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Ouachita names 2019 Alumni Milestone Award recipients

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For immediate release

Ouachita names 2019 Alumni Milestone Award recipients

October 8, 2019

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



ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University recognized five outstanding alumni in the 10th class of Ouachita Alumni Milestone Award recipients at its Homecoming football game on Saturday, Oct. 5: Mauricio Vargas, Dr. Jim Spann, Brad Sullivan, Dr. Sarah Beth Harrington and Laura Cox. This year's honorees represent the graduating classes of 1969, 1979, 1989, 1999 and 2009, respectively.

Honored for their professional achievements, community service and dedication to their alma mater, they were selected by a committee of Ouachita faculty, staff and President Ben Sells to represent their respective classes during the Homecoming festivities.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ouachita with a major in Spanish in 1969, **Mauricio Vargas** moved with his wife, Carolyn, to New Orleans, La., to attend New Orleans Theological Seminary. While in New Orleans, Vargas served through the New Orleans Seaman's Mission and was integral in starting Hispanic missions at local churches. Vargas later moved to North Carolina, where he served with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) and spread the gospel to Hispanics in North Carolina. Later serving 20 years with the Missouri Baptist Convention, Vargas was the recipient of the "Hispanic Church Planting Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Home Mission Board Language Department and the "Hispanic Heritage Award" from Missouri's Office of Administration. He and his wife have four children and six grandchildren, and he currently serves as pastor of Enon Baptist Church in Russellville, Mo.

A child of missionaries and second-generation Ouachitonian, **Dr. Jim Spann** earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and physics from Ouachita in 1979, followed by a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Arkansas. In 1986, Spann joined NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., where he spent more than 30 years. He now leads the space weather-related research for NASA's Heliophysics Division in Washington, D.C. He has two children and three grandchildren.

After graduating from Ouachita in 1989, **Brad Sullivan** earned his master's degree in educational leadership from the University of Arkansas. He has served in various roles in the field of education over the past 29 years, from teacher to his current position as superintendent of the South Pike County School District. Sullivan and his wife, Jill, married while students at Ouachita and had two daughters, Bethany,

who is now 24 years old, and Hannah, who passed away at the age of 17 after a year-long battle with brain cancer. As a result of their experience with Hannah, they co-founded a nonprofit ministry called While We're Waiting.

After graduating from Ouachita with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and chemistry in 1999, **Dr. Sarah Beth (Milam) Harrington** earned an M.D. from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Medicine in 2003. After serving as faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va., she moved back to Little Rock, where she currently serves as the director of the Palliative Medicine Division at UAMS and chief of palliative care at the VA. She and her husband, Brooks (a 2000 Ouachita graduate) have two sons, Cole and Patrick.

Laura Cox graduated from Ouachita in 2009 with a major in English. She went on to teach English in Kosovo through the International Mission Board and then earn a Master of Arts degree in English language and literature from the University of Arkansas. After teaching for a few more years in Germany and then California, Cox then earned a juris doctorate from Harvard Law School. Returning to Arkansas, Cox clerked for Hon. Bobby E. Shepherd ('73). She currently practices law as an associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in Washington, D.C.

-30-

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