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# OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



# NEWS

For immediate release

## **Ouachita honors Alumni Milestone and Worthy Ouachitonian award recipients**

*By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications*

October 20, 2016

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Honoring its seventh class of Ouachita Alumni Milestone Awards recipients, Ouachita Baptist University recognized outstanding graduates from the classes of 1966, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2006 at halftime of the Homecoming football game Oct. 15. The alumni honorees were selected by a committee of Ouachita faculty and staff to represent their milestone reunion classes.

This year's Homecoming festivities also included the presentation of a Worthy Ouachitonian Award by Ouachita President Ben Sells.

Ouachita's 2016 Alumni Milestone Awards recipients included:

**Dr. Tom Elliff ('66):** After graduating from Ouachita, Elliff married fellow Ouachitonian Jeannie Thomas. He earned his Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Ministry degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Elliffs served churches in Arkansas, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma where he served as a pastor for 42 years. They served as missionaries to Zimbabwe through the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and he later served as IMB president. Elliff also served as president of both the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention. He has authored 14 books, including his most recent book, *The Unwanted Gift*, released this month.

Elliff is a third-generation Ouachitonian. His grandfather A.P., graduated in 1916; his mother, Jewel, graduated in 1938; his father, J.T., in 1939, his sister, Sandra, graduated in 1963 followed by his brothers Jim in 1970 and Bill in 74.

Elliff lives in Oklahoma City. He and his late wife are the parents of four children and have 25 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

**Carol Miller Gresham ('76):** While a student at Ouachita, Gresham was part of a core group that established the Ouachita Student Foundation. Her work helped shape the organization which now has more than 1,000 alumni and has provided more than \$1.3 million in scholarships to help students complete their education at Ouachita.

After graduating from Ouachita with a major in choral music education, Gresham earned her MBA degree at Capella University in Minnesota. Working in real estate, she served as vice president for Landmark Properties in Tulsa and as founder and owner of both CMP Market Research and Relocation Services of Arkansas – the state's first and only nationally recognized apartment referral company. She also was the founder and served as executive director of the Arkansas Apartment Association.

Gresham also has served as vice chancellor for development at Arkansas State University, Mountain Home, and most recently has focused on helping families move out of poverty through the North Central Arkansas Poverty Consortium and her own consulting company, Cornerstones for Success, which works with communities and organizations to help families gain economic stability.

She is a member and Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International and has served on the board of United Way, Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, Southshore Foundation, Mountain Home Education Foundation, National Council for Resource Development, Bridges Out of Poverty and the Baxter Regional Medical Center Hospital Foundation. She and her husband, John, live in Rogers, Ark.

**Steve Bowman ('86):** After graduating from Ouachita, Bowman became the outdoor editor for the Arkansas Democrat, now the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, where he served for 13 years. His column, which focused on hunting, fishing and the outdoors of Arkansas, became one of the most-read columns in the state. In 1987, he co-authored the *Arkansas Duck Hunter's Almanac*, which has become one of the most-sold duck hunting books of all time.

In 2001, Bowman was hired to create ESPNOutdoors.com. The site quickly became the most-visited outdoor-focused website in the world. He also has authored two photographic books – one on duck hunting, co-authored with fellow OBU alumnus Mark Stallings, and one on bass fishing. In 2010, Bowman became the content director for JM Associates in Little Rock, serving as managing editor for *Redfish Nation* magazine and *Boat US Angler* magazine as well as managing Bassmaster.com, the current most-visited outdoor-focused website in the world. He has hosted his own television show, "Water Dog," and radio show, "The Arkansas Sportsman," and helped produce numerous Emmy-award winning television shows for ESPN and the Outdoor Network. He and his wife, Barbara, live in Little Rock.

**Dr. Tom Phelan ('96):** After graduating from Ouachita, Tom attended dental school at Baylor College of Dentistry in Dallas. After earning his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 2000, he received his Master of Science in Oral Biology and Certificate in Orthodontics in 2002. Upon completing his residency, Phelan returned home to Little Rock to begin practicing orthodontics with his father, Jim, a 1968 Ouachita alumnus. Phelan has served as secretary, treasurer, vice president and president of the Arkansas Association of Orthodontists.

In 2003, inspired by both of his grandfathers' service in World War II and the tragic events of 9/11, Phelan began the process of joining the National Guard. In 2005, he joined the 189th Airlift Wing of the Arkansas Air National Guard as a dental officer where he currently serves our state and nation. Phelan and his wife, Wendy, live in Little Rock and have three children, Emily, Olivia and J.T.

**Katherine (Jenkins) Grant ('06):** After graduating from Ouachita, Grant married fellow alumnus Gary Grant and they moved to North Little Rock where she enrolled in cosmetology school, following through on a lifelong dream. In 2008, just one year after completing cosmetology school, she opened Katherine Grant Salon and Spa in North Little Rock. Starting with space for just herself and 2 other cosmetologists, the growing salon has moved into a new location and now has 12 stylists.

In 2015, Grant joined Usborne Books & More as an independent consultant selling children's books. Quickly becoming a leader in the company, she became director in just under a year and now manages a team of more than 650 consultants. Grant and her husband in Sherwood, Ark., and have three children, Elliott, 4; Mason, 3; and Julianne, 2.

In addition to honoring this year's Alumni Milestone Award recipients, President Sells presented a Worthy Ouachitonian award to former Ouachita student **Candace (Sharp) Payne.**

During her years at Ouachita, Payne was a member of Theta Alpha Phi; Concert Choir; Ouachita Singers; performed in the musical and theater productions of *J.B.*, *the Ballad of Baby Doe* and *Godspell*; and was crowned Homecoming Queen in 1999. Earlier this year, Payne became known around the world as Chewbacca Mom as her joyful video with her new Chewbacca mask went viral and became the most viewed Facebook Live video to date with more than 161 million views. Since the viral video, Payne has shared her message of simple joys on *Good Morning America*, *The Late Late Show with James Corden* and on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry among others. She toured with country recording artist Dylan Scott this fall and performed in a concert with fellow Ouachitonian Barrett Baber as part of this year's

OBU Homecoming festivities. Payne, her husband, Chris, and, their children, Duncan and Cadence, live in Grand Prairie, Texas.

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