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NEWS

For Immediate Release

Ouachita celebrates 20th anniversary of Tiger Serve Day Sept. 24

By Katie Smith

September 16, 2016

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Students, faculty and staff from Ouachita Baptist University will gather to participate in the school's semi-annual Tiger Serve Day community service event on Saturday, Sept. 24, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Ouachita's Ben M. Elrod Center for Family and Community sponsors Tiger Serve Day and hopes to mark the event's 20th anniversary with record participation numbers.

"There will be new energy as we are motivating our campus to give an all-out effort in participation," said Judy Duvall, assistant director of the Elrod Center. "We are anticipating a huge crowd, which means we will be able to help many more people and make an impact in our community, both practically and relationally."

Along with participating in service projects around the community, a primary goal for Tiger Serve Day is for students to build relationships with Arkadelphia residents.

"I love the fact that it is a joy-filled day for students, faculty and staff to have a really great time," noted Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement. "We help people in simple ways, but it builds goodwill and strengthens our connections as a university to our hometown."

Students will meet in front of the Elrod Center at 8:30 on Saturday morning. After breakfast catered by Sodexo, they will divide into teams and go out into the community to complete their assigned projects. These projects include painting, repair jobs, cleaning, yard work and more. At noon, all of the students are invited to gather at the Elrod Center for lunch provided by Sodexo. This semester's goal is to exceed 1,006 volunteers, which is the record number of volunteers for a single Tiger Serve Day.

Twenty-three students serve on the Tiger Serve Day Leadership Team and help the Elrod Center staff plan this event. These students are involved in planning the projects, recruiting volunteers, managing the tools and equipment used and providing publicity for the day.

Brook East, a senior sociology major from Royse, Texas, is serving on the projects team this year.

"I chose to be on the Tiger Serve Day team because it is a group of individuals that care about connecting students to the Arkadelphia community in a way that is behind the scenes," East said. "The people I get to serve alongside care about showing people the love of Jesus, and we do that through Tiger Serve Day."

"I really love working with the Tiger Serve Day Leadership Team in the weeks preceding Tiger Serve Day," Duvall said. "They are humble, hardworking students with hearts to serve the campus and community. They always inspire me."

This year's theme for Tiger Serve Day is "Into the Streets," which is a throwback theme to the first Tiger Serve Day. Twenty years ago, Cosh planned Ouachita's first Tiger Serve Day, called "Into the Streets," after seeing other prominent universities host similar events under the same name.

“The first Tiger Serve Day was in fact called by that name,” Cosh said. “The next year I made the suggestion that we call our service day ‘Tiger Serve Day’ in order to link the name with Tiger Traks and Tiger Tunes,” other landmark events on campus. “It seemed to me to make much more sense for us to brand the day in a unique way that related to other key events.”

This year’s Tiger Serve Day is a special event, but its goal of encouraging students to serve their community and build relationships with its members remains the same.

“TSD impacts our entire community by creating a culture that is not all about the individual – the one serving or the one served,” East reflected. “For at least one day every semester I can say that we are college students who care more about someone else than ourselves. It’s more about this collective group of people who have one goal: to glorify the Lord by serving.”

To register for Tiger Serve Day or for more information, visit www.obu.edu/elrod/serve or call the Elrod Center at (870) 245-5320.