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Rachel Moreno

Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita News Bureau

Ouachita Baptist University

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OUACHITA
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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita's Patterson Summer Research Program sees record student participation, recognition

By Rachel Moreno

August 20, 2019

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206



ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's J.D. Patterson School of Natural Sciences had a record number of 28 students conducting faculty-advised research during summer break through its Patterson Summer Research Program. Twenty-five of these summer researchers also attended the Central Arkansas Undergraduate Symposium, held July 24 at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, Ark., and presented their findings.

Among the 115 student researchers in attendance at the regional event, a total of 10 poster designs were recognized, with four being Ouachita students' work. Patterson Summer Research students whose work was recognized in the central Arkansas area included Matt Burnham, a senior biology major from Blytheville, Ark.; Taylor Garner, a senior biology major from Hensley, Ark.; and Noah Thompson, a junior biology major from Texarkana, Ark. Brockton Brown, a senior biology major from Sheridan, Ark., and Hunter Jones, a senior biology major from Roland, Ark., were recognized together for their joint poster presentation.

"The Patterson Summer Research program provides the opportunity for our students to set themselves apart when applying for jobs, graduate or professional school," said Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the Patterson School of Natural Sciences and professor of biology. "Our science students receive more hands-on research experience than most any undergraduate student in any university in our region of the country."

In the Patterson Summer Research Program's 19-year history, a total of 287 students have worked one-on-one with Ouachita science faculty to conduct research in their respective fields – an opportunity rarely offered at the undergraduate level. Students accepted to the program are provided with a stipend and campus housing at a reduced cost.

"This summer alongside Dr. Sara Hubbard, I investigated the effects of temperature on the release of bisphenol-A from toothbrushes; I was honored to receive an award for one of the top posters at the symposium," said Taylor Garner, who plans to pursue dental school upon graduation. "After seeing the

number of Ouachita students recognized for their accomplishments, it is now evident to me the excellence our professors display when it comes to the Patterson Summer Research Program.”

For Brockton Brown, the initial appeal to apply for the summer research program was the opportunity to research subjects “that really sparked my interest.” Brown, along with Hunter Jones and Dr. Knight, studied the stream quality of Ouachita River tributaries utilizing macrobenthetic species and fish populations.

“Upon getting accepted to do the research, it made my summer great!” Brown said. “I experienced so many cool ways to evaluate nature and got to learn all the ins-and-outs of doing work in the field.”

David Rainwater, a senior biology and chemistry double major from Sheridan, Ark., conducted research with Dr. Nathan Reyna on the role of exosomes on the migration of glioblastoma cells.

“The research was wonderful as I was able to enhance my lab experience and study this material that could possibly lead to new discoveries involving cancer and the way it metastasizes in the body,” Rainwater said. “Ouachita gave me the opportunity to study these cancer cells in a way that few other undergraduate universities in the world are able to, and for that I am beyond thankful.

“This will also give me an opportunity to share with future employers what I have learned about glioblastoma through my research,” he added.

Other Ouachita students who participated in the Patterson Summer Research Program included:

- Mason Archer, a senior biology major from Arkadelphia, Ark.
- Sebastian Bustillo, a sophomore physics and mathematics double major from Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- Asaph Camillo, a junior engineering physics and applied mathematics double major from Nova Friburgo, Brazil.
- Markie Campbell, a senior nutrition/dietetics major from Bismarck, Ark.
- Kaleigh Casada, a junior biology and chemistry double major from White Hall, Ark.
- Kayla Churchwell, a senior chemistry, biology and Spanish triple major from Searcy, Ark.
- Savannah Edwards, a senior biomedical sciences major from Searcy, Ark.
- Jordan Gills, a junior biology major from Murfreesboro, Ark.
- Spencer Greer, a senior biology major from Conway, Ark.
- Tiffany Koba, a senior biology major from Benton, Ark.
- Michael Neathery, a senior biology major from Canton, Mich.
- Kenzie Pickard, a senior biology major from Vilonia, Ark.
- Susanna Schleiff, a senior environmental studies major from Arkadelphia, Ark.
- Keller Smith, a senior chemistry and biology double major from Mabelvale, Ark.
- Kyla Soden, a senior biology major from Cabot, Ark.
- Abby Walker, a senior biology major from Benton, Ark.
- Madeline Wallace, a senior nutrition/dietetics major from Arkadelphia, Ark.
- Madelyn Wauters, a junior chemistry major from Pine Bluff, Ark.
- Cammie York, a senior biology major from Glenwood, Ark.

Additionally, three Patterson Summer Research students conducted their research off-campus, traveling to Liverpool Hope University. These students included Nicholas Gerber, a junior biology major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; Luke Livingston, a junior biomedical sciences major from Batesville, Ark.; and Beau Pennington, a junior biomedical sciences major from Bee Branch, Ark.

Ouachita faculty members who served as advisers for Patterson Summer Research students included Dr. Joe Bradshaw, W.D. and Alice Burch professor of chemistry and pre-medical studies; Dr. Detri Brech, Charles S. and Elma Grey Goodwin Holt professor of dietetics and pre-medical studies; Dr. Kevin

Cornelius, professor of physics; Dr. Sharon Hamilton, assistant professor of chemistry; Dr. Sara Hubbard, associate professor of chemistry and holder of the Nell I. Mondy Chair of Chemistry; Dr. Blake Johnson, assistant professor of biology; Dr. Ruth Plymale, associate professor of biology and holder of the J.D. Patterson Chair of Biology; Dr. Christin Pruett, associate professor of biology; Dr. Nathan Reyna, associate professor of biology; and Dr. Jim Taylor, professor of biology.

Ouachita's Patterson Summer Research Program is named in honor of Dr. J.D. Patterson, a 1947 Ouachita alumnus who passed away in 2017. Dr. Patterson, a longtime trustee and benefactor of Ouachita, funded a number of academic initiatives, including the Patterson Summer Research Program. The Patterson School of Natural Sciences also is named in his honor.

In addition to Patterson Endowment funds, Ouachita's Patterson School of Natural Sciences received summer research funding from Alcoa Foundation, INBRE, ESPCoR, Ross Foundation and NASA. These off-campus funds supported 15 of Ouachita's 28 summer researchers.

For more information about the Patterson School of Natural Sciences and the summer research program, contact Dr. Tim Knight at knight@obu.edu or (870) 245-5528.

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