integrity and knowledge assisting our president." Hardin also serves as director of institutional research, university compliance officer and Title IX coordinator.

Not only has Hardin worked with four presidents and one interim president, but he served as secretary and ex-officio member of the presidential search committees that brought Dr. Horne and Dr. Sells to Ouachita. "The searches were very different. The first lasted just four months, the recent one nine; and this time there were many more candidates. Our committee was very diverse, but we immediately felt a sense of unity and a shared purpose," he said. "I can already tell how strongly Dr. Sells believes in Ouachita. I have no doubt he will do outstanding things for Ouachita and our students."

You may not physically see the work Hardin does on a regular basis, since so much is behind the scenes, but if you've visited campus in the past few years, you've probably noticed the tiger statue is no longer gold, but white, and has a new tail. After passing the statue for years and thinking it was not possible the tiger could be repaired, Hardin led the restoration efforts. Under his leadership, and with the help of many generous donors and a marble craftsman from Texarkana, the tiger was restored in 2010. "Enduring over 75 years of wear and tear, exposure to the elements and attacks from Reddies, the tiger had quite a few fractures and was very fragile," he explained. "It needed to be protected, so the fence was necessary. I'm thankful we were able to restore the tiger and keep the statue as a fixture on campus for generations to come."

While Hardin loved studying at and loves serving at Ouachita, it was the first day of Ouachita Singers rehearsal in the fall of 1970 that may be his most memorable on campus. That's the day a friend introduced him to Shirley Grant. They were married at First Baptist Church of Arkadelphia four years later – just after she graduated from OBU. Phil and Shirley, who also works at Ouachita as assistant registrar, live in Arkadelphia where they remain active members of First Baptist Church. They have two sons and daughters-in-law who graduated from Ouachita, Tad and Monica ('99 and '98) and Jon and Katie ('05 and '08), and three grandsons.

I love working with people who love Ouachita. . . . I enjoy coming to work every day."



## Final thoughts of an interim president

I am grateful to have the opportunity to reflect on the past 10 months, during which I have been honored and blessed to serve our beloved Ouachita as interim president. To be honest, I still find it difficult

to believe that God has given this gift to me. Having spent 40 years serving on the faculty and administration, almost 10 years in retirement and recently 18 months assisting in Ouachita's Office of Development, I must admit I did ask myself if the interim president responsibility was something I should accept at my age. Obviously, I reached the decision that I was being led to accept this opportunity. And I am happy I did.

As I analyzed what being interim president of Ouachita would encompass, I reflected on my observations of the five presidents and one interim president with whom I had worked during my years at Ouachita. I was challenged as I anticipated the many opportunities I would face that would demand some type of positive leadership.

Leadership of a university is by any measure multifaceted. I found myself looking forward to working with our outstanding faculty, staff and administration, many of whom I have known for almost a half century. I knew from the outset that I would experience great joy and satisfaction through my interaction with these talented and dedicated people. My utmost desire was to be able to work as a leadership team with these friends who love Ouachita and are, to the person, committed to fulfilling our mission, making Ouachita even greater than it already is. Without a doubt, these are some of the most remarkable and loving people God has ever created, and it has been my privilege to have them as co-workers and friends. Ouachita truly is a family.

While I have enjoyed every facet of my

interim presidency, I would have to say my favorite part has been getting to know and love our students. They are unbelievable, and interacting with them brings great joy, as well as a sense of confidence in our future. They are so bright and gifted and possess servant hearts. I believe they truly are blessings from God.

I express gratitude to everyone involved in providing this opportunity for me to serve this university I absolutely love with all my heart. This has been a wonderful blessing from God.

Allow me to also reflect a bit about Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita's new president. It has been my pleasure to spend time with President Sells discussing the many facets of what the presidency of Ouachita looks like from my perspective.

I have had the privilege of observing him as he has interacted positively with our students, faculty, staff, administrators, Board of Trustees and many of our publics. I am firmly convinced that God has selected Dr.

Sells to be our leader for the

future. Not only does he possess a deep and comprehensive understanding of Southern Baptist Christian higher education, he brings to us his vast experience and success in university advancement. I am convinced he already has fallen in love with our Ouachita and our wonderful students.

Let us all welcome him as we look forward to watching our Ouachita continue its upward ascent under President Sells' leadership.

My final words (almost): After hearing that I am planning to return to serve in our Development Office, a friend of mine told me I should just relax and do something I really enjoy. My response was, "I am."

I invite you to join President Sells and our Ouachita family with your continuing love, prayer and support in our quest to be the Christian university that God wants us to be. Please remember, we are *your* Ouachita!

*I am firmly convinced that God has selected Dr. Sells to be our leader for the future.*

*Charles W. Wright*

*The Queen of the College World*  
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*Tuesday, October 11*

**HOMECOMING CHAPEL • 10 a.m.**  
featuring Sarah Harmeyer ('00) of Neighbor's Table

**CLARK COUNTY ALUMNI DINNER • 5:30 p.m.**  
reservations required

*Wednesday, October 12*

**GROW (Getting Ready for Ouachita's World)**  
overnight admissions experience • [www.obu.edu/grow](http://www.obu.edu/grow)

**TIGER TUNES DRESS REHEARSAL • 6:30 p.m.**  
limited ticket availability at the door

*Thursday, October 13*

**GROW (Getting Ready for Ouachita's World)**  
overnight admissions experience • [www.obu.edu/grow](http://www.obu.edu/grow)

**TIGER TUNES • 7:30 p.m.**  
purchase tickets at [www.obutigertunes.com](http://www.obutigertunes.com)

*Friday, October 14*

**OUACHITA FAMILY REUNION DINNER • 6 p.m.**  
all classes welcome, reservations required

**TIGER TUNES • 7:30 p.m.**  
purchase tickets at [www.obutigertunes.com](http://www.obutigertunes.com)

**BARRETT BABER IN CONCERT • after Tiger Tunes**  
on the lawn of Cone-Bottoms Hall

*Saturday, October 15*

**OCTIGER FEAST! REUNION BRUNCH • 9 a.m. – noon**  
all classes welcome

**OCTIGER FEST • 9 – 11:30 a.m.**  
drop-in fellowship with clubs  
(including a special BASS alumni gathering),  
academic departments and more

**ALUMNI SWIM MEET • 9 – 10 a.m.**  
contact [bosticks@obu.edu](mailto:bosticks@obu.edu) to register

**PRE-GAME ACTIVITIES • 11:30 a.m.**  
presentation of Homecoming Queen & Court

**HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME • 12 noon**  
vs. Southern Arkansas University

**HOMECOMING AFTER PARTY • after the game**  
fellowship, snacks & campus tours

**TIGER TUNES • 5 & 8:30 p.m.**  
purchase tickets at [www.obutigertunes.com](http://www.obutigertunes.com)

**HOMECOMING STREET FESTIVAL • 4 – 8:30 p.m.**  
fajitas & fellowship



Learn more and purchase tickets for all  
Homecoming events at [www.obu.edu/alumni](http://www.obu.edu/alumni).  
For Tiger Tunes ticket information,  
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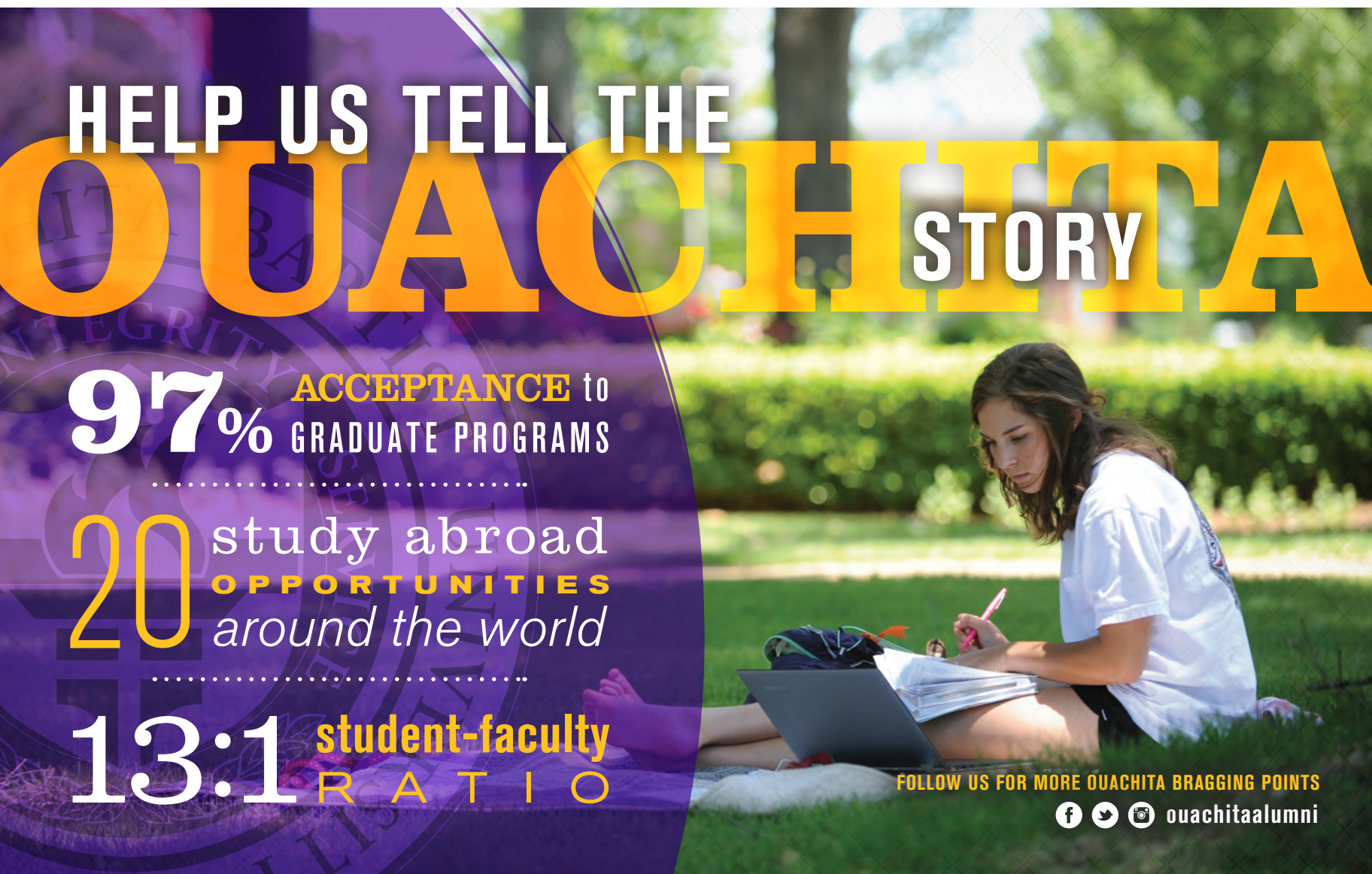






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