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OUACHITA
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NEWS

For immediate release

Dr. Rex Horne concludes tenure as Ouachita president, accepts AICU leadership post

By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications

May 12, 2015

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Dr. Rex M. Horne, Jr., president of Ouachita Baptist University since 2006, has announced his resignation as president effective this summer in order to serve as president of Arkansas' Independent Colleges & Universities. He succeeds Ouachita alumnus Rex Nelson who has been named director of corporate communications for Simmons First National Corp.

"My nine-plus years at Ouachita have been very rewarding," Dr. Horne said. "I have been most impressed by the work performed by our faculty and staff. The sense of calling and commitment to duty has been evident on the campus. Our students are difference makers. I will treasure the time the Lord allowed me to serve here. Our prayers, continued interest and desire to help remain strong."

During his tenure at Ouachita's 15th president, Dr. Horne has led efforts to strengthen the university's financial standing, including launching the "Defining the Difference" capital campaign. Other achievements include providing leadership for several significant improvements to the physical campus, including such major projects as the Student Village residence halls dedicated in 2009 and Cliff Harris Stadium dedicated in 2014. He also presided over Ouachita's 125th anniversary celebration in 2011.

Throughout his tenure as president, Dr. Horne consistently challenged students, faculty and staff to be "difference makers" in their personal lives, careers and ministry opportunities. "You are difference makers," he reminded Ouachita's 2015 graduating class. "Make this your lifelong passion and pursuit."

Concerning his new role, Dr. Horne said, "I have known the presidents of our private colleges and universities as friends. I now have the opportunity to assist them personally and represent them corporately before the public and our legislature. The schools share a foundation of faith. I pray this time will prove beneficial for these friends and their institutions."

"Rex Horne is a graduate of one of our Arkansas independent colleges and the president of another," noted Dr. Don Weatherman, chairman of the AICU executive committee and president of Lyon College. "There couldn't be a better background for the next president of Arkansas' Independent Colleges & Universities. Dr. Horne is respected throughout the state."

"I was concerned about the task of replacing Rex Nelson, who served our organization effectively and professionally," Dr. Weatherman said. "I'm delighted we were able to find an educator who is also effective, professional and respected in every region of Arkansas."

Arkansas' Independent Colleges & Universities is a consortium of 11 independent institutions of higher education throughout the state. In addition to Ouachita, member institutions include Arkansas Baptist College, Central Baptist College, Crowley's Ridge College, Harding University, Hendrix College, John Brown University, Lyon College, Philander Smith College, University of the Ozarks and Williams Baptist College. The AICU provides support for the member colleges and universities in such areas as scholarships, governmental affairs and public affairs.

Reflecting on Dr. Horne's tenure as president, Jay Heflin, chair of OBU's Board of Trustees, said, "Dr. Horne has been a beacon of hope and light for Ouachita over the last several years. His leadership and vision have not only transformed the physical appearance of Ouachita's campus, but they have strengthened the Ouachita community in very meaningful ways. He has put us into an enviable position among Christian liberal arts universities for attracting and retaining the best and brightest students.

"We are thankful for God's provision in leading Dr. Horne to Ouachita in 2006 and look forward to continuing our relationship with him as he transitions into his new role with Arkansas' Independent Colleges & Universities," Heflin added. "While we won't see him on a daily basis, we know that God has called him to a new ministry to be a pillar of support for all independent colleges and universities throughout Arkansas. We prayerfully wish him much continued success."

"I have known Rex Horne for years as a great leader and personal friend," said Dr. Sonny Tucker, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. "I watched him serve with tremendous impact as the pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock and as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"As president of Ouachita, not only was he a great friend to my two children while they were students there, he has been a great friend to the pastors and churches in Arkansas and has led the school to new heights as a national leader among private Christian universities," Dr. Tucker said. "As an Arkansas Baptist and as a parent, I deeply appreciate Dr. Rex and Becky Horne."

Dr. Horne, who attended Ouachita as a student, holds degrees from Lyon College, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Becky, are the parents of four adult children and have 11 grandchildren.

Prior to serving as president of Ouachita, Dr. Horne served 16 years as senior pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock. He previously was pastor of churches in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. He also has served as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and chair of the Great American Conference Council of Presidents as well as serving on several corporate and civic boards.

PHOTO OF HORNE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <https://www.obu.edu/news/2015/05/12/dr-rex-horne-concludes-tenure-as-ouachita-president-accepts-aicu-leadership-post>.