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Ouachita's American Chemical Society student chapter presents at national meeting, receives Honorable Mention Award

By Rachel Moreno

June 18, 2019

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Four Ouachita Baptist University chemistry faculty and seven student researchers attended the American Chemical Society (ACS) National Meeting and Exposition this spring in Orlando, Fla., to present individual research. Ouachita's student ACS chapter also received the Honorable Mention ACS Student Chapter Award for the 2017-18 school year during the meeting's Student Awards Ceremony.

The event featured presentations on new discoveries in science where chemistry plays a role, including food and nutrition, medicine, health, energy, the environment and other fields. Ouachita students Joey Dean, Travis Hankins, Savanna Harris, Mallory Mayfield, Alex Podguzov, Catie Shirley and Jessica Snelgrove gave poster presentations. Ouachita's Dr. Sharon Hamilton, Dr. Timothy Hayes and Dr. Sara Hubbard also presented their work. Dr. Joe Bradshaw, W.D. and Alice Burch Professor of Chemistry and Pre-Medical Studies, also attended in support of his students.

"It's a huge benefit to undergraduates to present research at a national conference," said Hamilton, assistant professor of chemistry and ACS chapter co-faculty mentor. "This is just one of the many things Ouachita's chemistry department does to help prepare our students for graduate and professional schools."

Dean, a senior biology major from Hot Springs, Ark., presented "Epigenetic interactions between methyltransferase SWN and chromatin remodeler PKL." Hankins, a sophomore chemistry major from Bismarck, Ark., presented "Synthesis of a novel water-soluble porphyrin derivative for use as a potential phototherapeutic cancer treatment." Harris, a senior biology major from Richmond, Ky., gave a presentation on "Synthesis and characterization of a novel Zn(II) porphyrin incorporating TAMRA for use as a PDT agent." Mayfield, a senior biology major from Alexander, Ark., presented "Determination of BPA in infant oral hygiene products using fluorescence spectrophotometry." Podguzov, a junior chemistry major from Razvilka Village, Russia, presented "Where, how and how much: Novel porphyrins for photodynamic therapy of triple negative breast cancer." Shirley, a junior biology major from Wylie, Texas,

presented “Developing a new water-soluble porphyrin as a potential photodynamic cancer therapy agent.” Snelgrove, a senior biology major from Camden, Ark., presented “Determination of BPA in vaping mouthpieces using spectrofluorometry.”

Shirley and Snelgrove also presented “In our element: ACS at Ouachita Baptist University,” a poster summarizing Ouachita’s ACS chapter activities over the 2018-19 school year, and Ouachita’s student chapter also participated in the ACS meeting’s demo-exchange, an academic and networking opportunity for all student chapters in attendance to share chemistry demonstrations using household items/chemicals.

Snelgrove, Ouachita’s 2018-2019 ACS student chapter president, accepted the Honorable Mention ACS Student Chapter Award on behalf of last year’s president, Alyson Cole, to whom the chapter award is attributed. Cole is a 2018 biology graduate from El Dorado, Ark.

Chemistry faculty who gave poster presentations included: Dr. Hamilton, who presented “Modern technology in the organic chemistry classroom: online components and clickers and apps, oh my!”; Dr. Hayes, professor of chemistry and holder of the E. A. Provine Chair of Chemistry, who presented “Light-induced cell death in response to a novel porphyrin derivative”; and Dr. Hubbard, associate professor of chemistry and holder of the Nell I. Mondy Chair of Chemistry, who presented “Incorporating food chemistry into GOB (general, organic, and biochemistry).”

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