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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita student publications earn 53 awards at 2017 ACMA competition

By Katie Smith

April 13, 2017

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's student publications recently won 53 awards at the Arkansas College Media Association (AMCA) conference in Bentonville, Ark.

"It's nice to see so many students honored for their work because it shows that it is a team effort when producing the publications for the university," said Dr. Deborah Root, chair of Ouachita's Rogers Department of Communications and sponsor of the *Ouachitonian* yearbook. "From writing to design to photography, it takes a strong staff of students to publish award-winning publications."

The 2015-2016 *Ouachitonian* yearbook earned 32 awards, including first place for Yearbook of the Year. It also has been awarded an All-American Award from Associated Collegiate Press and a Gold-Medalist critique from Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

"I am so honored and proud to be a part of an award-winning staff like the *Ouachitonian*," said Amber Easterly, a senior business administration and mass communications double major from Alexander, Ark. who serves as the *Ouachitonian*'s co-editor-in-chief. "The bragging rights are always nice, but it is just so rewarding to work with this staff and create such a good book while having fun, too. The newsroom is our little safe haven where we produce such amazing work. I'm just so proud."

"The *Ouachitonian* has a strong tradition of doing well in this competition, and I'm always excited to see that tradition continue," Root added. "Winning first place as Yearbook of the Year is always an honor. The students see their work as a historical record of the university, and they take pride in telling the story of the university they love."

Andy Henderson, a junior mass communications major from Royse City, Texas, who serves as editor of Ouachita's student photography staff, was named Photographer of the Year. Four other students from the photography staff also won first place awards for specific photos.

"When I was named Photographer of the Year, I was in disbelief at first; I didn't leave my seat for the first few seconds after they called my name," Henderson said. "I definitely gained some confidence in my work through this experience, and it was very rewarding. All of the late nights spent editing, the hours and hours a week spent shooting, and the delegating and working with other photographers paid off, not only for the photo lab, but for *The Signal* and *Ouachitonian* staffs as well!"

"I'm so excited for Andy Henderson winning Photographer of the Year," Root said. "He is not only very talented, but he is a proven leader for the photography staff. His talent, attitude and work ethic are stellar. He and his staff do an excellent job providing photos of all campus events and special projects."

The Signal student newspaper placed third for Newspaper of the Year, and *The Online Signal* placed third for Website of the Year. The newspaper earned 18 other awards, as well. Barrett Gay, a senior mass communications major from Little Rock, Ark., is editor-in-chief of *The Signal*, and Cimber Winfrey, a senior mass communications major from North Little Rock, Ark., is editor-in-chief of *The Online Signal*.

"I have been pleased all year with the work ethic and talent displayed by our editors and writers, but it's especially pleasing to see that professionals have judged them to be among the best college journalists in so many categories of competition," said Dr. Jeff Root, dean of Ouachita's School of Humanities and sponsor for *The Signal*. "It begins with our editor, Barrett Gay, who has pulled in a talented group of section editors and writers. Barrett has mastered the art of making the publication both enjoyable and a serious endeavor. The fact that several staff members won awards shows both talent and depth in the major and on Barrett's staff."

For the *Ouachitonian*, Easterly won first place for the Academics Layout, Closing, Divider, Feature Layout, Introduction Theme Page, Layout-Organization/Greek and Portrait Layout categories. Easterly also won second place in the Academics Layout, Cover, Sports Layout and Student Life Layout categories.

Robert DeSoto, a mass communications and Spanish double major from Sheridan, Ark., and the *Ouachitonian's* co-editor-in-chief, won first place in the Academics Writing category. DeSoto was also honored with second place and honorable mention for Special Features Writing and second place and honorable mention for Student Life Writing.

Ian Craft, a senior mass communications major from Celina, Texas, won first place for Sports Writing. Gloria Davis, a mass communications graduate, won first place for Academics Writing. Grace Finley, a mass communications graduate, won second place and honorable mention for Academics Photo; first place, second place and honorable mention for Feature Photo; second place and honorable mention for Sports Photo and second place for Student Life Photo. Laken Livingston, a mass communications graduate, won third place for Academics Writing. Haley Martin, a mass communications graduate, won third place for Writing-Organization/Greek. Evan Wheatley, a music and mass communications double major from Camden, Ark., won second place for Special Features Writing.

Along with winning Photographer of the Year, Henderson also won first place for Student Life Photo.

For work on *The Signal*, Gay won third place for Editorial Page Layout and honorable mention for Headlines. Caleb Byrd, a sophomore mass communications, business administration and Spanish triple major from Little Rock, Ark., won honorable mention for Election/Political. Katherine Carter, a Christian studies and sociology double major from Little Rock, Ark., won second place for Editorial Cartoon. Craft won first place for Sports Column and second and third place photo for Sports Feature. Katie Kemp, a senior mass communications and Spanish major from Conway, Ark., won second place for Personality Profile. Mackenzie Osborn, a sophomore musical theatre major from Rockwall, Texas, won first place for Feature Photo. Wheatley won first place for Personality Profile and third place for Feature Page Layout .

For *The Online Signal*, Winfrey won first place in Topical Reporting/Blogs. Ali Kinsey, a sophomore business administration major from Hot Springs, Ark., won first place for Election/Political. Barrett Pfeiffer, a freshman mass communications major from Benton, Ark., won third place and honorable mention for Personality Profile and third place for Sports Writing.

In the Audio Podcast category, Bekah Davis, a senior mass communications major from Benton, Ark.; Ian Craft; Marcellus Hill, a junior mass communications major from Princeton, Texas; Carl Olloway, a junior mass communications major from Marion, Ark.; and J.V. Vinson, a junior mass communications major from Conway, Ark.; won first and second place for their *Bekah and Boys* sports podcast.

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