

Ouachita Baptist University

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The Ouachita Circle: The Alumni Magazine of  
Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita Alumni

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Winter 2019

## The Ouachita Circle Winter 2019

Ouachita Baptist University

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BEHIND THE SCENES WITH NURSING

| BERRY-PEEPLES BIBLE BUILDING COMPLETED

| TIGERS CLAIM TWO GAC TITLES

# OUACHITA CIRCLE

Winter 2019



*Rising*



## The challenge, reward of rising to the occasion

Thinking of this issue's theme, rising, my own personal game of BuzzWord began: "A rising tide floats all boats." "Rise to the occasion." This one especially reverberates as I take the helm of

this publication that I have contributed to over the last 10 years.

And my mother's favorite, "Rise and shine." How many times did I stubbornly pull the covers back over my head after hearing that invitation to greet the day? Even Isaiah issues the same refrain: "Arise, shine, ... the glory of the LORD rises upon you." I see now the wisdom, encouragement and challenge offered with these words.

At the heart of these phrases is a choice to act, often to do difficult work, in order to yield a better result. This concept of persistence, determination to improve, we can each understand. At Ouachita, it is what we hope for our students every day – and seek to guide them in – and what we hope for Ouachita as an institution. Nicole Porchia, director of Ouachita's Academic Success Center and Multicultural Student Programs, reflects on challenges faced and rewards reaped as we pursue this ideal on pages 8-9.

And the goal is being met! We see this university-wide as key statistics have risen in recent months and years – enrollment, retention, endowment, private gifts, job placement for graduates (pages 2-4 & 16-17). We see it in specific instances, as well. Think of our football and men's soccer teams who claimed their second consecutive conference championships (pages 20-22) or biology faculty who secured a half million dollar grant to fund a research network to better serve not only Ouachita students but undergraduates across the nation (pages 10-11).

Not to be overlooked are the everyday moments when a student stands to make his first speech, an alumnus serves in her local church, a faculty member gets through to a struggling student or a staff member tackles a brand new problem with courage and enthusiasm. You'll see evidence of these efforts throughout the magazine.

The work we do here – that you did here as a student and continue to do – is meaningful, from the big headlines to daily efforts to "rise and shine." Let us hear that invitation not as a trite greeting but as the encouragement and challenge that it can represent.

**Brooke Zimny**

*Director of Communications & Marketing*

# Rising

“Our greatest glory consists not in never failing but in rising every time we fall.

*Oliver Goldsmith*

“You may trod me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.

*Maya Angelou*

“The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion.

*Abraham Lincoln*

“Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. ... Lay first the foundation of humility.

*St. Augustine of Hippo*

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

*Isaiah 60:1*

# OUACHITACIRCLE

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## ON THE COVER

This issue's cover depicts sunrise over the Ouachita River at DeSoto Bluff near campus. The natural setting and rising sun illustrate Ouachita's deep roots and vision for the future.

## 8 RISING TO THE CHALLENGE TAKES GRIT, PERSISTENCE



*Nicole Porchia, director of the Academic Success Center, seeks to equip students to rise and shine.*

## 10 \$500,000 BIOLOGY GRANT SEEKS NATIONWIDE IMPACT



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*Recent construction projects improve academic, residence life and athletics facilities.*

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*Claiming their fourth GAC championship, the Tigers came together on and off the field.*

# OUACHITACIRCLE

Winter 2019

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**MISSION** Ouachita Baptist University is a Christ-centered learning community. Embracing the liberal arts tradition, the university prepares individuals for ongoing intellectual and spiritual growth, lives of meaningful work, and reasoned engagement with the world.

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# CAMPUS NEWS



photo by Alex Blankenship

## OUACHITA SETS RETENTION RECORD, ENROLLMENT INCREASES 7.45 PERCENT

Ouachita began the fall semester with a record freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 83.4 percent and student enrollment of 1,660, an increase of 7.45 percent from a year ago.

The enrollment figures account for students in the undergraduate residential, online and concurrent programs.

“We are pleased that students are choosing to further their education at Ouachita and remain here,” said Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president. “Higher retention represents higher student satisfaction and leads to higher graduation and placement rates.”

Recent data from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shows a 75 percent average retention rate for private universities and a 72 percent average for public universities, positioning Ouachita well over the state and national averages.

The undergraduate residential program includes an 18 percent increase in first year out-of-state students.

“Our success in attracting out-of-state students is a compliment to Ouachita and demonstrates the growing reputation of our university,” Sells said.

There are 472 new students, including freshmen and transfers. Of new freshmen, 43 percent had high school grade point averages of 3.9 or higher.

“We are very fortunate to have exceptionally well-qualified students, representing our commitment to academic and Christian excellence,” Sells said.

“Ouachita is rising,” he added. “We are empowered by the commitment of students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who believe in the vision of dreaming a larger dream to advance our Christian higher education mission.”

UPDATE

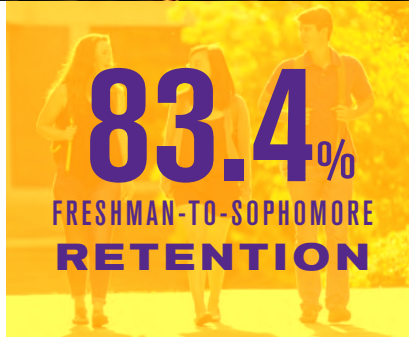


**\$147,875**  
RECORD RAISED BY  
TIGER TUNES 2018



*Quachita  
Rising*

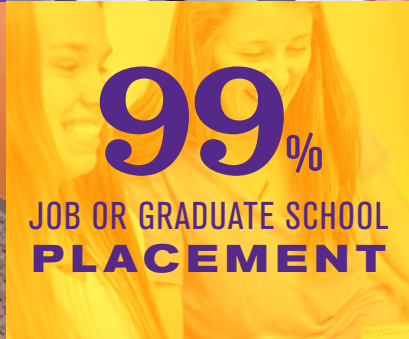
**83.4%**  
FRESHMAN-TO-SOPHOMORE  
RETENTION



— **RANKED #1** —  
IN STUDENT SATISFACTION  
IN AR, LA AND TX  
BY COLLEGECONSENSUS.COM



**99%**  
JOB OR GRADUATE SCHOOL  
PLACEMENT



**43%** OF FRESHMEN  
HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL  
GPA OF 3.9 OR HIGHER



**#1 PRIVATE  
UNIVERSITY IN  
ARKANSAS**  
*by niche.com*

**18%**  
INCREASE  
IN FIRST YEAR  
OUT-OF-STATE  
STUDENTS



**\$17.2  
MILLION**  
RECORD IN PRIVATE  
GIFTS FOR 2017-18

TOTAL ENROLLMENT:  
**1,660 STUDENTS**  
INCREASE OF  
**7.45%**

## OUACHITA REPORTS 99 PERCENT PLACEMENT RATE FOR MOST RECENT GRADUATING CLASS

Ninety-nine percent of Ouachita’s most recent graduating class are employed or furthering their education. Ouachita’s rate compares to a national average of 84 percent.

The results are based on Ouachita’s Senior Survey, relying on standards established by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. More than 80 percent of Ouachita’s recent graduating class completed the survey, compared to a national average of 64.5 percent. In the survey, graduates fall into one of the following categories: full-time employment, graduate school, part-time employment and those who are still seeking employment. The results generate a “career outcomes rate,” sometimes called a placement rate.

“I am very proud of our graduates,” said Rachel Roberts, Ouachita’s director of career and calling. “Employers continue to express how well-prepared Ouachita students are, both in their approach to the job search and for on-the-job responsibilities. They are well-rounded employees with excellent relational and technical skills, integrity and work ethic.”



Selby Tucker, Jaret Webb and Alec Edmonds

## TIGER TUNES WINS NATIONAL OUTSTANDING STUDENT ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM AWARD

Tiger Tunes was named the 2018 Outstanding Student Advancement Program by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Affiliated Student Advancement Programs (ASAP). Tiger Tunes is coordinated by the Ouachita Student Foundation (OSF).

CASE is an international association that serves educational institutions and professionals who work on their behalf in communications, marketing, alumni relations and development. ASAP is an organization within CASE that helps organizations like OSF elevate their programs and learn best practices.

“The award is significant because it shines a light on the amazing work of OSF members past and present – and especially the creative structure of the event yielding so much money for student scholarships,” said Jon Merryman, Ouachita’s director of alumni relations and the Ouachita Student Foundation.

Over 700 universities were represented at CASE ASAP this year. Eight other colleges were nominated for this award, such as University of California Los Angeles. This national recognition comes after OSF joined ASAP in 2017.

Tiger Tunes is a fundraising event held at Ouachita during Homecoming week every fall; it has raised more than \$1.5 million since it was founded. The student-produced song-and-dance competition features student performers from campus organizations and social clubs, and proceeds are awarded to junior and senior Ouachita students as scholarships. This award follows a record-breaking year in which the program raised \$100,000 in the fall of 2017.

OSF also won the annual ROLL Call Spirit Award at the first night of the conference and was invited to present at next year’s national conference in Baltimore.

## OUACHITA RECEIVES SECOND RECOGNITION FROM THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SPORTS MEDICINE

Ouachita has received, for the second time, Silver Status from the Exercise is Medicine® program, an initiative of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). ACSM is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world.

Ouachita was awarded Silver Status for its Department of Kinesiology and Leisure Studies’ work with the Exercise is Medicine® program; it first earned Silver Status recognition in 2016. ACSM launched its recognition program in 2014 to honor campuses for their participation and engagement in living a healthy lifestyle.

Ouachita’s kinesiology department hosts events in both the fall and spring semesters. This spring, Ouachita students taught healthy lifestyle skills to local second and third graders in a way that was fun for the kids. It also has partnered with Baptist Health to provide water bottles, pedometers and other health promotion literature for Ouachita students and faculty to pass out at their events.

“It is a very humbling credential and award to have,” said Dr. Terry DeWitt, chair of Ouachita’s Department of Kinesiology and Leisure Studies. “It shows what we do in our department in regard to physical well-being for college students and other people. ... We’re not only on our campus but also on elementary campuses, and I think that’s a really neat thing.”

## THE SIGNAL EARNS NATIONAL GOLD MEDALIST RATING

*The Signal*, Ouachita's student newspaper, and its accompanying website were awarded a Gold Medalist rating from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) in the category of College Hybrid News. The highest rating given by CSPA, the award honored both the print and web editions during the 2017-18 academic year.

"We are proud of the work we put in every week, but receiving high praise from such a prestigious press association is so exciting," said Katie Kemp, a 2018 mass communications graduate and the editor of the 2017-18 print edition. "*The Signal* is the publication it is because of the team behind it, and I'm so grateful to anyone who has written a story or picked up a copy in the past year."

Ethan Dial, a junior communications and media/multimedia journalism major from Little Rock, Ark., served as online editor for 2017-18 and continues in the role this year.

"Good journalism is much more than a series of words," Dial said. "It's when those words are written with passion and jump off the page that great journalism is achieved. The heartbeat of *The Signal* is in each of its writers, photographers and videographers as they creatively tell stories that make a lasting impact."

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association at Columbia University in New York is the nation's largest college student news organization. Drs. Jeff and Deborah Root advise *The Signal*; Dr. Tiffany Eurich advises the online edition.



"Delta in Blue, 2015-16" by Beverly Buys



André Chiang, photo by Justin Trostle

## GUEST ARTIST SERIES BRINGS TALENT TO CAMPUS

The School of Fine Arts hosted several guest artists this fall as a part of Ouachita's Guest Artist Series.

"We are fortunate to have a Guest Artist Series that brings high quality performers and artists to our campus to share their talents with our students and Ouachita community," said Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of the School of Fine Arts.

The Department of Visual Arts hosted Lin Holland and her exhibit "Informed by Shadows" in September. Holland, a fine art course leader and senior professional tutor at Liverpool Hope University, specializes in sculpture and site-specific installations. It hosted an exhibit by Hot Springs photographer Beverly Buys, "Traces That Remain," in November. Buys prints her photography with a chemical process known as cyanotype, which varies in shades of blue and brown.

The School of Fine Arts welcomed several performing artists in October, beginning with National Federation of Music Clubs Young Artist winner André Chiang on Oct. 1. On Oct. 2, The Bob Boyd Sounds performed band and jazz music. Originally a trio, the group has grown to include Sim Flora, Ouachita professor emeritus of music. On Oct. 25, American violinist Dr. Benjamin Shute and Malaysian harpsichordist Anastasia Abu Bakar, known as Highlands Duo, performed sonatas written during the Baroque period on instruments consistent with that period.

## OUACHITA AND BAPTIST HEALTH PROVIDE CONCUSSION CLINICS TO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES

Ouachita and Baptist Health have partnered for the second year to diagnose sports-related injuries in area high school athletes through the Baptist Health Sports Injury and Concussion Program. The clinic has seen more than 250 individual cases of athletic injuries since 2017.

The program consists of a free student- and faculty-hosted walk-in clinic offered weekly during football season. The clinic serves student athletes from seven area high schools. At these clinics, Ouachita upperclassmen studying kinesiology and leisure studies use their classroom training to evaluate injuries of student athletes and work with area physicians to develop a treatment plan.

"We're doing something unique," said Dr. Terry DeWitt, founder and faculty sponsor of the program. "People don't typically think of healthcare when they think of kinesiology, but that's what we do." DeWitt is a certified athletic trainer who currently serves as chair of Ouachita's Department of Kinesiology and Leisure Studies.

In addition to the walk-in clinics, faculty and students conduct baseline tests at area high schools prior to the start of the athletic season. After an injury, the clinic utilizes a balance test and Vestibular/Ocular Motor Screening to diagnose an athlete's neurological impairment after an injury in conjunction with the baseline test to provide a full concussion diagnosis.

This information is shared with the patient's healthcare provider to create a treatment plan following the clinic visit. Baptist Health has a network of physicians and healthcare providers in the area that work with families of student athletes.

"It's a lot of new experiences that I wasn't expecting to have, with people skills in general and the actual injuries," said Callie Tosh, a senior kinesiology major from Troup, Texas. "I've been getting a more in-depth view of the things I've been seeing in class."





photo by Alex Blankenship

## MORE THAN 770 VOLUNTEER ON FALL TIGER SERVE DAY

A total of 774 students, faculty and staff from Ouachita served the community of Arkadelphia during the Fall 2018 Tiger Serve Day on Saturday, Sept. 22, all while rain came down periodically throughout the morning. A total of 89 Tiger Serve Day projects were completed by 103 volunteer teams.

“Volunteers have the opportunity to build community with each other and those they serve. In the process, we are all reminded that we need each other,” said Judy Duvall, associate director of Ouachita’s Elrod Center for Family and Community, which coordinates the event. “As a result, we become a little more like Christ who did not come to be served but to serve and give His life; that’s our goal.”

Every year, teams of six to eight volunteers serve in various capacities across the community. The projects reached senior adults, individuals with disabilities, non-profits and schools. Some volunteers were able to clean up Lake DeGray and work at the Clark County Library, organizing, cleaning and painting within the building.

“Well the rain definitely didn’t start as a good thing, but it ended up being so awesome,” said Hannah Eddington, a senior business administration/marketing major from Benton, Ark., and chair of the volunteer teams for the Tiger Serve Day Leadership Team. “The teams showed up in the cold rain ready to serve; it was a pretty cool testament to Ouachita’s focus on lives of meaningful work.”

## SNAPCHAT “TAKEOVERS” SHOW A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT

Social media is often referred to as a “highlight reel” of someone’s life, only showing the most polished moments and scenes. Ouachita’s social media account on Snapchat, @OuachitaBaptist, takes a more authentic approach by inviting current students to “take over” the account to show a typical day in their life as a Ouachita student.

“We obviously always want to put the university’s best foot forward, but we also know that showing authentic student voices and experiences really resonates with the high school and college students we’re communicating with on Snapchat,” said Brooke Zimny, director of communications and marketing. “Our students are always such good ambassadors for Ouachita; it’s fun to hand them the reins and see a snippet of their Ouachita story firsthand.”

The Snapchat takeovers often highlight events such as Homecoming, arts performances or school trips and have shown hands-on opportunities available to students through summer research and study abroad programs. Each photo or video “snap” currently reaches an audience of 500-800 viewers.

“For alumni, it’s basically like being on campus again, but you’re seeing Ouachita through this student’s perspective,” said Tyler Rosenthal, Ouachita’s digital content coordinator.

The takeovers also have been popular with current Ouachita students. “It’s become this kind of bucket-list thing to do before they graduate,” Rosenthal said.

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## OUACHITA PURSUES ADDITION OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS BY 2021

A key insight that grew out of the university’s recent strategic planning process was that Ouachita must proactively respond to changing demographics and disruptions in higher education to thrive and fulfill its mission. As a result, one of the six strategic directions identified in the University Strategic Plan 2018-2022 is “Diversify Educational Offerings,” including extending Ouachita’s reach beyond traditional undergraduate, residential programs. This fall, work actively began toward this strategic direction.

After a national search, Dr. Monica Hardin ('98) was hired in September to serve as special assistant to the president for graduate and professional studies to give additional leadership and support to the university’s efforts to extend its mission to nontraditional students.

Additionally, two subcommittees were appointed by the president in August to explore the possibilities for adding graduate and other professional programs. They are tasked with addressing broad questions related to processes and policies for program selection, governance and operations to ensure that programs reflect Ouachita’s Christian mission, are academically reputable, meet societal needs and are financially sustainable.

Through collaboration with other university groups, reviewing research and gathering input from faculty and staff, they have developed a timeline and plan for program proposal, selection and implementation. The goal is to launch at least one graduate program by fall 2021.

## OUACHITA STUDENTS LEAD COMMUNITY CHILDREN IN ARTS EDUCATION PROJECTS

Ouachita music students offered two arts education programs this fall to children in the Arkadelphia community, Pan Harmony steel band and the Ouachita Honor Choir. These music performance groups offer local children opportunities to learn instrumental and vocal music, and they allow Ouachita music education students real-world experience that enriches the community.

Pan Harmony is an after-school, community steel band program for fourth and fifth graders from Peake Elementary School in Arkadelphia. The steel band met on campus for practice every Monday afternoon. During Ouachita's fall steel band concert on Dec. 3, the students had the opportunity to show the skills they learned this semester. They will perform again at the steel band concert this spring.

The community steel band program began with nine Peake Elementary students and student volunteers from Goza Middle School, Arkadelphia High School and Ouachita. The program is geared toward fourth and fifth graders specifically because they are not yet old enough to play school sports or join the school band.

"To have young students excited about music, and excited about learning music from a different culture other than our own, is very exciting," said Dr. Ryan Lewis, director of the steel band program and associate professor of music at Ouachita.

Something unique to the program is its goal not only to teach music but also respect. At the beginning of each rehearsal, Lewis would lead the students in a chant about respecting the people around them. This emphasis on respect inspired the band's name, Pan Harmony.

Ouachita's Pan Harmony student volunteers included Maggie Foreman, a senior music major from Sherwood, Ark.; Karlee Sanders, a freshman music education major from Caraway, Ark.;



and Hannah Terry, a sophomore Christian studies/missions major from Texarkana, Ark.

Throughout the fall semester, Ouachita music education majors also had the opportunity to help lead the Ouachita Honor Choir, which featured elementary students from the Arkadelphia public schools. They presented a concert on Nov. 17. In addition to working with the students in preparation for the concert, Ouachita students also assisted in directing the concert.

"It is a lab experience for them as they are learning how to teach elementary-age students," said Dr. Becky Morrison, assistant professor of music at Ouachita who oversees the choir.

"This has been a great example of hands-on learning for me as an education student because I have been able to work on how I interact with younger students," said Emma Pitts, a junior music education major from Clarksville, Ark. "Elementary and middle school students are so different from interacting with high school students and my peers; it has been nice getting more comfortable with that age group."

## OUACHITA STUDENTS CHOSEN TO SING AND STUDY IN ITALY

Ouachita students filled one third of the competitive spots for this year's Opera in Concert in Italy program. Five Ouachita students were selected for the three-week program for college students to study opera and Italian language. Students from around the U.S. and Canada auditioned, and only 15 were selected.

Ouachita students selected include: Micah Brooks, a senior musical theatre major from Rockwall, Texas; Bonnie Gentry, a junior musical theatre major from Arlington, Texas; Lizzy Griffin, a senior musical theatre major from Pittsburg, Texas; Hannah Saunders, a senior musical theatre major from St. Paul, Ark.; and Rachel Webber, a senior musical theatre major from Longview, Texas.

"It is an honor to have any Ouachita student chosen for this program, but to have five students selected to attend the program is outstanding," said Gary Gerber, dean of Ouachita's School of Fine Arts. "It is such a rich cultural, educational and musical experience for them."

"This experience was so beneficial in so many ways," Saunders said. "I had the opportunity to study with world-class vocal coaches and teachers. I was immersed in the Italian language in a way that I never would have been able to in a classroom or lecture setting, and I got to experience an entirely new culture in an incredibly personal way."

Through Opera in Concert in Italy, which is based in Urbino, Italy, students studied Italian language and opera business, received vocal coaching, auditioned for area opera companies and performed at concert venues and opera houses throughout Italy.



*Get up,*  
GET DRESSED,  
SHOW UP AND  
NEVER GIVE UP.

Equipping students to rise to the challenge.

*By Nicole Porchia*

*“It’s so rewarding to tear back the layers, boundaries or insecurities with a student and see them grow into the person that they want to become.”*

“Get up, get dressed, show up and never give up.” This is what I tell all of my students who come through the Academic Success Center here at Ouachita. The Academic Success Center (ASC), located on the first floor of Lile Hall, assists students with various educational needs ranging from homework to test anxiety. We offer workshops, tutoring and one-on-one counsel to help students achieve their academic goals – to truly *rise* and *shine*.

Working in the center is not an easy, comfortable job. Students don't always want to hear, “You've got to get this together.” When students come to the center – or any place they interact with faculty or staff on campus – our approach is intentional. We get to know each student because this is a home and place of support.

I have a two-year-old, Bennett, and right now we are working on potty-training and sleeping in his own bed. My husband and I have had to really focus and think, “What is the best way to encourage Bennett to want to use the restroom or stay in his bed?” We have to figure it out by trying new things and talking through those situations.

As much as I think of my work and my home life as separate – and we always hope a college student has a more solid head on his shoulders than a toddler – working in education is a lot like parenting. There is no cookie-cutter solution for student success. We want to equip our students, just like my husband and I hope to equip our son, to rise to any challenge they may meet.

When we are training our staff and our little army of student tutors, we talk about meeting ASC students where they are. Oftentimes, it's not until we have a one-on-one conversation with a student that we realize they are dealing with other issues in their life. We don't ignore those; we seek to build upon the whole person, not just address the academic challenges they may be facing.

We come up with an action plan, see how they do, come back and evaluate. The action plan does not always work the same from student to student because they are individuals. Occasionally, we do have to give them tough love, but building students up and giving them positive reinforcement is key for our students to be successful. We raise the expectations and see them rise to meet them.

As a first generation college student, my parents were very supportive of me. But some of the students I have worked with have not come from that background. Sometimes I have been the first person who has told them, “You can do this.”

I had a student who came in to the ASC with a low reading level. From the very beginning, I knew this young man would have issues because there is a lot of reading in college! I told him that it wasn't going to be easy, but if he was willing to work, he could do this. We met every week, and he was tutored for almost every one of his classes. He was in our office every day.

I remember the first time he wrote an essay and made a “C.” We celebrate those kinds of “C's” in the center! We were almost in tears because we knew how hard he had worked, even after hours

of tutoring. He rose to the challenge. It's students like him who rise to the occasion and realize, “I can make it here.”

I grew up in Prescott, Ark., working on my family's farm. That's where I acquired my work ethic – slopping hogs, hauling hay and other things done on a farm. But I struggled with standardized tests, and academics never really came easily for me. After taking bridge classes through Ouachita's TRIO Program the summer after my 10<sup>th</sup> grade year, I was determined to attend college at Ouachita.

When I got here, there were so many barriers to overcome as a first generation college student. I was so scared the first time I registered for classes. Registration is not a scary thing, but I didn't know the ropes. I put my mom on speakerphone to make sure I was asking all the right questions! Later, I talked to another student who was one of the first in her family to attend college. That is when I began to notice other students dealing with similar challenges.

As a college student, I worked on campus for the same TRIO Program that had introduced me to Ouachita. I was a mentor and tutor, and I would also visit local high schools with the program to give college presentations. I shared my story and told them that their standardized test scores did not determine whether they could achieve academic success.

It was my sophomore or junior year that the lightbulb came on for me: I wanted to work with students like myself. Thanks to the mentors who poured into my life here at Ouachita, I found my path. After I explained to a mentor how much I enjoyed sharing my story and seeing students light up when I told them they could go to college, that mentor suggested a career in higher education. We worked together and talked to several people about how I could do that. After graduating from Ouachita in 2009, I went on to earn a master's degree in higher education administration from the University of Arkansas.

Leading students not only to success in the classroom but also in life is truly what higher education – or at least higher education at Ouachita – is all about. It's so rewarding to tear back the layers, boundaries or insecurities with a student and see them grow into the person that they want to become.

That is the work that is happening all across our campus in classrooms, residence halls, club meetings and devotional groups. Since I joined the staff at Ouachita seven years ago, the ASC has worked formally with hundreds of students, providing tools for success and offering encouragement.

There is something about telling someone, “I've been in your shoes. I did it, and you can, too.” And for so many students, like myself, they find their confidence while at Ouachita. They *rise*. And they *shine*. Then they go out from this place as graduates and, in jobs and homes and churches, they make a difference – *you* make a difference. And that's why we do what we do.



*Nicole Porchia joined the staff at Ouachita in 2012 and is director of the Academic Success Center and Multicultural Student Programs. A 2009 graduate of Ouachita, she also holds a master's degree in higher education administration from the University of Arkansas.*

# OUACHITA LEADS

## IN UNDERGRADUATE BIOLOGY RESEARCH WITH \$500,000 National Science Foundation grant

Ouachita is now leading a national effort for innovation in undergraduate biology education, thanks to a \$500,000 grant from the prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF) and the hard work of faculty in the J.D. Patterson School of Natural Sciences.

The grant funds the creation of the Cell Biology Education Consortium (CBEC) for five years as a Research Collaborative Network for Undergraduate Biology Education. The consortium, which advances the incorporation of cell culture-based research into undergraduate classes, capitalizes on Ouachita's strengths of high-impact learning and a long tradition of incorporating research in the classroom. The CBEC is coordinated by Dr. Nathan Reyna, associate professor of biology at Ouachita, and Dr. Lori Hensley, former Ouachita faculty member currently serving as department head of Jacksonville State University's Department of Biology.

"Dr. Reyna's work in developing the CURE program is outstanding, and recognition by the National Science Foundation verifies what we at Ouachita already knew!" said Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the Patterson School.

The foundation for the grant was a three-year pilot program at Ouachita on cancer metastasis and neuron differentiation, funded by Arkansas Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence and the Center for Advanced Surface Engineering.

"Since we started this journey three years ago, we've been able to improve and expand the modules created in the initial pilot research project," Reyna said. "This course-based research experience will transform the cell biology learning experience for our students because they will be able to take what they've learned in the classroom and directly apply it in the lab."

Even before receiving the grant, Ouachita had incorporated research into all phases of the undergraduate biology curriculum, allowing hundreds of students to conduct authentic research.

As part of the CBEC, students work on new techniques to use in research and develop written and video protocols for those techniques. Additionally, students have the opportunity to interact with scientists from around the world to expand their professional development experiences and create their own independent research projects.

Students are also building on class projects as independent research projects. To date, 16 students have worked in Reyna's lab and have co-authored a cancer research publication.

"The fact that students are not only doing the research but are able to publish the data in a peer-reviewed science journal shows our combination of teaching and research works," Reyna said. "This innovative, student-centered approach was recognized by the National Science Foundation and was one of the deciding factors for our funding. Students are more engaged, have ownership of their projects and are growing in their knowledge of cell biology."

The ultimate objective is to send more Ouachita students into graduate-level coursework or directly into the work force.

"The National Science Foundation award – along with the university's growing enrollment, highest retention rate ever and record level giving – provides further evidence that Ouachita is rising," said Dr. Ben Sells, president of Ouachita. "I'm grateful for the leadership of Dr. Reyna and others in securing this competitive funding for the benefit of our students."

In addition to creating outstanding learning opportunities for Ouachita's own students, the CBEC creates a first-of-its-kind network to provide resources for other similar institutions.

While isolated groups are introducing cell culture techniques into undergraduate research experiences, there has been no coordinated effort to compile resources and provide training. The CBEC creates a network of faculty, students and resources to facilitate the development and implementation of unique, student-driven research experiences. By creating projects that align with a curriculum's goals, these activities help strengthen critical thinking skills in and beyond the classroom. The network makes it easier to implement these research techniques at smaller, primarily undergraduate institutions and community colleges where faculty time and resources are limited.

The primary activity of CBEC is the development of "Cell Blocks," learning modules composed of written and video protocols and classroom implementation strategies and assessments. Cell Blocks are developed by faculty and their students. Because the modules have similar basic components, they are able to be mixed and matched to answer novel questions. The implementation of multiple Cell Blocks serve as the basis for semester-long research projects that provide the foundation for independent student research projects.

As Ouachita continues to be a leader in innovative biology education at the undergraduate level, the NSF grant gives the university the practical resources to improve undergraduate research opportunities at similar universities across the nation.



Our combination of teaching and research works. This innovative, student-centered approach was recognized by the National Science Foundation. Students are more engaged, have ownership of their projects and are growing in their knowledge of cell biology.

*Dr. Nathan Reyna*

# INNOVATION KEY TO ADDRESSING NURSING SHORTAGE

## Behind the curtain on developing Ouachita's new nursing program

By Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita President

*Editor's note: This article originally appeared as a guest column in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette on Oct. 29, 2018.*

**A**rkansas is facing a healthcare crisis. By the year 2020, the Institute of Medicine forecasts a shortage of 15,000 nurses. The impact is real: less accessible healthcare and overworked nurses, especially in rural communities.

Such challenges create opportunities for innovation.

Ouachita and Baptist Health have developed an innovative approach – more than two years in the making – to get more nurses in the work force sooner. For many reasons, including our similar missions and shared values, our partnership is a natural fit.

Baptist Health is Arkansas' largest and most comprehensive not-for-profit healthcare network, with more than 175 points of access. Ouachita is a leading private university in the state, with an enrollment of 1,660 students, 65% of whom are from Arkansas.

Both Baptist Health and Ouachita recognize the need to increase the number of nurses who are entering the work force while also building a work force with advanced degrees, national certifications and specialized learning in order to respond to the growing complexity of patient care. Baptist Health has both an advantage and a limitation in meeting these needs.

The advantage? Baptist Health has a long history of educating healthcare professionals through its educational division, Baptist Health College Little Rock (BHCLR). BHCLR operates a large and respected associate degree program in nursing and is the leading pipeline of nurses to Baptist Health.

The limitation? BHCLR is committed to the many non-traditional, often second-career individuals who are interested in nursing. This population often prefers an efficient route to licensure and employment. The 18-month associate degree model at BHCLR serves this population well and allows the profession to be an attainable goal for many students.

Ouachita, too, has an advantage and limitation.

The advantage? Exceptionally strong science and pre-professional programs – enrolling 27% of our students – with Higher Learning Commission accreditation.

The limitation? It would be expensive to create a traditional Bachelor of Science Nursing program (BSN), which would increase costs for students. Additionally, it would be challenging to create enough clinical experiences in our rural location – and we didn't want to impinge on Henderson State University's well-regarded nursing program.

As a result, we took an existing approach, the RN-to-BSN

completion model, and reimagined it. The RN-to-BSN is typically geared for nurses who are non-traditional students (older than 22) who desire to complete their bachelor's degree while they work, often completing their studies online.

Our innovation? A dual-enrollment RN-to-BSN completion program for traditional college-aged students. With guidance from the Arkansas State Board of Nursing and the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, here's how it works.

Ouachita students complete their freshman and sophomore years on our Arkadelphia campus, immersed in our Christian liberal arts residential program. They will take three courses introducing them to nursing, helping them decide if it's the perfect career fit. They will simultaneously complete the prerequisite requirements to apply to BHCLR.

After acceptance to BHCLR, they spend their junior year and half of their senior year in Little Rock to earn the Associate of Applied Science in Nursing degree, which involves all pre-licensure courses and extensive clinicals in the Baptist Health system. At the same time, they are dually enrolled in Ouachita Online, taking three other nursing courses.

Prior to the student's senior spring semester, they will apply to take the National Council Licensure Examination. Once licensed as a registered nurse, the student will finish post-licensure BSN courses through Ouachita Online. In this model, students can begin working as an RN sooner than peers in traditional programs. This accelerates meeting the nursing need and is attractive to students

concerned about costs.

In this innovative approach and partnership, everyone benefits – especially Arkansans – by having more nurses to meet their healthcare needs.

Institutions of higher learning can't maintain and enhance their relevance if they are not attuned to emerging societal needs and challenges and committed to finding the most innovative means of responding to them. True innovation is adaptive, strategic, sustainable and highly cost-effective. Institutions that foster innovation make themselves better by better serving the public interest.

Innovation is about seeing new possibilities in old problems. This innovative approach will help solve the nursing shortage today and other problems tomorrow and is but the beginning of a new era of innovation for Ouachita Baptist University.

“True innovation is adaptive, strategic, sustainable and highly cost-effective.”

## MEET THE FACULTY

In addition to existing faculty in Ouachita's Patterson School of Natural Sciences and at Baptist Health College Little Rock, Ouachita's nursing students will have the benefit of learning from two full-time nursing faculty members at Ouachita.



**Dr. Brenda Trigg**

DNP, GNP, RN, CNE

**TITLE:** Director of Nursing,  
Associate Professor of Nursing

**EDUCATION:** Duquesne University – D.N.P., University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences – M.N.Sc. & B.S.N.

**WHAT HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT DURING THIS FIRST SEMESTER OF THE PROGRAM?** Achieving the Higher Learning Commission accreditation for the nursing program validates the importance of this program. It has a significant impact for the profession of nursing as well as for the university.



**Dr. Becky Parnell**

PHD, APRN, ACNS-BC

**TITLE:** Associate Professor  
of Nursing

**EDUCATION:** University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences – Ph.D. & M.N.Sc., Elmhurst College – B.S.

**WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS PROGRAM?** The collaboration between Ouachita and BHCLR is very unique. It draws on the best of faculty from both schools to prepare a quality nurse to enter today's challenging healthcare field. I am very excited about developing this program to meet the needs of Ouachita's students and the healthcare needs of our region.

This will also be my first position where I will be encouraged to open discussion of my faith and how I incorporate my faith into my nursing practice. God has blessed me beyond measure with a mission field every day that I practice. I want to prepare our students to use their future practice as a way to show God's love to their patients every day they work.







photo by Josie Pringle

# GIVING THANKS FOR PLACE

## *Recognizing three significant construction projects complete*

*“Father, we praise you, for you are great and greatly to be praised. ... Thank you for a sense of place. Thank you for places we call home. ... Places where our experience with You deepens, places where You become larger in our understanding, places where we learn Your story and our place in it.”* – Dr. John McCallum, chair of Ouachita's Board of Trustees

Read Dr. McCallum's full Prayer of Dedication for Berry-Peebles Bible Building at [obu.edu/berryprayer](http://obu.edu/berryprayer).

The face of Ouachita was changed this fall as continued improvements were made on the physical campus, impacting academic, residence life and athletics facilities, thanks to generous gifts by Ouachita supporters. Most notably, major renovations were completed on the newly renamed Kluck Hillside Apartments (formerly OBU Apartments) and Berry-Peebles Bible Building, including the addition of the Horne Center for Biblical Preaching. Additionally, one new construction, the Haley Hatcher Indoor Soccer Pavilion, was completed. It is the first indoor training facility for soccer at any college in the state. The following includes selected words of dedication, gratitude and reflection shared for each facility.



photo by Wesley Kluck



photo by Carey Roberson



photo by Carey Roberson



photo by Tyler Rosenthal

**KLUCK HILLSIDE APARTMENTS ▪ DEDICATED SEPT. 18**

*Originally built as OBU Apartments, its 13,000 square feet has housed hundreds of Ouachita students since 1953. The original oak floors were refinished and floorplan adjusted to open the kitchen to the living room, and laundry machines were added to each unit in addition to new light and plumbing fixtures, paint and other finishes. It was renamed in 2018 in honor of Dr. Wesley and Debbie Kluck. Dr. Kluck is a 1977 Ouachita alumnus and has served as an administrator at Ouachita since 2005 and previously served on Ouachita's Board of Trustees.*

“There are few people who might dream a different dream, a better dream, for an old facility. Wesley and Debbie, I thank you for your vision. You gave more than we could have imagined, and I thank you for your stewardship. This is one more example of many of your love for Ouachita, and I thank you for your passion.” – **Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president**

“The Kluck Hillside Apartments were renovated with love. ... Debbie and I were proud to make the funds available for this renovation. My parents taught me the importance of giving generously. Dr. Elrod, who passed about a month ago into heaven taught me you should give while you're alive to see it. ... We love college students, and we always try to minister to the needs of college students whenever possible. ... So residents who are here and in the future, I want you to follow the challenge [in Joshua 24:15], which is one of our favorites. And it's applied to this house. So from me and my household and the Kluck Hillside Apartments, we will serve the Lord.” – **Dr. Wesley Kluck, vice president for student development and university physician**

**BERRY-PEEPLES BIBLE BUILDING ▪ DEDICATED SEPT. 27**

*Originally built in 1962, the building was named for James Earl Berry, a 1914 graduate of Ouachita and former member of the Board of Trustees, and his wife, Ruby. It houses the Pruet School of Christian Studies. A generous estate gift from Ouachita alumni Dr. Raymond Peeples and his wife, Bonnie, provided major funding for the renovation. A total of 243 donors made this project possible and are recognized on a donor wall in the lobby. The renovation included: covering cinderblock walls with sheetrock; a new HVAC; replacing floors, ceilings and lights; state-of-the-art Horne Center preaching lab; a new main entrance; study lounges and outdoor seating; new sidewalks and landscaping; and a new wing for faculty offices, a conference room and dean's suite.*

“This building is going to serve us for years and years. There will be thousands of young men and women who are going to be trained here and educated and well trained so that they can serve our Lord, go out and serve the church and plant the church all around the world.” – **Dr. Danny Hays, dean of the Pruet School of Christian Studies**

“When I think about the center for Biblical preaching, if my prayers are answered, it will be more than a mere honor for my family and me but rather it will become a hub of activity. A hub of activity that leads to more preachers, Biblical preachers in our state and throughout the world.” – **Dr. Rex Horne, former Ouachita president**

“My parents only hoped for one OBU item with their name on it, a diploma. Now it is their great honor that this building would

carry their name. The Peeples estate gift was not so much a bequest from wealth, rather it was a return on the investment that Ouachita had made in those two lives. ... The Bible Building is at the core of OBU and its educational ministry just as the Bible was at the core of my parents' lives. I cannot express in words the gratitude of the Peeples and Boatman family for this memorial.” – **Dr. Earl Peeples, son of Dr. Raymond & Bonnie Peeples**

“I believe this structure is an ‘Ebenezer’ for Ouachita. It reminds us of God's help in the past. It reminds us that we experience God's help in the present. It reminds us that we need God's help for the future. May this ‘Ebenezer’ – so prominently and purposefully located on this campus – inspire, compel and remind us to be faithful to the Lord in this Kingdom cause, known as Ouachita.” – **Dr. Ben Sells**

**HALEY HATCHER INDOOR SOCCER PAVILION ▪ DEDICATED OCT. 29**

*The pavilion is named for Haley (Hatcher) Weaver, a 2016 Ouachita graduate who played and served as captain on the Tigers women's soccer team. Twice named an NCAA All-American, she holds the GAC women's soccer record for total goals scored. While at Ouachita, Haley studied mass communications and graduated with a 4.0 GPA. A generous gift from her father, Greg Hatcher, fully funded the project. Hatcher is founder and president of The Hatcher Agency and serves on Ouachita's President's Advisory Council. The facility features a team meeting room/study hall, strength training room and elevated spectator space above the turf playing field.*

“There is a reason for Haley's awards and her nominations. What I remember the most is her desire to improve. She was gifted to score goals, but she was always working to improve her game. ... She has a drive that a lot of players don't have.” – **Kevin Wright, head women's soccer coach**

“Thank you to faculty and staff, coaches and others who were part of my experience. Ouachita is a special place for me. ... I want to thank my dad. There is no one who believes in his children more than this man. ... Players, honor your parents, work hard for your coach, but really it's for Christ. ... You can beat those teams on the field, but let them remember who you represent.”

– **Haley (Hatcher) Weaver, honoree**

“Ouachita is better, and Ouachita soccer is better, because of the Hatcher family.”

– **Dr. Ben Sells**

“I think Ouachita has the best: academically, spiritually, all of it. ...

In the end, [this project] was because Ouachita took care of my kid. ... I feel like we have a great friendship and partnership with Ouachita.” – **Greg Hatcher, father of the honoree**



# Donors rise up for Quachita

*"Quachita is rising, and we are empowered by students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who embrace and invest in dreaming a larger dream to advance our university."*

## RECORD \$17.2 MILLION RECEIVED IN 2017-18, \$1 MILLION GIFT JUMP-STARTS 2018-19

Ouachita donors stepped up in a big way in 2017-2018, giving a total of \$17.2 million in private support, a record amount for the university. The fundraising total surpasses the previous record set in 2005-2006 by almost \$1 million.

“We are fortunate to work with alumni, friends and churches who believe in, and give so generously in support of, the mission and vision of Ouachita,” said Dr. Ben Sells, president. “Our donors appreciate our success in developing leaders in so many walks of life and extend our impact around the world.”

Of the \$17.2 million given, 58 percent is in the form of cash and pledges. The remaining 42 percent is in realized estate bequests. The bulk of the funds, approximately \$12 million, will be applied to annual and endowed student scholarships. The remainder is earmarked for programs, facilities and strategic initiatives.

In the previous academic year, 2016-2017, total fundraising was \$12.3 million.

“We are proud of the fact that most of our giving comes from individuals and Arkansas Baptist churches,” said Terry Peebles, vice president for development. “But alumni support is vital. We want our alumni to be engaged and participate no matter what amount they are able to give.”

Ouachita’s success runs counter to national trends in higher education, which has experienced a 25-year decline in the percentage of annual alumni giving. At Ouachita, alumni giving slightly increased last year to 19.75 percent. The median alumni giving percentage for private universities in 2017 was 17 percent. For public universities, that number was 4.8 percent.

Additionally, for the second consecutive year, Ouachita has received an unrestricted \$1 million gift from an anonymous donor, jump-starting fundraising efforts for 2018-19.

“The gift is significant for its size and nature as well as its impact,” Sells said. “The contribution supports the President’s Innovation Fund that is focused on advancing the university’s new strategic plan, which includes new academic programs, enrollment and fundraising efforts. Ouachita is becoming more innovative, which is crucial to meeting the needs of students and responding to challenges in society.

“We are so thankful for this friend’s confidence in the vision, mission and values of Ouachita and hope it encourages others to do likewise,” Sells added. “Ouachita is rising, and we are empowered by students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who embrace and invest in dreaming a larger dream to advance our university.”

An unrestricted gift means that the university can freely decide where to use the money – no strings attached. According to *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, colleges and universities in the U.S. received only 15 unrestricted gifts of \$1 million or more in 2017.

“We believe that our donors are responding favorably to the momentum we are enjoying here,” Sells said. “Our alumni, students and friends are excited to see Ouachita on the rise, and we are poised for continued growth.”

# HOME COMING 2018 CELEBRATES 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF TIGER TUNES, ALUMNI MILESTONE AWARDS AND MORE

**O**uachita's 2018 Homecoming festivities included the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tiger Tunes, Molly Boone crowned Homecoming Queen, six new Alumni Milestone Award winners and a Tiger football victory.

For the anniversary year, Tiger Tunes performances featured LED wrist bands for attendees and a special performance by former hosts and hostesses. In addition to Tiger Tunes celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it raised a record \$147,875, with more than 800 students participating and 6,753 tickets sold.

Tiger Tunes 2018 winners include: EEE women's social club, first place; Campus Ministries, second place; Eta Alpha Omega men's social club, third place; Kappa Chi men's social club, fourth place; Student Life, People's Choice Award; and Chi Mu women's social club, OSF Award. Harrison Ballard, a senior biomedical sciences major from Benton, Ark., received the Shelby Seabaugh Spirit of Tunes Award.

Molly Boone, a senior nutrition and dietetics major from Maumelle, Ark., was crowned the 2018 Homecoming Queen; she represented the Student Dietetic Association. Members of the Homecoming Court included first runner-up Abigail Brizuela, a senior finance and business administration/management double major from San Pedro Sula, Honduras, who represented the International Club; second runner-up Katie Young, a senior finance and business administration/management double major from Little Rock, Ark., who represented Tri Chi women's social club; and third runner-up Katie Jo Henley, a senior mass communications major from Conway, Ark., who represented Eta Alpha Omega men's social club.

Three nominees tied for fourth runner-up, including: Maggie Donnell, a junior psychology and social justice studies double major from Rogers, Ark., who represented Student Senate; Allyson Edwards, a junior Christian studies and biology double major from Hawkins, Texas, who represented Chi Mu women's social club pledge class of 2017; and JaNeeshia Harvell, a senior psychology and sociology double major from Arkadelphia, Ark., who represented the Multicultural Organization Reaching Equality.

The Tiger football team took a 24-7 victory over the Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys, continuing their undefeated regular season.

## ALUMNI MILESTONE AWARD HONOREES

Ouachita recognized the ninth class of Ouachita Alumni Milestone Award recipients for their professional achievements, community service and dedication to their alma mater. They were selected by a committee of Ouachita faculty, staff and President Ben Sells to represent their respective classes. Honorees include:

**Daniel Gaske ('68):** After earning a B.A. in economics and mathematics from Ouachita, Gaske earned a Ph.D. in economics from Rice University. He served 43 years as an international economics analyst with the federal government, earning more than 25 awards of excellence and international honors. The author of two books on economics and statistics, he also received an Outstanding

Teaching Award from George Mason University. Gaske is a member of the Ouachita Athletic Hall of Fame as a member of the 1964-65 basketball team. He and his wife, Susan, live in Williamsburg, Va., and have two children and three grandchildren. He noted that his time at Ouachita taught him to serve Christ, honor his profession and reserve time for self and family.

**Dwight McKissic ('78):** Interested in attending Ouachita from a young age, Rev. McKissic earned a B.A. in Christian studies. He served for six years as pastor of St. Peter's Rock Baptist Church in Pine Bluff before relocating to Arlington, Texas, where he serves as senior pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church. The church, which he founded in his home in 1983, has grown to 3,000 members. The author of several books and articles, he often is referred to as the "racial conscience of the Southern Baptist Convention." He and his wife, Vera, have four children and 12 grandchildren. McKissic said he is thankful for his four years at Ouachita that provided him a foundation for professional ministry, service and leadership.

**Terri (Smithson) King ('88):** Attracted to Ouachita's size and its faith-based curriculum, King graduated from Ouachita with a B.A. in accounting. She and her husband, Taylor King, also a Ouachita alumnus, have lived in Arkadelphia for 32 years. Their business, Taylor King Law, now has offices throughout the state. King has been active in her alma mater, church and community, including serving seven years as a member of the Arkadelphia School Board. She and her husband have two adult children and one grandchild. King said she is thankful for the countless friends and mentors she has gained through her connection to Ouachita.

**Carmen (Byrd) Lane ('98):** Sensing God's call to ministry as a senior in high school, Lane felt Ouachita was the ideal place to continue her education. After graduating with a B.A. in Christian studies, Lane married her husband, Brian, and went on to earn her Master of Christian Education degree at New Orleans Theological Seminary. She serves as the camp coordinator for Super Summer Arkansas, which is hosted at Ouachita. The annual youth camp brings thousands of students to campus. Lane affirmed that Ouachita gave her the ability to approach life holistically by preparing her academically, socially and spiritually. She and her husband live in Vilonia, Ark., and are the parents of two children.

**Austin & Ashton (Berry) Samuelson ('08):** After graduating from Ouachita, the Samuelsons moved to California. There, God gripped their hearts about the plight of childhood hunger. They returned to Arkansas in 2010, and opened Pitza 42, a fast, casual restaurant that donated a meal for every meal sold, in 2011. In 2014, they opened Tacos 4 Life with the same concept. The Samuelsons now operate 15 Tacos 4 Life locations in three states and have donated more than 7.5 million meals to children around the world through Feed My Starving Children. The couple lives in Conway, Ark., with their three sons. They also were the featured speakers for Homecoming chapel and emphasized that they are thankful for the support Ouachita has offered them on every step of their journey.



photo by Alex Blankenship



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photo by Alex Blankenship



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**ALUMNI MILESTONE AWARD HONOREES** were recognized by President Ben Sells (from left): Austin and Ashton Samuelson, Carmen Lane, Daniel Gaske, Terri King and Dwight McKissic. *Photo by Wesley Kluck.*

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@hellohayleyyy



@valeregory



@courtneynicole



@juleebturner



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@missobu2018



@tylerrosenthal

# OUACHITA'S HISTORIC 12-1 FOOTBALL SEASON COMES TO END, MISSION CONTINUES

By Caleb Yarbrough

College football is a big deal in the South. And while faithful fans cheer on their favorite team regardless of the record – it sure is nice to cheer for a winner.

This year's Ouachita Tigers football team was the winningest in the school's history.

The Tigers went undefeated in the Great American Conference (winning the conference for the second year in a row) and won their first contest during the NCAA Division II playoffs before losing in the quarterfinals to Ferris State University, a school with a student enrollment nearly 10 times that of Ouachita's. Ferris State went on to place second nationally.

While many small Baptist colleges and universities do not have football programs, Ouachita's dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first "Battle of the Ravine," the nickname for Ouachita's longstanding rivalry game with cross-highway rival Henderson State University, dates back to 1895.

"When you grow up in the state of Arkansas ... everybody is always talking about the Razorbacks. But I am so proud of our guys. They work just as hard and do all the same things that those guys do," said Todd Knight, Ouachita alumnus and Tigers head football coach for the past 19 years.

"I just love it when we are all about our school. We are not about somebody else's school; we are about the one that we attend and about the one that we work at," he said.

"It just brings a lot of pride to the university, and it's been fun to have been a small part of that. Getting to coach these guys has been an honor for me," Knight said.

"This semester I've talked with students, including football players, about how developing resilience contributes to 'lives of meaningful work,' our university mission-related theme this year. I'm very proud of Tiger football's record performance, and I'm especially pleased with the character and resilience that our student-athletes displayed," said Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president.

"The collective efforts of players, coaches, marching band, cheerleaders, alumni and fans fostered wonderful school spirit and brought positive attention to Ouachita," he said.

According to Knight, every team is special but this year's team stood out based on its player-led culture.

"You may have heard the old statement that a player-led team is better than a coach-led team," said the coach. "That is really what we have. We have some really strong leadership from within."

While there are many Christian coaches and players at non-Christian public and private institutions across the country who are not shy about the role that their faith plays in their lives, on and off the football field, without taking anything away from these



individuals, Knight said that the spiritual support that he, the rest of the coaching staff and players receive at Ouachita is unique and refreshing.

“The platform that we have and the faculty that we have and the way that they do care about the guys and push them to be the best they can be in the classroom [makes it a lot easier],” Knight said. “They care about them out of the classroom and off the field too. There are a lot more than coaches at OBU that are pulling for and have helped develop the guys.”

Within the football program, Knight said the entire coaching staff attempts to “show the guys what it means to be a Christian father, a Christian coach and work for the university that we do.

“That is part of our mission and part of who we are. And hopefully the guys gravitate to that and see that we are different in ways,” said Knight.

While physical attributes, skill and other athletic markers are keys to recruiting high-level players, Knight said that he and his staff also focus on recruiting football players who want to buy into the mission of the Tiger football team – which directly correlates to the mission of the university.

Ouachita bases its foundation on five values: faith, scholarship, growth, character and community. Through these five values the school aims to develop students who “foster a love of God” and display “reasoned engagement with the world.”

According to Knight, holding to Ouachita’s values, the Tiger football team is “a mission field.”

By the time a Ouachita football player graduates, the goal of Knight and his coaching staff is for the players to “know who they are in their faith, know who they are as a man and know where they are headed,” he said.

“If that happens, nobody is going to be talking to me about this season, or how many we have won or lost, in another 20 years. They are going to be talking about the quality of young men that come out of our program,” Knight said.

One of the spiritual leaders of the Tigers football team, Drew Harris, became a Christian while attending the university and currently leads a Bible study for the football team.

According to Knight, without the spiritual leadership of players like Harris off the field, “We probably wouldn’t be where we are on the field.”

“It’s just been amazing to watch that happen and see how a bunch of guys in our program are learning how to lead in that (spiritual) area too by watching Drew,” said Knight.

“Wins and losses really don’t change how you feel about people,” said Knight. “We make a lot of mistakes. We are not perfect. We are a football team that is growing and learning what total manhood is really about: the physical, the mental and the spiritual. It takes all those things to become a real man.”

While it is fun to win a lot of games, Knight said that the success the Tiger football team has had this year, and in recent years, has been humbling.

“We know we are in a very blessed situation,” he said.

“I feel like we are a very important part of the university. ... Our mission is right in line with what the university is trying to do,” said Knight. “Our guys come from all over, and we have so many different backgrounds in our program.

“It’s a great place to teach a young man how to grow,” he said.

*Caleb Yarbrough is associate editor of Arkansas Baptist News. This article originally appeared in ABN’s Dec. 13, 2018, issue. Reprinted with permission.*



photo by Spencer Ewing

## TIGER FOOTBALL ACCOLADES

AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION (AFCA)  
REGION 4 COACH OF THE YEAR

**HEAD COACH TODD KNIGHT**

AFCA DIVISION II TOP 25 POLL (SEASON-END)

**#6 NATIONAL RANKING**

DII CONFERENCE COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION (CCA)  
FIRST TEAM ALL AMERICANS

**KEANDRE EVANS**

**JUSTIN GOOSEBERRY**

CLIFF HARRIS AWARD FINALIST

**KEANDRE EVANS**

AFCA SECOND TEAM ALL AMERICANS

**COLE ANTLEY • JUSTIN GOOSEBERRY**

DII CCA ALL-SUPER REGION 3 TEAM

**COLE ANTLEY • KEANDRE EVANS**

**JUSTIN GOOSEBERRY**

**KRIS OLIVER • AIRRIC PARKER**

## COMING 2019 TURF AT THE CLIFF

Thanks to a gift by Tiger football alumnus Tom Thrash and his wife, Toni, Benson-Williams Field at Cliff Harris Stadium will feature turf for the 2019 season. Read more about this late-breaking story at [obu.edu/turf](http://obu.edu/turf).



## STORMI LEONARD SETS GAC RECORD, LEADS TIGER VOLLEYBALL TO SEMIFINALS

Ouachita senior volleyball player Stormi Leonard broke the Great American Conference (GAC) all-time career assists record in women's volleyball this season with 4,767 career assists. The team made it to the GAC tournament semifinals and recorded 23 wins on the season, tying the previous university record.

Leonard, a senior finance, Spanish and mass communications triple major from Decatur, Texas, set several GAC records during three consecutive matches this season. First, she posted a career-high 69 assists against Henderson State University, setting the GAC record for assists in a five-set match. Then, during Ouachita's back-to-back winning matches against Austin College and Howard Payne University, Leonard set the GAC record for assists in a game with 40 against Austin College, and later the

all-time career assists record, surpassing the former record of 4,142.

"We are so excited for Stormi to set the record," said Allison Frizzell-Kizer, Ouachita head volleyball coach. "As always, it is a team effort, but Stormi's athleticism puts the ball right where it needs to be for our hitters to execute. We are all so proud of her."

Additionally, Leonard was named GAC Setter of the Year for the second time and was named GAC Setter of the Week three times this season. She has received All-GAC honors every year of her career (including two First Team selections) as well as the GAC's Distinguished Scholar Athlete award.

Leonard also is the first volleyball player in Ouachita's history to surpass 4,500 assists and 1,000 career digs with 4,767 assists and 1,054 digs.



photo by Wesley Kluck

## MEN'S SOCCER CLAIMS SECOND CONSECUTIVE GAC CHAMPIONSHIP

The Ouachita Tigers men's soccer team earned their second consecutive Great American Conference championship this fall, defeating Harding 2-1 to claim the title. The Tigers finished the season with an overall record of 7-10-1.

"Winning back-to-back conference championships and three in four years is a testament to the work the boys put in during the offseason and in preseason," said Head Coach Wilson Jones. "The guys did a great job of adapting each week to what was asked of them tactically. At the start of the year, the staff knew the talent and potential that this team had."

Additionally, Blain Hickman and Jakob Cuellar were named to the Division II Conference Commissioner's Association All-Central Region Team.

Hickman, a First Team All-GAC midfielder, earned First Team All-Central Region honors. The senior midfielder from Royse City, Texas, led the team in goals scored (5), assists (14) and points (14) and was third on the team in shots (28). He also was named to the Google Cloud Academic All-District Team.

Cuellar, also a Second Team All-GAC defender, earned Second Team All-Central Region honors. The junior from Frisco, Texas, also earned GAC Defensive Player of the Week honors earlier in the season.

"This senior class was my first recruiting class at Ouachita," Jones added. "For them to graduate having won one regular season championship and three conference tournaments is pretty special. They have taken this program to a higher standard and we are very appreciative for the work they have put in and the example they have set on and off the field."



photo by Sterling McMichael, Harding University

# CLASS NOTES

*connecting the circle*

## 1920s

The late **Bill Walton ('24)** was inducted into the Union County Sports Hall of Fame on Aug. 4 in El Dorado, Ark. Walton coached Paul "Bear" Bryant and Lynwood "Schoolboy" Rowe at the secondary level, leading teams in various sports to district and state championships. He served as head football coach at Ouachita for nine years in the 1930s and 1940s.

## 1940s

**Edith Grigson ('46)** celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on Oct. 3.



## 1970s

**Mike Meeks ('70)** was this year's meritorious selection for the Union County Sports Hall of Fame. He was recognized for his volunteer efforts with local youth baseball organizations in Union County.

**Robert McMenis ('73)** was honored with a retirement dinner at First United Methodist Church in Smackover, Ark. He most recently served as minister of worship and organist at the church. He also served in other roles, such as youth pastor and minister of education, since beginning ministry in 1975.

## 1980s

**Eddie Jackson ('81)** was inducted into the Oklahoma Officials Hall of Fame. He

currently serves as an NCAA D1 assistant coordinator of men's basketball officials for several conferences, is a member of the NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee and serves as commissioner and supervisor of women and men officials for the Oklahoma Collegiate Athletic Conference. He lives in Nixa, Mo., with his wife and two children.

**Alberto Gomes ('88)** is working for the New York City Department of Correction as an associate correctional counselor. He works with adult offenders at Rikers Island.

**Mike Perkins ('89)** was appointed as vice president and administrator for Baptist Health Medical Center-North Little Rock.

## 1990s

**Kevin Samples ('93)** was appointed principal of Rockwall High School (Texas) for the 2018-2019 school year.

**Lt. Col. Naomi Mercer ('94)** is chief of command policy Army G-1 (human resources) at the Pentagon. She manages the Army's religious accommodation program and Soldier 2020, a project for advancing gender integration of combat career fields. Naomi recently was awarded the 2018 Joint Women's Leadership Symposium's merit award for her work in furthering gender integration. She lives in Arlington, Va., with her husband, Kerry Takenaka, and daughter, Aurora.

**Denver Peacock ('94)** graduated from the Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy.

**Stacy Swilling ('95)** sold her private dental practice in Sheridan, Ark., in 2017 and moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. She is now an assistant professor in the Student Clinic at the University of Utah School of Dentistry.

**Mike ('97) and Amy ('98) Floyd** live in Knoxville, Tenn., where Mike is a district manager with Home Depot, and Amy has her own greeting card business, impactcardstudio.com. Their oldest son, AJ, has joined the US Army and was married Jan. 1, 2019.

### Jason Tolbert

**('98)** married **Gina Daulton ('97)** on

Oct. 6 in Ouachita's Berry Chapel a little over two decades after meeting at Ouachita for the first time as

students. They live in Benton where Jason serves as Ouachita's CFO and Gina serves as director of student financial aid at Imagine Paul Mitchell in North Little Rock.



**Justin Moseley ('99)** was named high school principal at Life Way Christian School in Centerton, Ark. He previously served 19 years as a teacher, coach and superintendent at Abundant Life School in Sherwood, Ark. Justin also was chosen as the newest member of the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association Board of Directors. Justin and his wife, **Kari ('99)**, have three daughters: Abby (15), Hallie (13) and Lilly (12).

**Danna E. Taylor ('99)** was appointed vice president of operations at Medical Center of South Arkansas in El Dorado, Ark.

## 2000s

**Marie (Bryant) Keene ('04)** now serves as personal lines manager for Summit Insurance Group in Hot Springs, Ark. She has been working in the insurance industry for five years.

# OUACHITA FACULTY AND STAFF HONORED FOR COMBINED 730 YEARS OF SERVICE

**D**uring Ouachita's annual Faculty/Staff Banquet, 39 faculty and staff members were honored for a combined total of 730 years of service at the university. Dr. Johnny Wink, Betty Burton Peck Professor of English, was recognized for 45 years of service.

"We want you to know that you matter and your work matters," said Ouachita President Ben Sells. "It's important that we notice and honor one another."

Wink, this year's longest-serving honoree, first joined Ouachita in 1973 as an assistant professor of English. He holds a B.A. in English from the University of Southern Mississippi and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas. Wink currently teaches classes in advanced grammar, creative writing, Latin, composition and banned books. Over his 45 years at Ouachita, he has taught a wide variety of classes including mythology, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, world literature and linguistics.

In addition to Wink, 38 other faculty and staff members were honored for service milestones including:

**35 Years:** Daniel Bailey, facilities management; Phillip Easley, facilities management; Dr. Craig Hamilton, Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music and director of bands; Bill Phelps, assistant to the president for I.T. services and facilities management.

**30 Years:** Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement and Title IX coordinator; Dr. William Viser, professor of Christian ministries.

**25 Years:** Terrence Carter, associate director of TRIO and director of Upward Bound; Dr. Keldon Henley, vice president for institutional advancement and chief of staff; Linda Purifoy, administrative assistant of TRIO; Dr. Amy Sonheim, professor of English.

**20 Years:** Dr. Jay Curlin, Kathryn Maddox Professor of English; Jay Derby, assistant football coach; John Hill, senior programmer and analyst; Todd Knight, head football coach;



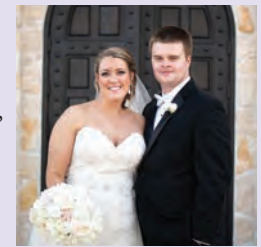
Marla Rigsby, instructional design and technology specialist; Dr. Caroline Taylor, professor of music; Dr. Jim Taylor, professor of biology.

**15 Years:** Bill Barnes, facilities management; Dr. Ray Franklin, professor of Christian missions; Tonya Magby, facilities management; Karen Matros, assistant director of student financial services; Angie May, facilities management; Dr. Doug Nykolaishen, professor of biblical studies; Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs, dean of interdisciplinary studies and professor of English.

**10 Years:** Dr. Tully Borland, associate professor of philosophy; James Clark, facilities management; Dr. Joey Dodson, associate professor of biblical studies; Dr. Margaret Garrett, associate professor of music; Tanya Jackson, administrative assistant in the Grant Center for International Education; Dan Jarboe, university counselor and ADA/504 coordinator; Michael Lee, facilities management; Rachel Martinez, acquisitions administrative assistant; Dr. Jeff Matocha, associate professor of mathematics and computer science; Dr. Chris Mortenson, associate professor of history; Dr. Nathan Reyna, associate professor of biology; Rickey Rogers, dean of students and director of residence life; Dr. Steven Thomason, associate professor of political science; Brooke Zimny, director of communications and marketing.

## ..... 2010s .....

**Ben Clardy ('11)** married **Morgan Fitzgerald ('11)** on May 27 in McKinney, Texas. They live in Plano, Texas, where she works as a speech-language pathology assistant at a private practice, and he works in risk management at Brinker International.



**Zachary Nottingham ('11)** and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Houston, Texas, where Zach serves on the media staff at Second Baptist Houston. They have two sons, Shane and Jake.

**Christopher Chandler ('12)** graduated from the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center on May 17 with a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree. He and his wife, **Carrington (Tillery '14)**, live in Alexander, Ark., where he is practicing at Chandler Family Dentistry.

**Aubrey Elliot ('12)** married Nicholas Adams on Aug. 4 in Fayetteville, Ark. They live in Minnesota, where she is a music teacher for Eden Prairie Schools.



**Alex Ray ('12)** was elected to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors for the Arkansas Advanced Energy Association.

**Marshall Butler ('13)** married **Stephanie Hampton ('13)** on March 10 at Calvary Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark. Marshall is director of wealth management at EGP LLC in North Little Rock, and Stephanie is an educator in Cabot.



**Caleb Knight ('13)** married **Montana McAdams ('16\*)** on July 7 at First Baptist Church in El Dorado, Ark. Caleb is associate pastor for students and discipleship at New Life Baptist Church in Alexander, Ark. Montana is pursuing her doctorate at UAMS School of Pharmacy.



**Sara Driskill ('17)** married Nathan Curry on March 25, 2017. They are moving to Fort Mill, S.C., where Nathan will be flying out of Charlotte, N.C., as a first officer in Piedmont Airlines. Sara plans to teach in the Fort Mill area.

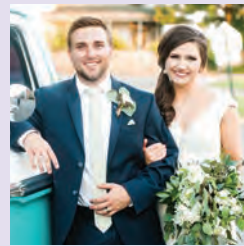


**MyLisa Speer ('13)** married Daniel Thiels on May 5 at First Baptist Church in Texarkana, Texas. They live in Texarkana, Ark., where MyLisa is a speech-language pathologist and Daniel is a fireman.



**Conley Harrison ('17)** married Justin Wortman on June 23 at Fellowship Bible Church in Little Rock, Ark. Conley is self-employed as a personal trainer, and Justin is the general manager at Kaufman by Design West.

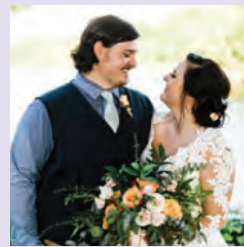
**Jackson Kennedy ('17)** married **Rebekah Van Cleave ('18)** on June 15 at First Baptist Church in Benton, Ark. They live in Conway, Ark., where Jackson is college pastor at First Baptist Church and is taking online classes through New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Rebekah is pursuing a master's degree in speech pathology.



**Emily Hastings ('14)** married Jeremy Dunn on Sep. 16, 2017, in Overland Park, Kan. They live in Kansas City, Mo., where Emily works as a registered dietitian at Consultants in Gastroenterology and Jeremy works as an IT systems administrator at Associated Wholesale Grocers.



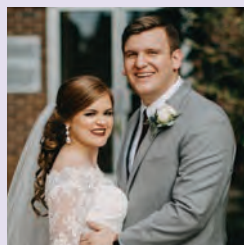
**Brittany Beaver ('18)** married Allen Rogers on May 26 at Cedar Lodge in Arkadelphia. They live in Bryant, Ark., where Brittany is attending nursing school at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Allen is a sales associate for Wholesale Electric in Benton, Ark.



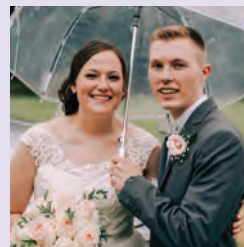
**Nathan Hill ('16)** married Megan Archibald on April 28 at First United Methodist Church in Arkadelphia. They live in Maumelle, Ark., where he is a software developer for Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation and she is pursuing a doctorate in occupational therapy.



**Matthew Cox ('16)** married **Shelby Sutton ('17)** on Sep. 30, 2017, in Fort Worth, Texas. They live in Texarkana, Texas, where Matthew works as a financial advisor at Wells Fargo Advisors and Shelby is the youth pastor at Highland Park Baptist Church.



**Addison Crow ('18)** married Jared Payne on July 28 in Malvern, Ark. They live in Fayetteville, Ark.



## FACULTY & STAFF

### LEWIS PERFORMS RARE ETUDES

**Dr. Ryan Lewis**, associate professor of percussion, was honored as a guest artist during the American Liszt Society Conference at Furman University. Lewis, a 1999 Furman graduate, performed alongside Ouachita graduate and pianist Tad Hardin. They participated in the first-ever consecutive performance of "Etudes d'interpretation," a cycle of 12 etudes by 20<sup>th</sup>-century French Composer Maurice Ohana.

### COMMS TEAM WINS PRSA AWARDS

Ouachita's Office of Communications & Marketing won two Prism Awards and one finalist recognition during the 2018 ARcom Awards, presented by the Arkansas chapters of the Public Relations Society of America and International Association of Business Communicators. Staff members recognized included **Trennis Henderson**, **Tyler Rosenthal**, **Brooke Zimny** and **René Zimny**.

### SEATON GAINS CLIMBING CERTIFICATION

**Shane Seaton**, director of recreational life, received a Single Pitch Instructor (SPI) Certification from the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA). The certification from the AMGA is the only internationally recognized single pitch climbing instructor certification program in the United States. Single pitch climbs are routes that belay from the ground. The three-days certification includes training in correct gear usage, anchor building, risk management, instructional skills and more.

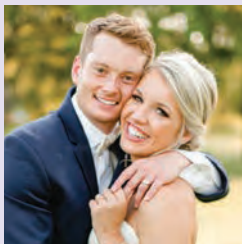
### SPEER HONORED BY ARCHIVISTS

**Dr. Lisa Speer**, associate professor and university archivist, was honored with the Victoria Irons Walch Leadership Award by the national Council of State Archivists (CoSA). This award recognizes her leadership as former state historian and director of the Arkansas State Archives. Speer began serving at Ouachita in February 2018. In addition to her work in Ouachita's library, Speer coordinates Ouachita's public history program in the Department of History.

**Jake Knight ('18)** married **Kelsey Hogue ('17)** on Aug. 11 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark. Jake is an insurance agent with Farm Bureau in Little Rock, and Kelsey is pursuing a graduate degree in speech pathology.



**Braden Lunday ('18)** married **Erin Lundy ('18)** on July 7 in Rogers, Ark. They live in Sheridan, Ark., where Braden is a salesman for Lunday & Associates and Erin is working in the customer service department for Roof Connect.



# FUTURE TIGERS

## ..... 2000s .....

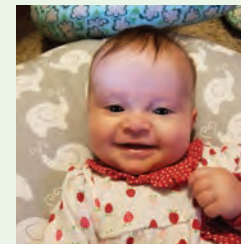
**Michael Rodriguez ('05)** and his wife, Carryssa, welcomed daughter Collins Faith on Sep. 13. She joins older sister Annsleigh. They live in Brandon, Miss., where Michael serves as teaching pastor at First Baptist Church.



**Matt and Blair (Howell) Cohen ('06)** welcomed son Beau Abner on Dec. 26, 2017. He joins siblings James (5) and Peyton (2). He is the great-grandson of **Clifford Herron ('47)**.



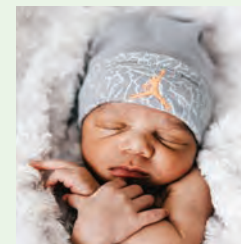
**Lisa (Cromer) Whitmire ('06)** and her husband, Eric, welcomed daughter Charlotte Belle on July 13. She joins older sister Evelyn.



**Tom ('07) and Christina (Srda '97) Armstrong** welcomed daughter Sawyer Sage on Aug. 7. She joins siblings Tristan and Willa.



**Maggie (Starr) Perea ('07)** and her husband, Benjamin, welcomed son Jordan Carter on Aug. 20.



**Becca (Woodall) Owens ('09)** and her husband, Chuck, welcomed daughter Mattie Gayle on July 14. She joins older sister Annalynn.



## ..... 2010s .....

**Rachel (Wait) Ekenseair ('08)** and her husband, John Sr., adopted 5-year-old twins John Jr. and Gabriella Ann on May 21. They were born on November 7, 2012.



**Daniel ('10) and Angela (Bloodworth '08) Collier** welcomed their first child, Lucy Kay, on June 7.



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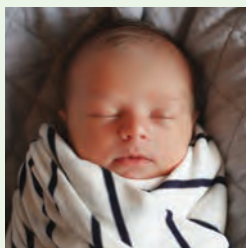
**Austin ('10) and Abby (Kidwell '08) Hall** welcomed twins Matthan and Maely on Oct 2.



**Megan (Gentry) Jones ('10)** and her husband, Jericho, welcomed son Judah David on June 15.



**Barry ('10) and Haley (Whisenhunt '11) McCaskill** welcomed son Hayes Daniel on Dec. 20, 2017.



**Karlee (Smith) Owens ('10)** and her husband, Matt, welcomed daughter Lynnlee on Feb. 8.



**Whitney Johnson ('11)** and her husband, Cory, welcomed son Jake Allen on Oct. 23.

**Eric ('11) and Katie (Fisher '09) Mahfouz** adopted their son Titus (2) on June 4. He joins older brothers Josiah and Walt.



## CATHY BERRYMAN HONORED AT 2018 STEPPING UP FOR OUACHITA LUNCHEON

By Rachel Moreno, OBU Editorial Coordinator

Ouachita honored Cathryn Berryman of Dallas, Texas, during its ninth Stepping Up for Ouachita luncheon on Nov. 16 at the Benton Event Center. Berryman, a 1988 Ouachita graduate, serves as a shareholder in Winstead's Intellectual Property Practice Group in Dallas, which focuses on intellectual property licensing and transactional work.

The annual luncheon honors outstanding Ouachita women as participants have the opportunity to invest in scholarship funds.

"We are all here for the same reason," Berryman said. "We understand the importance of investing in scholarships specifically for women. We are here to give these women an opportunity for an education and collegiate experience that can directly impact their lives and futures for the common good. But not an ordinary undergrad experience – it's the Ouachita experience, and there truly is a difference."

Berryman was honored with personal testimonies from lifelong friends and Ouachita classmates and was introduced by her brother, Andy. Additionally, Ouachita graduate and Nashville songwriter Marcia Ramirez Waldron performed her song "God and My Girlfriends."

"Your life exemplifies the higher ideals of Ouachita, and your actions demonstrate what it means to be Stepping Up for Ouachita," said Ouachita President Ben Sells.

Berryman resides in Dallas, Texas, and is a member of Park Cities Baptist Church. Among her many professional recognitions, *D Magazine* recognized Berryman as one of the "Best Lawyers in Dallas" for 2018 and one of the "Best Women Lawyers in Dallas" in 2010. Berryman also has been recognized in Woodward/White Inc.'s *The Best Lawyers in America* from 2011-2019 and named 2015 "Lawyer of the Year" in Dallas Trademark Law by the same publication.

Originally from Arkadelphia, Berryman is the daughter of the late Dr. Jim Berryman, longtime Ouachita professor of religion and philosophy, and Mrs. Mary Anne Berryman, a former teacher at Perritt Primary School.



Cathy Berryman

"Other universities are designed to impact knowledge, or to teach a skill or task, all to increase your intelligence and expand minds," Berryman said. "But Ouachita, in contrast, is further designed to impart wisdom ... all to increase your emotional intelligence and to impact hearts."

While attending Ouachita, Berryman was recognized as Outstanding Senior Woman; served as vice president of Ouachita's chapter of Phi Alpha Theta history honor society; and was a member of Chi Delta women's social club, Ouachi-Tones, International Relations Club, Young Democrats, Debate Team, Academic Exceptions Committee and Alpha Chi national honor fraternity. She went on to earn her juris doctor degree from Vanderbilt University Law School.

"Gender equality is the aspiration of women in my lifetime. Our goal is not to tear men down; our goal is to build women up," she said. "I was taught that tenet from a very young age from the women in my life. ... I've made this tenet a key cornerstone of my career to support other women."

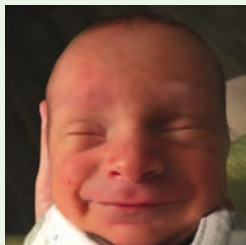
Judy Shaddox ('83), served as chair of this year's Stepping Up steering committee.

"When you graduate from Ouachita, they don't close the gate," Shaddox said. "They are cheering you on – cheering for what your goals are in life, what you are going to accomplish in the future, your family. What we are doing here today, and each year, through Stepping Up is really cheering on women before they graduate, as well as after."

**Andrea (Jones) Smithers ('11)** and her husband, Bridger, welcomed son Ezra Jones on June 4. They live in Fayetteville, Ark., where they own Smithers Animal Hospital.



**Kelsey (Bates) Hicks ('12)** and her husband, Jake, welcomed son Jamie Elliott on Oct. 12.



**Paschall and Charlene (Heimsch) Leus ('12)** welcomed daughter Alexandra Mae on Aug. 27.



**Morgan (Thornton) Morrison ('12)** and her husband, Luke, welcomed son Witten Luke on Jan. 31. He joins older sister Piper.



**Oliver ('12) and Bethany (Elliff '10) Thomas** welcomed son John Elliff on June 21, 2017. He joins older sister Elsie. They live in Austin, Texas, where Oliver is a manager for Steel City Pops.



**Devan (Malone) '13) Elbert** and her husband, Ernie, welcomed son Peter Graham on Oct. 5.



**Adam ('13) and Rebecca (Wright '12) Gosnell** welcomed daughter Violet Kay on Feb. 24. She joins older brother Joseph (2).



**Evan ('14) and Heather (Ederington '11) Rogers** welcomed son Easton Patrick on Dec. 21, 2017.



**Harrison ('16) and Kailen (Johnson '15) Daniel** adopted Madelyn, age 5, and Liam, age 3.



**Kathleen Burton ('49)** of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Aug. 19. She is survived by her four children, **Allen Burton, Jr. ('76)**, Mark Burton, **Brian Burton ('81)** and **Sara Deats ('88)**; and two grandchildren.

**Victor L. Oliver ('49)** passed away on Aug. 6. He is survived by his wife, **Billie Oliver ('59)**; sister, **Betty Jo Grant ('47)**, and her husband, **Dr. Daniel R. Grant ('45)**; daughter, **Victoria Gaines ('79)**; and two grandchildren.

..... 1950s .....

**William D. Gober ('50)** of Ozark, Ark., passed away on Aug. 29. He is survived by two daughters, **Mary Thompson ('74\*)** and Alice Bullington; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

**Cecil L. Malone, Jr. ('51)** passed away on June 30. He is survived by his children, Linda Pledger, Teresa Bechtel and Brenda Breckling; seven grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Carole A. McDonald ('54)** passed away on Oct. 31. She is survived by her husband, Harold McDonald; two daughters, Milicent McDonald and Rosalind Cheek; and two granddaughters.

**Harold Douglas White ('55)** of Van Buren, Ark., passed away on July 2. He is survived by his wife, **Thelma White ('55)**; children, **Joy Lovelady ('79\*)**, **Janice Brooks ('80\*)** and Joe White; seven grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and three step-great-grandchildren.

**William Raymond Brown ('56)** of Morrilton, Ark., passed away on May 29. He is survived by his wife, Letha Brown; children, Karen Ratliff, **Eddie Jackson ('82)**, David Brown, Linnea Udochi, William Ray Brown and Melissa Hayes; 22 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

**Charles Wayne Curry ('56\*)** of North Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Nov. 18. He is survived by his wife, Janelle Curry; 106-year-old mother, Hazel Curry; siblings, Larry Curry, Richard Curry and Patsy Beatty; children, Cheryl Duncan and Leslie Birley; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

## IN MEMORIAM

..... 1930s .....

**Helen V. Bruening ('36)** passed away on Oct. 23. She is survived by her daughter, Beca DeLoach, and seven grandchildren.

**Lois A. Fowler ('38)** of Nashville, Tenn., passed away on July 14.

..... 1940s .....

**Clovis Stewart Landes ('42\*)** of Lewisville, Ark., passed away on April 15. He is survived by his brother, James Curtis Landes II; his son, Larry Landes; stepdaughters, Debbie Nolte and Sandra Haltom; and two grandsons.

**Margrete E. Horne ('47)** passed away on Oct. 29.

**Sue Hargis ('48)** passed away on Sept. 13. She is survived by her sister, Roxie Lawrence; children, **Bernie Hargis III ('73)** and **Roxanne Watkins ('78)**; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Dorothy E. Ferguson ('56)** passed away on July 9. She is survived by her children, Gregory Ferguson and Kimberly Garner; and one granddaughter.

**Peggy Wood Koen ('56)** of Gurdon, Ark., passed away on Sept. 7. She is survived by her husband, Carl Koen; brother, **Henry W. Wood Jr. ('53)**; and children, Roger Koen and Carla Koen.

**Peggy Caldwell Robbins ('57)** of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on June 26. She is survived by six children, Andrew Toler, Margaret Toler, Marguerette Trickey, Robin Robbins, Ray F. Robbins and Gene Mapes; 10 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

**Vernon L. Brannon ('58)** of Cabot, Ark., passed away on Nov. 7. He is survived by his brothers, Thomas Brannon and Wayne Brannon; sons, Michael Brannon and Mitch Brannon; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**James L. Buckner ('59)** of Fayetteville, Ark., passed away on July 22. He is survived by his siblings, Luther Buckner and **John W. Buckner ('62)**, and two sons, James L. Buckner Jr. and Matthew D. Buckner.

**Curtis H. Butterfield ('59)** passed away on July 4. He is survived by his sister, Janice Brewer; sons, Jimmie and Matthew; and one grandson.

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

**Paul D. Fray ('61)** of Sherwood, Ark., passed away on July 10. He is survived by his wife, **Mary Lee Saunders ('67)**; siblings, **Marion Fray ('52)**, George Fray, **Nancy Threet ('71)** and **Emily Atkins ('73\*)**; children, Malea, Jane and David; six grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

**Amal N. Olaimy ('61)** of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Oct. 14. He is survived by his wife, Sue Olaimy; children, Maggie Jones, John Olaimy, Anne Olaimy and Thomas Olaimy; and six grandchildren.

**Lynn R. McClung ('62)** of Broken Arrow, Okla., passed away on June 6. He is survived by his wife, Pat.

**Bonita Watts ('62)** of Tulsa, Okla., passed away on Aug. 4. She is survived by her siblings, Mary Anderson and Rodney Liles; three step-children; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**David L. Basham ('64)** of Marietta, Ga., passed away on April 14. He is survived by two brothers, Eddie Basham and Don Basham; daughters, Shannon Shaw and Michelle Tilson; stepdaughters, Suzette Brennan and Fran Sisson; and 10 grandchildren.

**Wayne S. Smith ('64)** of Bryant, Ark., passed away on July 13. He is survived by his son, Brett Smith; one granddaughter; and one great-grandson.

**Neal Clifton Sanders ('65)** passed away on Aug. 5. He is survived by wife, Sandy; mother, Virginia Sanders; siblings, Don Sanders and **Nancy Dutton ('56)**; and children, Matt Sanders and Lori Hattan.

**Edgar A. Porchia ('66\*)** passed away in October. He is survived by his wife, Mamie Jo Porchia; 15 children; 33 grandchildren; and 32 great-grandchildren.

**Clinton B. Settle ('66)** passed away on Sept. 4. He is survived by his brother, Harold Settle, and two grandchildren.

**Hattie C. Britt ('68)** passed away on July 11.

**Sarah Haggard ('69\*)** passed away on July 4. She is survived by her children, **John Haggard ('73)**, Jenny Allen and Sarah Keathley; seven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

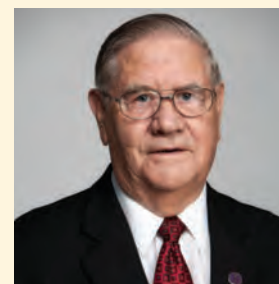
**Gary Wayne Scruggs ('69)** of Du Quoin, Ill., passed away on Sept. 10.

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

**Nell Everett ('72)** of Arkadelphia passed away on July 23. She is survived by her son, **Greg Everett ('79)**, and three grandchildren.

## ROOT REMEMBERED FOR DEDICATION TO EDUCATION

**D**r. Paul Ray Root, professor emeritus of education, passed away on Oct. 26 at age 86. He served a total of 22 years at Ouachita, including serving as dean of the graduate school, professor and chair of the Department of Education and director of the Arkansas Technical Assistance and Consultative Center. He also served on the faculty of Arkansas State University and Oakland City College in Indiana.



Dr. Paul Ray Root

He was born Oct. 24, 1932, in Worden, Ark., to the late Clifford and Eva Schneibly Root. He married his wife of 61 years, Mary Windham Root, on Dec. 22, 1956.

Dr. Root started his career as a history teacher at Greenbriar High School in 1958 and at Hot Springs High School in 1959. From 1983-1987, Dr. Root served as special assistant to the governor and from 1987-1989 served as special assistant to the director of the Arkansas Department of General Education before returning to Ouachita.

In 2012, Ouachita dedicated the Dr. Paul and Mary Root Education Seminar Room in honor of Paul and Mary, who also served at Ouachita.

He earned a B.S.E. and an M.S.E. from Arkansas State Teachers College (now UCA) and an Ed.D. from the University of Arkansas. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, a member of First Baptist Church in Arkadelphia and the author/editor of two books, *To the Grassroots* and *Learning Together at Last*.

Root is survived by his wife, Mary; two sisters, Ann Harris and Sue Cooley; two sons and their spouses, Larry and Terrie Root of Little Rock and Jeff and Deborah Root of Arkadelphia; three grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; and 20 nieces and nephews.



**Dickie M. Johnson** ('72\*) of Glenwood, Ark., passed away on May 24. He is survived by his wife, Louise Johnson; mother, Geraldine Johnson; six children and their spouses, Tim and Melissa Hardy, Tony and Michelle Bright, Kaye and Brian Hill, Jennifer and Tony Hill, Rickey and Christine Johnson and Missy and Brandon Jones; 18 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Martha Livers** ('73) passed away on Oct. 15. She is survived by her husband, **Rob Livers** ('75); siblings, **John Wooddell** ('76) and Portia Oaks; children, **Nicholas Livers** ('99), **Nathan Livers** ('01), **Brooks Livers** ('07) and **Joy Livers** ('09\*); and eight grandchildren.

**Randal A. Woodfield** ('73) of Baltimore, Md., passed away on Nov. 7. He is survived by his brother-in-law, **Charles W. Wright** ('60).

**Sherman W. Baker, Sr.** ('74) of Forrest City, Ark., passed away on April 7, 2016. He is survived by his brother, Therman A. Baker; children, **Sherman W. Baker Jr.** ('81), Henderson Baker II, Paul Baker, **Evelyn Baker** ('81) and Shandia Baker; and four grandchildren.

**Max Glenn Taylor** ('74) of Malvern, Ark., passed away on May 18. He is survived by his parents, **Gerald Taylor** ('57) and Catherine Taylor; sisters, Susan Ladd, Sharon Taylor and Karen Reynolds; and children, Jesse Taylor and Melody Taylor.

**Robert Lynn Cooper, Jr.** ('75) of Arkadelphia passed away on Nov. 30. He is survived by his wife, Cheryl Cooper; sister, Rose McCauley; children, Amanda Burroughs, Becky Gaines and Carrie Flora; stepchildren, Andrew Moore and Suzanne Gray; 15 grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

**Clifton L. Easter, Sr.** ('75) of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Oct. 10. He is survived by wife, Hazel Easter; brother, Elijah Easter Jr.; children, Clifton Easter Jr., Daryl Johnson, Fredrick Johnson and Tiffany Rogers; and one granddaughter.

**Johnnie Baker** ('79) of Forrest City, Ark., passed away on July 14. She is survived by her children, **Sherman W. Baker Jr.** ('81), Henderson Baker II, Paul Baker, **Evelyn Baker** ('81) and Shandia Baker; and four grandchildren.

**Doran E. Williams** ('79) passed away on Nov. 13. He is survived by his wife, Anna Williams; brother, Cleon Williams; children, Jenni Blimka, Matt Williams and Tim Williams; and 13 grandchildren.

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

**Rhonda Barker Flaherty** ('80) passed away on July 5. She is survived by her mother, Ola Mayfield; two children, Caitlin Stuart and Kylie Spears; two brothers, Jack Barker and Dwain Mayfield; and two grandsons.

**Jerry House** ('80) of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Oct. 29. He is survived by wife, Evelyn House; sons, Jarred House and Justin House; siblings, Charles House, Eddie House, George House, Annie Maddox, Mattie Perry, Cattie Smith, Vivian Williams and Murlin Jones; and two grandchildren.

**William Miller** ('82) of North Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Jan. 3. He is survived by his sisters, Janie and Brenda J. Miller; brother, Brian V. Miller; two aunts; and several nieces, nephews and cousins. An All-American football player for the Tigers, Miller went on to play in the National Football League and Canadian Football League.

**Victor Lee Simpson** ('82) of Prince Frederick, Md., passed away on June 4. He is survived by his sister, Connie Patrick, and two children, Christian Allen and Victoria Leigh.

**William B. Elliott, Sr.** ('83) of Sherwood, Ark., passed away on July 11. He is survived by his wife, **Sandra Elliott** ('82); brother, Ronald Elliott; sons, William Elliott Jr. and Michael Elliott; and two grandchildren.

**Kim A. Harwell** ('84\*) of Pine Bluff, Ark., passed away on Oct. 17. She is survived by her sister, Nancy Weaver.

**Laura Efurd** ('86) of Hawaii passed away on July 2. She is survived by her brother, **Steve Efurd** ('83).

**David W. Oliver** ('88\*) passed away on Oct. 26. He is survived by his sister, **Sally Larsen** ('83\*)

..... 1990s .....

**Charlotte Hill** ('90) passed away on July 12. She is survived by her sisters, Camille Dixon and Margi Harrell; children, **Jenifer Kendrick** ('92) and **Allison Worthen** ('95); and five grandchildren.

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

**Melanie A. Carlton** ('00) of De Queen, Ark., passed away on May 24. She is survived by her husband, Jason Carlton; mother, Cathy Ross; brother, Daniel Ross; and daughters, Riley Carlton and Amelia Carlton.

**Tyler Nathaniel Finley** ('00) of Fordyce, Ark., passed away on May 24. He is survived by his parents, Joe and Barbara Finley, and siblings, **Brian Finley** ('90) and **Allison Stroud** ('92).

**Rachel Wait Ekenseair** ('08) of Little Rock, Ark., passed away on Aug. 22. She is survived by her husband, John Ekenseair, Sr.; parents, Bernard Wait and **Beverly Barnard Wait** ('78); brothers, Brett and Stephen Wait; and children, John Jr. and Gabriella Ekenseair.

..... Faculty .....

**Janice Duncan** passed away on July 9. She is survived by three brothers, Jerald, Kenneth and Keith. She served as professor of modern languages from 2000 to 2012.

\* denotes former student

# FORMER OUACHITA PRESIDENT BEN ELROD AND HIS WIFE, BETTY LOU, LEFT ENDURING LEGACY OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

**D**r. Ben M. Elrod, former president and chancellor of Ouachita, passed away Aug. 7. He is remembered for a lasting legacy of leadership and service at Ouachita during his decade as president and beyond. His wife, Betty Lou, passed away Sept. 12. They were both 87.

Dr. Elrod served as Ouachita's 13<sup>th</sup> president from 1988 to 1998. A 1952 graduate of Ouachita, he also served on the Board of Trustees and as vice president for development. He was named chancellor following his retirement as president.

"Ouachita has lost a great friend, and Christian higher education has lost a great leader," emphasized Dr. Daniel Grant, president emeritus of Ouachita and Elrod's predecessor, longtime colleague and friend. "His wisdom, enthusiasm and faithfulness have been a great benefit not only to Ouachita but to higher education in America and beyond."

Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Elrod led the university in raising \$57 million during Ouachita's Decade of Progress Campaign. Signature achievements during his tenure included the construction of Jones Performing Arts Center, Harvey Jones Science Center, R.A. Lile Hall, Heflin (now Ward) Tennis Center, Anthony and Maddox residence halls, the International Flag Plaza, Speer Pavilion and the renovation of Cone-Bottoms Hall to house the Grant Administration Center.

"I met Dr. Elrod during my first week as president," recalled Ouachita President Ben Sells. "He and Betty Lou hosted me in their home. Sharing some of her famous chocolate pie, they told me their Ouachita story. I asked him for advice that afternoon, and I have not forgotten his counsel. Just a few weeks before his passing, I was in his home, learning more Ouachita history, and I always left encouraged."

"Dr. Elrod was Ouachita's first true vice president for development, and the university continues to benefit from the work he inaugurated in the 1960s," Sells added. "I believe the legacy of a college president becomes more evident with the passing of time. The longer I'm at Ouachita, the clearer it is that Ben Elrod's impact is significant and enduring."



Ben and Betty Lou Elrod

In recognition of Dr. Elrod's lifelong commitment to servant leadership, volunteerism and community service, the Board of Trustees named Ouachita's Ben M. Elrod Center for Family and Community in his honor upon his retirement as president. Dr. and Mrs. Elrod also were honored in 2009 with the dedication of Ben and Betty Elrod Boulevard, designed as the main entrance to campus from Highway 7.

In a 2011 essay published in *Ouachita Voices: Celebrating 125 Years of Academic and Christian Excellence*, Dr. Elrod wrote that his vision as president was "to move the institution to a new level of capability, excellence, reputation and effectiveness in the world of higher education," adding that "all of that would be devoted to the development of a 'university under the Lordship of Christ.'"

"Dr. Ben Elrod was a multi-faceted leader," reflected Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement and director of the Elrod Center. "He believed in the power of experiential learning and wanted Ouachita to be known as a university committed to learning that starts in the classroom and moves beyond it to meet the needs of a hurting world."

In addition to his Ouachita degree, Dr. Elrod earned Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Education degree in higher education from Indiana

University. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree by Oakland City College.

Dr. Elrod, an ordained minister, served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma as well as president of Oakland City College in Indiana, Georgetown College in Kentucky and Arkansas' Independent Colleges and Universities. He also served as president of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools, chairman of the Cooperative Services International Education Consortium and president of the Arkadelphia Rotary Club. He served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Elrod was born in Smackover, Ark., to the late Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Warren. As a 1952 graduate of Ouachita, she was awarded the distinguished alumna award in 1998 in recognition of her service to the university.

"Mrs. Elrod was appreciated for her gracious and warm hospitality that made people feel welcomed and valued, whether it was in their home or on the Ouachita campus," Sells said. "Together they served and loved this university community that continues to impact generations of alumni. We'll be forever grateful for their service."

The Elrods are survived by their daughter, Cindy Elrod Stroud ('76); son, Bill Elrod ('80); four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.



photo by Tyler Rosenthal

# Jeff Root

*Dean, Huckabee School of Education & School of Humanities*

*By Jon Merryman, Director of Alumni Relations*

There probably aren't many of you reading this who do not know the Root family. Whether you had Dr. Paul Root, Jeff's father, for Western Civilization; Mary Root, Jeff's mother, for a study skills class; Jeff or his wife, Deborah, for a mass communications course; or know their daughter, Abby, you know how special the Root family is to Ouachita.

Jeff first set foot on campus when his father joined the Ouachita faculty in 1964. After taking other teaching assignments around the state and the country, the Roots returned to Arkadelphia in 1972 and settled into their home in the Ouachita Hills neighborhood just north of campus.

"I grew up surrounded by professors from English, psychology, Christian studies, political science, music, theatre, mathematics, sociology, education, French, journalism and military science, along with a Hall of Fame basketball coach, two deans, a vice president and the president," Root said. "I grew up all Ouachita, all the time. And I loved it. It means so much to me that Deborah and I moved back to that same neighborhood 16 years ago."

With Paul Root's passing this year, Jeff has been reflecting on his father's influence and work. "I saw my father invest much time in his students," Root said. "Of course, one of dad's former high school students [Bill Clinton] became the president of the United States. That's a special blessing. But dad was also always looking out for those who had little chance of making a big splash in life. He saw something special in them as well – the ability to move past where they were to a better future."

Jeff likewise has dedicated his life to education and having an impact on students. After graduating from Ouachita, he earned his master's degree at the University of Arkansas and returned to Arkadelphia High School to teach while Deborah joined the staff and taught at Ouachita. After earning their doctoral degrees at Oklahoma State University, both were offered administration/faculty positions at Ouachita in 1991.

Serving as dean of the School of Humanities since 2002, Root stepped into interim leadership of the Huckabee School of Education three years ago and was named dean in 2017. While it may have seemed daunting to some to oversee both areas, it just made sense for Jeff.

"Because I had gone through Ouachita's teacher education program and had experience as a teacher and school board member, there was a certain sense of familiarity when I stepped into the teacher education department three years ago," Root shared. "Thanks to the tireless efforts of our outstanding faculty and staff, we successfully navigated through the uncharted waters of a new accrediting body and met all standards."

"As the child of a faculty member, it was always the people that made Ouachita such a wonderful place," Root said. "As a student and then as a faculty member and administrator, that's absolutely still true, but I've grown to a deeper understanding of how the mission of Ouachita can have lasting impact on lives. I believe it's my calling to be here, and Deborah feels the same way. That makes relationships even deeper. Now that we've been here a few decades, Deborah and I both note the joy of having close friends and colleagues who were once our students."

Jeff ('83) and Deborah (Holley '81) live in Arkadelphia and are active members of First Baptist Church. They have one daughter, Abby ('17), who recently married Stephen Curry ('15).

"I grew up all Ouachita,  
all the time. And I loved it."



photo by Tyler Rosenthal

# Terry (Griffin) Peeples

*Vice President for Development*

*By Jon Merryman, Director of Alumni Relations*

As a teenager from Springdale, Ark., Terry Griffin Peeples first stepped foot on campus to attend music camp and fell in love with Ouachita. Having earned a full scholarship at a state university, Peeples felt called to attend Ouachita but didn't see a way to make it work financially. Praying for months, God took care of the details, and she was able to enroll as a freshman in 1979. Studying business and education, Peeples was still able to use her musical abilities as a member of the Ouachi-Tones, serving as a Tiger Tunes hostess the second year of the production and winning the title of Miss OBU in 1982.

After 25 years in corporate America, including 20 years at Baptist Health, Peeples was invited to return to Ouachita as vice president for development in 2008.

"It's an exciting time as Ouachita begins partnering with Baptist Health for our new nursing program," Peeples says. "Serving 20 years at Baptist and 11 years at Ouachita, I have loved seeing the program form and grow and look forward to seeing Ouachita nursing graduates begin to enter the work force and make a difference in their communities."

Under Peeples' leadership, Ouachita has raised more than \$100 million, including a record \$17.2 million in 2017-2018. Building projects completed since 2007 include the Elrod Boulevard campus entrance; four new residence halls: Gosser, Tollett, Susie Everett and Georgia Hickingbotham Halls; five major renovation projects: Lile Hall, the Grant Center for International Studies, the Rosemary Gossett Adams Department of Visual Arts, Kluck Hillside Apartments and Berry-Peeples Bible Building; and five athletics facility projects: Hatcher Wrestling Complex, Cliff Harris Stadium, Kluck Field, Whisenhunt Field House and Hatcher Indoor Soccer Pavilion.

"Terry loves the Lord, her local church and Ouachita," noted Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president. "In her decade of leadership, she has been a tireless advocate for alumni and the university. Her work has contributed to a record level of private giving – all for the benefit of advancing the Ouachita mission and helping students."

"I've loved introducing new people to Ouachita through scholarship and construction project giving as well as working with alumni, former students and friends to support projects at Ouachita they're passionate about," Peeples said. "Fundraising is hard work, but seeing the students who benefit from donors' gifts every day makes it worth it. It's God who ultimately works on the hearts of our donors; our best co-worker is the Lord!"

For those who are considering making a gift to Ouachita, Peeples encourages a visit to campus and talking with our students.

"When I need to be reminded why I do what I do, I visit with students or worship with them during Chapel," she said. "Lives are changed here, and each gift – no matter how small – comes together to make every single day possible for students at Ouachita. You probably never met a donor who made your Ouachita experience possible while you were a student, but they were there! Your gifts now can make that same difference for students on campus today."

Peeples and her husband, Daryl, live in North Little Rock, Ark., and are parents of Griffin, a 2016 *summa cum laude* Ouachita graduate.

"Seeing students who benefit from donors' gifts every day makes it worth it."



## OUACHITA RISING

Ouachita is rising, rising to anticipate, innovate and achieve so that the students of today will be able rise to the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.

That is why:

- Even when 99 percent of last year’s graduates found employment or were accepted to graduate school, we created a new bachelor’s degree in nursing, began exploring new graduate programs and strengthened key partnerships with those who will employ our graduates in the future.
- Even when our enrollment has been increasing and our first-to-second year retention has reached its highest level, we continue to strengthen our high impact educational practices and expand residential living to ensure that we provide transformational learning opportunities.
- Even when many colleges and universities have minimized their Christian identity, we have chosen to emphasize Christ-centered learning.

These successes and commitments have led Ouachita alumni, parents and friends to provide record levels of private support in recognition of what we have achieved and in the hope that we will pursue these ideals and goals with even greater energy.

Since becoming president, the one activity in which I have engaged the most is listening – to the hopes and concerns of students, parents, alumni, faculty and staff. I have heard your concerns about the cost and value of higher education. Can we afford it? Should we stretch to make the investment? How much debt will my son or daughter be left with? Will it lead to a good, paying job after graduation? Will it be the kind of education that will make a significant and lasting difference?

*Ouachita  
is rising to  
anticipate,  
innovate  
and achieve.*

That is why I cite the evidence above and why we keep our administrative costs so low. We strive to generate the greatest possible return on your investment – whether it is in the form of tuition, room and board or private support.

Our emphasis must be on building long-term value because that is the best way to deliver significant and sustainable short-term results. The long-term commitment can be heard in our mission:

*“Ouachita is a Christ-centered learning community. Embracing the liberal arts tradition, the university prepares individuals for ongoing intellectual and spiritual growth, lives of meaningful work and reasoned engagement with the world.”*

The evidence of the value proposition that we seek to strengthen every day can be found in:

- The growing number of families who find their way to our campus – nestled in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains and on the bluff overlooking the Ouachita River – and see that their hopes for the future can be realized here.
- The parents who see their children developing career capabilities, broadening their intellect and deepening their faith.
- The alumni who remain loyal and send their children to us because they remember the great investment that faculty and staff made in them.
- The employers who seek to hire our graduates in greater numbers because of the “faith, scholarship, growth, character and community” that a Ouachita education imparts.

Experience and dedication have taught us that the source of enduring value is to “foster a love of God and of learning.”

With foresight and faithfulness, Ouachita will continue to make a greater and greater difference.

**Ben R. Sells, PhD**  
*@OuachitaPrez*

# VISIT CAMPUS FROM THE COUCH

[obu.edu/virtualtour](http://obu.edu/virtualtour)

Whether you've been on campus recently or the last time you were here was graduation day, take our new virtual campus tour and see what's changed and what's stayed the same at your alma mater!

**AS ALWAYS, WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU IN PERSON, TOO!** Give us a call at 870-245-5111 or stop by the Office of Alumni Relations on the first floor of Cone-Bottoms any time you're on campus.





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I attended Ouachita for three-and-a-half years, and I wasn't able to finish. I discovered that Ouachita had online classes, and all of a sudden there was an opportunity. It was the right moment in time for me.

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