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Trennis Henderson
Ouachita Baptist University

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OUACHITA
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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita honors outstanding alumni with 2014 Alumni Milestone Awards

By Trennis Henderson, vice president for communications

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University recently honored five outstanding alumni for their personal and professional achievements and impact. The annual Alumni Milestone Awards recognize honorees representing graduation milestones over the past five decades.

This year's awards honored alumni from the classes of 1964, 1974, 1984, 1994 and 2004, including Dr. David Blase ('64) of Nashville, Ark.; Richard Lusby ('74) of Jonesboro; Jamie Fowler ('84) of Dallas; Mica Strother ('94) of Little Rock; and Nathan James ('04) of Little Rock.

"Our Ouachita Alumni Milestone Awards are a great opportunity to highlight alumni making a difference in a variety of career fields," said Jon Merryman, director of alumni. "These recipients remind alumni, current students and prospective students of the quality of a Ouachita education and the future it affords those who study here."

This year's honorees' educational and professional achievements include:

Dr. David Blase ('64): In addition to his bachelor's degree from Ouachita, Dr. Blase holds a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary. His distinguished ministry career includes serving 25 years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Nashville, Ark.

Dr. Blase previously was pastor of Westview Baptist Church in Chanute, Kan.; Springlake Baptist Church in Paris, Texas; First Baptist Church of Naples, Texas; and Highland Park Baptist Church in Texarkana, Texas. He also has served on numerous ministerial alliances and was president of the ministerial association in each city where he served as pastor. He currently is interim pastor of First Baptist Church of Dierks.

Dr. Blase and his wife, Anna, live in Nashville. They have two children, John David and Shawn, and five grandchildren.

Richard Lusby ('74): After graduating from Ouachita, Lusby was encouraged by two Ouachita professors, Betty McCommas and the late Dr. Jim Berryman, to accept a graduate assistantship in the philosophy department at Baylor University. After completing his master's degree at Baylor, Lusby attended law school at the University of Arkansas, where he met his wife, Sandra, and completed his law degree in 1978.

Lusby, former chairman of the Ouachita Board of Trustees, is licensed to practice law in all Arkansas state courts, federal district courts and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a member of the Craighead County Bar Association, the Arkansas Bar Association and the American Bar Association and has served as a Special Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court.

He and his wife have two sons, Ted and John, and are active members of First Baptist Church of Jonesboro.

Jamie Fowler ('84): Following her graduation from Ouachita, Fowler attended graduate school at the University of Virginia and received her Master of Science in Accounting degree in 1985. Highlights of her career include becoming a Partner at KPMG and later at Grant Thornton where she recently served as principal architect for Grant Thornton's shared services center in Bangalore, India.

Fowler recently was named managing partner of the Grant Thornton Atlantic Coast Market Territory and is now one of 22 members of their national leadership team.

Mica Strother ('94): After graduating from Ouachita, Strother moved to Little Rock to work on Jim Guy Tucker's gubernatorial campaign. She has worked in politics for 20 years, including 13 years for Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe.

Strother currently manages the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions and runs a political fundraising consulting firm that is raising funds for Sen. Mark Pryor's U.S. Senate campaign and Mike Ross's campaign for governor.

Strother is married to Greg Hale and has one son, Eli, age 12. An active member of Second Baptist Church of Little Rock, she serves on the board of the Arkansas Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as well as the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and City Year Little Rock.

Nathan James ('04): After earning his bachelor's degree at Ouachita, James served in campus ministries at California Baptist University while attending Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He returned to Little Rock in 2005 and co-founded Epoch Church with fellow Ouachita alumnus Grant Harrison ('04).

James currently is completing his master's degree from B.H. Carroll Theological Institute. He lives in Little Rock with his wife, Natalie; their daughter, Audrey, age 3; and son, Luke, age 1.

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