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For immediate release

Ouachita's director of recreational life earns notable climbing certification

By Rachel Bruton

November 16, 2018

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



ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University's Shane Seaton, director of recreational life, received a Single Pitch Instructor (SPI) Certification from the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA). The certification from the AMGA is the only internationally recognized single pitch climbing instructor certification program in the United States.

Founded in 1979, the American Mountain Guide Association sets standards for American guiding instruction for rock climbing. The AMGA Single Pitch Instructor certification course is 27 hours of instruction over three days and includes training in correct gear usage, anchor building, risk management, instruction skills and more. A pitch is a steep section of rock that requires a rope between two belays or a belay and an anchor; single pitch climbs are routes that belay from the ground.

"I have always wanted to train with the AMGA; they are one of the top organizations for mountain guide training," said Seaton, who also teaches courses in rock climbing, outdoor leisure pursuits and backpacking at Ouachita. "The hard skills they teach, such as knots and equipment usage, are beneficial for managing the risk of climbing. I appreciate their programming because it promotes teaching skills and client care. It tested my knowledge of the technical skills needed to guide and my ability to instruct new climbers in the outdoors."

Seaton received the SPI certification this fall upon completing a 16-hour assessment that tested both the technical skills he learned from the certification course, as well as his ability to instruct new climbers in an outdoor environment.



"This certification has challenged me to make my programming even better," Seaton said. "I learned more skills to make the risk management aspect better. More importantly, I learned how to cater our [Ouachita] climbing activities to what the students want and need. I have already implemented some changes on trips I lead and in my climbing class. These new skills allow me to challenge students through rock climbing and help them learn more about themselves, others and God."

For more information about Ouachita's Recreational Life program, contact Shane Seaton at seatons@obu.edu or (870) 245-5268.

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