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4-29-2021

### **Ouachita to honor 364 graduates May 8 at Cliff Harris Stadium**

Rachel Gaddis

Ouachita News Bureau

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For immediate release

**Ouachita to honor 364 graduates May 8 at Cliff Harris Stadium**

*By Rachel Gaddis*

April 29, 2021

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University will hold its 134<sup>th</sup> Commencement honoring the class of 2021 on Saturday, May 8, at 9:30 a.m. in Cliff Harris Stadium on Ouachita's campus. The ceremony will honor 364 graduates earning Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education and Associate of Arts degrees, with seven students receiving Ouachita's first ever post-baccalaureate certificates for dietetic internship.

The gates to Cliff Harris Stadium open at 8 a.m. for guests, and guests must have a ticket to enter. Guest seating will be limited to allow for physical distancing due to COVID-19. Friends and family who are not able to attend in person may watch live at [www.livestream.com/obu](http://www.livestream.com/obu) or through the Livestream app.

Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president, will preside over the annual Commencement exercises. Honorary Commencement marshals include Dr. Ray Granade, professor of history and director of library services emeritus; Dr. Danny Hays, professor of biblical studies and dean of the Pruet School of Christian Studies emeritus; Dr. Steve Hennagin, professor emeritus of mathematics; and Dr. Dave Ozmun, professor emeritus of communications. Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement emeritus, also will be recognized as emeritus administrative staff.

"After an entire academic year of residential learning that has been fully in-person at Ouachita during the pandemic, with exemplary student leadership by the senior class, we look forward to celebrating these graduates for this outstanding achievement of completing their degrees in spite of difficult circumstances," said Dr. Sells, who also will deliver remarks at the ceremony.

The ceremony will include an invocation by senior class president Christopher Cobb, a finance major from Little Rock, Ark. The university's vision and mission statement will be read by Lori Motl, director of admissions counseling, and Rickey Rogers, dean of students.

Scripture reading will be led by the top graduates from the Pruet School of Christian Studies: Kara DeLaune, a senior community & family services and Spanish double major from Conway, Ark., and Laura Beth Warner, a senior Christian studies/Christian ministries major from Benton, Ark.

Dr. Stan Poole, vice president for academic affairs, will introduce the graduates. John McCallum, vice chair of Ouachita's Board of Trustees, will deliver the prayer of dedication.

Dr. Gary Gerber, dean of the School of Fine Arts, will lead in the singing of the alma mater and accompanied by recordings of the Ouachita Wind Ensemble, which is directed by Dr. Craig Hamilton, Lena Goodwin Trimble Professor of Music and director of bands. Dr. Danny Hays will lead a responsive reading.

The commencement exercises will be livestreamed at [www.livestream.com/obu](http://www.livestream.com/obu). For more information about commencement, visit [obu.edu/graduation](http://obu.edu/graduation).

Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts university in Arkadelphia, Ark., is in its 134<sup>th</sup> year as a Christ-centered learning community and is ranked the No. 2 "Regional College in the South" by *U.S. News & World Report*. In fall 2020, Ouachita recorded its highest enrollment in 20 years and its highest-ever four year graduation rate with the class of 2020. The class of 2020 also recorded a 97% career

outcomes rate despite the pandemic. Learn more about the university's highly personal approach, reflected in a student/faculty ratio of 13:1, at [www.obu.edu](http://www.obu.edu).

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