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## Horton wins 39th annual Virginia Queen Piano Competition at Ouachita

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**OUACHITA**  
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



**NEWS**

For immediate release

**Horton wins 39<sup>th</sup> annual Virginia Queen Piano Competition at Ouachita**

*By Meaghan Pollizi*

May 3, 2016

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University junior Joanna Horton from Arkadelphia, Ark., was named first place winner of the 39th annual Virginia Queen Competition for Excellence in Piano Performance, hosted by Ouachita's School of Fine Arts on April 30.

Horton, a music major, won first place and a \$500 cash prize for her performance of the first movement of Muzio Clementi's "Sonata Op. 47, No. 2," and "Dreaming," from "Four Sketches" by Amy Beach. Horton is a piano student of Dr. Adam Haas, visiting assistant professor of music.

"I feel honored and thankful to have gotten the chance to play pieces that I truly enjoyed learning," Horton said. "I feel thankful for the instruction and encouragement I've received from Dr. Haas and the piano studio."

Lauren Johnson, a senior music major from Little Rock, Ark., earned second place and a cash prize of \$350 for her performance of Felix Mendelssohn's "Song without Words" and Claude Debussy's "Reverie." She also is a student of Haas.

Third place winner Tyler Sanders, a freshman music major from Arkadelphia, Ark., won a \$150 cash prize with his performance of Jan Ladislav Dussek's "Sonatina in G major, Op.20, No.1" and the first movement of Dmitry Kabalevsky's "Sonatina, Op.13, No.1. Sanders is a piano student of Dr. Lei Cai, professor of piano.

Having never participated in the competition before, Sanders said, "Honestly, I was a little nervous at first. But, when it came time for me to play, most of that went away and I enjoyed myself." Zhanxiu Lu, a sophomore music and studio art double major from Shaoxin, China, and Elizabeth Anderson, a junior choral music education major from Salem, Ark., earned honorable mentions. Both are piano students of Cai.

The Virginia Queen Piano Competition was established in 1977 by Virginia Queen, professor emerita of music, who taught piano at Ouachita for more than 40 years. This year's judge was Dr. David Northington, professor of piano at the University of Tennessee.

"It was a pleasure to adjudicate the Virginia Queen Competition," Northington noted. "The students that competed were all well-prepared and seemed to genuinely enjoy playing their pieces for the audience that was assembled. I was pleasantly surprised at the enthusiasm that the students had for the experience.

“The piano is an extraordinarily expressive instrument, and one which demands the highest level of concentration and dedication to reach artistic expression and competence,” Northington added. “These students demonstrated a love for the instrument that no doubt will continue to grow as they further their studies.”

For more information, contact Dr. Lei Cai at [leic@obu.edu](mailto:leic@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5140.