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## Suzie Gresham crowned Miss Ouachita Baptist University 2016

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*Ouachita Baptist University*

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**OUACHITA**  
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



**NEWS**

For immediate release

**Suzie Gresham crowned Miss Ouachita Baptist University 2016**

*By Anna Hurst*

October 28, 2015

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Suzie Gresham, a senior business administration/management and marketing major from Hope, Ark., was crowned Miss Ouachita Baptist University on Oct. 23 at Jones Performing Arts Center. Gresham will represent Ouachita in the 2016 Miss Arkansas Pageant this summer.

"I'm absolutely overjoyed and am still in shock," said Gresham, who represented the OBU softball team in the pageant. "This honor is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I'm still taking in the crowning moment. It is so rewarding to see a lot of hard work and preparation pay off and have my whole softball team supporting me every step of the way. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to represent and serve as Miss Ouachita Baptist University."

Along with being crowned Miss OBU, Gresham received a \$1,000 scholarship from the university as well as wardrobe, photography, consultations and other gift packages from supporting businesses. Gresham was also the recipient of the Dr. Wesley Kluck Photogenic Award, People's Choice Award, the Bethany Whitfield Alpha Swimsuit Award, the MaryLacey Thomson Alpha Evening Wear Award and the Bethany Briscoe Toney Presence and Poise in Evening Wear Award.

Gresham is the daughter of Ben and Jamie Gresham of Hope, Ark. She is captain of the OBU softball team. Her platform is First Aid First: Taking Initiative Guarantees Emergency Response Sooner (T.I.G.E.R.S.).

"My platform works to educate and empower youth with basic, yet important, life-saving skills. Being that my family has been in the emergency medical industry since 1967, helping others is literally in my blood," she explained. "I have taken a 144-hour EMT course, and, during this course, I had a friend taking it with me who was very opposed to the idea of gaining EMT certification. He felt that he would never use these skills with the career path he had chosen, but boy was he wrong.

"After the class was completed, he and one of his friends were in Taco Bell one day and his friend nudged him out of the booth," Gresham continued. "Thinking his friend just had to use the restroom, he got up but then realized his friend was demonstrating the international sign for choking. Thankfully he performed the Heimlich maneuver and cleared his friend's airway. His friend's life he just saved was my little brother! My platform means so much to me, and I feel that everybody should know; no matter if you're 5 or 25 you can make a difference and you can save a life."

Six other contestants competed alongside Gresham in this year's pageant. First runner-up was Kathryn Barfield, a senior biology major from New Boston, Texas. Second runner-up and winner of the Academic Award, the Children's Miracle Network Miracle Maker Award, the Kiley Jane Wright Alpha Award and the Kristen Glover Belew Private Interview Award was Stoni Butler, a senior psychology major from Camden, Ark. Third runner-up and winner of the Mac Sisson Alpha Talent Award and the Miss Congeniality Award was Alexis Morgan, a junior choral music education major from Frisco, Texas.

Lauren Ford, a sophomore political science major from Cabot, Ark., won the Spirit of Miss Ouachita Baptist University Award, and Bethany Arredondo, a senior speech communication major from Prosper,

Texas, won the Ouachita Baptist University Student Senate Inner and Outer Beauty Award. Mariah Gough, a junior biology and kinesiology/leisure studies double major from Smackover, Ark., also competed.

"I look forward to appearances not only with community leaders, but also getting to visit schools and to speak on my platform," Gresham said. "Getting to serve, educate and empower others is what the Miss America Organization is all about, and I'm excited to be able to do just that. This part of the title will prepare me for Miss Arkansas by sharing my platform with others – and working on my talent! I haven't danced in years, and I look forward to dusting off my shoes and getting back into the groove of things."

Former Miss OBU and Miss Arkansas 2004 Lacy Glover served as emcee for the pageant. Guests presenting entertainment during the event included Miss OBU's Diamond State Princess Chloe Hargis; Miss OBU 2015 Brooke Schmidt; and Loren McDaniel, Miss Arkansas 2015.

Also providing entertainment throughout the pageant was this year's Court of Honor, featuring Taylor Black, a senior psychology and mass communications double major from Benton, Ark., and Kayla Walker, a junior musical theatre major from North Little Rock, Ark. Carli Sasser, an OBU alumna and current admissions counselor, served as musical director, and Stacy Hawking, a senior musical theatre major from Sherwood, Ark., served as choreographer for the Court of Honor.

The pageant was directed by OBU alumnus Justin Harper and hosted by Ouachita's Student Senate. Ouachita alumni, business professionals and pageant directors from the surrounding region served as judges for the event.

"We were so pleased with the contestants, and the judges were really impressed by the caliber of talent that we have on campus at Ouachita," said Harper, adding that he is looking forward to working with Gresham. "She is new to the Miss Arkansas world, and I am excited to help her navigate that world and learn all she can. She is just a delight, and she is going to be great to work with. I think that she is such a great representative for the university."

Harper also noted that Gresham is the first student-athlete to win Miss OBU during his time as director and excited about working with the new skill set that Gresham brings.

"With athletics comes a lot of discipline, and I am eager to see that discipline carry over into this competitive pageant world. I think it is going to be a really great advantage for her."

For more information, contact Ashlee Giles at [gilesa@obu.edu](mailto:gilesa@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5200.

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