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Madison Cresswell

Ouachita News Bureau

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NEWS

OUACHITA NEWS

For immediate release

Tara Pritchard named Ouachita's Support Staff Member of the Year

By Madison Cresswell

May 18, 2021

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Ouachita Baptist University named Tara Pritchard, assistant to the dean in the Sutton School of Social Sciences, as the 2020-2021 Support Staff Member of the Year. Pritchard, who has worked at Ouachita for 16 years, was recognized on April 29 by Ouachita's Staff Development Committee and President Dr. Ben Sells.

Each year, Ouachita's Staff Development Committee requests nominations from university faculty and staff for the Support Staff Member of the Year, an award that recognizes individuals for their contribution to Ouachita's campus community.

"It's an honor to be recognized, and I am thrilled," Pritchard said. "My favorite part of working as the assistant to the dean is assisting the students with their questions and concerns.

"I try to be the person I wish I had access to when I was in college; navigating everything can be overwhelming," she added.



“Tara exemplifies personal grace, bringing to her work clarity in what she sees, discernment in what she hears and the work ethic to frame solutions therein for the best interest of all who pass her way, especially our students,” said Randall Wight, dean of the Sutton School of Social Sciences and professor of psychology and biology.

“Tara beams kindness and competence to our students every day. Few students fail to notice,” he continued. “The secret to enjoying one’s work is personal excellence and sharing that excellence. Tara comprehends that intuitively.”

This year, Ouachita’s Staff Development Committee encouraged nominations to specifically address how the staff member assisted in the previous year during COVID-19.

“During the pandemic, Tara was central to planning and organization in preparation for class,” Wight said. “I still remember the day she was handing me tape as we marked out the COVID floor plan. Tara was comfort to all in our school and building throughout the pandemic.”

After attending Henderson State University and receiving an associate’s degree from Miami-Dade University in Early Childhood Education, Pritchard said she felt called to serve at Ouachita.

Outside of work, Pritchard enjoys spending time with family and friends. She likes being outdoors on the water and attending concerts with her husband, Mike – who works in Facilities Management at Ouachita – and her two daughters, Jennifer (Beaver) Crow ('09) and Brittany (Beaver) Rogers ('18).

For more information, contact Jason Tolbert, chief financial officer and chair of the Staff Development Committee, at tolbertj@obu.edu or (870) 245-5410.

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