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For Immediate Release

Cross Brandon named winner of Ouachita's 2020 McBeth Concerto Competition



By Rachel Gaddis

December 1, 2020

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Cross Brandon was named the winner of the 2020 W. Francis and Mary McBeth Wind and Percussion Concerto Competition on Nov. 20. Because the event was limited to the Ouachita community due to COVID-19, the event can be viewed at livestream.com/obu.

Brandon is a junior music industry major from Little Rock, Ark. He received a \$500 award for his saxophone performance of "Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone and Piano" by M. Watters. He also has been invited to perform with the Ouachita Wind Ensemble in Spring 2020.

"Performing in the Concerto Competition was one of the greatest experiences I have had in my college career," Brandon said. "I participated last year, but this year I practiced and prepared intensely, and I was glad to know that all that hard work paid off."



Picture 1 Cross Brandon

“Being an instrumentalist, I recognize that I am constantly growing in my musicianship,” he continued. “This means growing in unexpected but necessary ways. This experience has definitely proven that I have grown as a musician!”



Picture 3 Holli Barger



Picture 2 Katelyn Still

Katelyn Still, a junior instrumental music education major from Benton, Ark., earned second place and a \$300 award for her saxophone performance of “Odysseus: Concerto for Saxophones” by L. Garner. Holli Barger, a senior instrumental music education major from Carrollton, Texas, received third place and an award of \$200 for her horn performance of “Horn Concerto No. 4 in Eb Major, K. 495” by W. A. Mozart.

Other students who competed include: Kaitlyn Campbell, a senior computer science and mathematics double major from Benton, Ark., on French horn; Andrew Coop, a senior worship arts major from Gladewater, Texas, on trombone; Craig Crawford, a junior instrumental performance and communications & media/multimedia journalism double major from Texarkana, Texas, on saxophone; Allan Schroeder, a senior worship arts major from Carrollton, Texas, on trombone; Josh Sutton, a sophomore instrumental music education major from Lone Star, Texas, on saxophone; Taryn Toles, a junior instrumental music education major from Little Rock, Ark., on clarinet.

This was the 15th year of the annual competition, which features outstanding Ouachita instrumental students. It is sponsored by Mrs. Mary McBeth in honor of her late husband, W. Francis McBeth, who was Arkansas’ composer laureate and a long-time professor of music at Ouachita.

The 2020 McBeth Concerto Competition judges included: Emily Hall, school improvement specialist as well as a former band director of Marion High School, as the woodwind judge; Arnie Larson, director of music at Texarkana Independent Music School District, as the brass judge; and Sean Lane, percussion leader for the Lake Hamilton High School band, as the percussion judge.

Pianists accompanying the students throughout the performance were Dr. Cai Lei, professor of music, and staff accompanists Kristen La Madrid, Susan Monroe and Dr. Elsen Portugal.

For more information regarding the competition, contact Dr. Carlos Feller, visiting assistant professor of music, at fellerc@obu.edu or 870-245-4160.

PHOTO AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD <https://obu.edu/stories/news/2020/12/cross-brandon-named-winner-2020-mcbeth-concerto-competition.php>