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## Ouachita students earn awards in math and programming competitions

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**OUACHITA**  
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



**NEWS**

For immediate release

**Ouachita students earn awards in math and programming competitions**

*By Chelsea Whelpley*

April 13, 2015

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University students from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science recently earned awards at the Arkansas Undergraduate Mathematics Competition and Acxiom's Collegiate Programming Contest.

Six Ouachita students competed in the 12th annual Arkansas Undergraduate Mathematics Competition (AUMC), hosted this year by John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Ark. At AUMC, students worked in teams of two, three or four on a three-hour exam consisting of 10 problems over a wide range of difficulty.

The team of Camden Dwelle, a senior mathematics and biology major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; Kaylee Harper, a junior mathematics and secondary education major from Rogers, Ark.; and Hamilton Johnson, a junior physics and computer science major from Little Rock, Ark., finished in a tie for first place out of 10 competing teams. Each member of the team received a \$50 prize.

"Winning a competition like this means that I truly am growing in my knowledge and skill in mathematics," Harper said. "It shows that our math classes are a place of learning and community. We trust each other to work in an environment where we have to be able to move forward in faith when someone knows more or accept critique when a mistake is found without wasting time."

"This is an excellent opportunity for students to use their mathematical skills cooperatively in a fun atmosphere, as well as to meet other mathematics students from around the state," said Dr. Jeffery Sykes, Ouachita professor of mathematics and competition organizer.

Nine students competed at the 2015 Collegiate Programming Contest sponsored by Acxiom at the University of Central Arkansas. Teams seek to solve a set of programming problems as quickly and error-free as possible within a five-hour time limit.

The team including Nathan Hill, a junior computer science and applied mathematics major from Bryant, Ark.; Jake Kausler, a senior computer science and biblical languages major from Marion, Ark.; and Nathan Malone, a senior computer science and applied mathematics major from Mayflower, Ark., earned third place out of 12 teams.

"The Acxiom competition is a good way for students to gain some experience outside of class," said Dr. Jeff Matocha, associate professor of computer science. "They have a good time, but get to see what competition they will have after graduation. The students are very proud of their achievement."

While some schools train specifically for the competitions, Ouachita students are able to be competitive with only class instruction as a guide. "Being part of a team that can compete at the levels of some of those schools was indeed an accomplishment," Kausler said. "It also shows that not only can the students make good grades, but they can take their knowledge and apply it to extracurricular situations."

For more information about the competitions or Ouachita's mathematics and computer science programs, contact Dr. Jeff Matocha at [matochai@obu.edu](mailto:matochai@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5329 or Dr. Jeff Sykes at [sykesj@obu.edu](mailto:sykesj@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5328.