

2-16-2015

## OBU's Ouachitonian yearbook earns Gold Medalist rating

Katy Firmin  
*Ouachita Baptist University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press\\_releases](http://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases)

---

### Recommended Citation

Firmin, Katy, "OBU's Ouachitonian yearbook earns Gold Medalist rating" (2015). *Press Releases*. Paper 64.  
[http://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press\\_releases/64](http://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases/64)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Communication at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Press Releases by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact [mortensona@obu.edu](mailto:mortensona@obu.edu).

# OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



# NEWS

For immediate release

## **OBU's *Ouachitonian* yearbook earns Gold Medalist rating**

By Katy Firmin

February 16, 2015

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's 2014 yearbook, the *Ouachitonian*, received Columbia Scholastic Press Association's Gold Medalist rating, the highest honor presented through the CSPA's annual college yearbook critique.

Individual staff members also earned a total of seven Gold Circle Awards, including two first place awards. The individual national winners were selected from among more than 4,600 entries from students throughout the nation.

"It is such an honor to be recognized in this way," said *Ouachitonian* Editor Aly Smith, a senior mass communications and graphic design double major from Sherwood, Ark. "We put in so much time and effort on this book; it feels great to have someone else appreciate it as much as I do."

"It is nice to see our students rewarded for doing good work," added Dr. Deborah Root, faculty advisor for the *Ouachitonian* and chair of OBU's Rogers Department of Communications. "The yearbook is very much a learning tool for our students, and it's great that we are recognized as one of the best yearbooks in the nation."

Columbia Scholastic Press Association at Columbia University conducts the annual yearbook critique in which universities and high schools across the nation send in their yearbooks to be judged. The 2014 *Ouachitonian*, themed "Ouachita State of Mind," earned All-Columbian honors in two of the three judging categories, verbal (writing) and visual (photography and graphic design). The book's total score of 956 of a possible 1,000 points earned the Gold Medalist rating.

Among the Gold Circle Award winners, Smith earned first place for yearbook index, and she and Tori (Abellera) Gay, a 2014 Ouachita graduate, earned first place for single advertisement layout for "The Men of Kappa Chi." They also won second place for single ad layout for "The Men of Eta Alpha Omega." Ben Cline, also a 2014 OBU graduate, was awarded second place for a personality profile in memory of Dr. Tom Auffenberg.

Staff members earning certificates of merit included Robert DeSoto, a sophomore mass communications and Spanish double major from Sheridan, Ark., for academic writing on "Thespian Resurgence"; Smith and Jake Coffman, a 2014 OBU graduate, for a student life spread on Tiger Tunes; and Smith and Cline for a sports spread about softball.

Other *Ouachitonian* section editors included 2014 graduate Mauri Sparks, as well as Amber Easterly, a sophomore business administration/marketing major from Bryant, Ark.; and Hannah Shull, a senior psychology major from Little Rock, Ark. Smith was responsible for the book's theme, page design, story ideas and editing. Other students on staff wrote stories and captions. Kristen (Barnard) Young, a 2014 OBU graduate, served as photo lab editor.

Noting that Ouachita was the smallest university to earn Gold Circle Awards, Root said, "Other winners were schools such as University of Miami and University of Oklahoma. When you compete with larger schools with bigger budgets, it's nice to be judged not on the size of your school or book, but on the quality of your publication."

"It was such a special moment to read our name among the Gold Circle winners," Smith reflected. "To see our name among those huge schools really validated all our planning and hard work."

The CSPA was established in 1925 "to help improve student publications" through annual critiques, awards programs and conventions. According to CSPA Director Edmund Sullivan, "Yearbooks today use the techniques of journalism to fulfill their roles as a memory book, a history book, a record book and a reference book." He added that the CSPA seeks to "help today's yearbooks successfully meet the expectations of today's audience."

For more information on the *Ouachitonian* or Ouachita's Rogers Department of Communications, contact Dr. Deborah Root at [root@obu.edu](mailto:root@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5510.