

Ouachita Baptist University

## Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

---

Press Releases

Office of Communication

---

11-18-2021

### **Ouachita Department of Nursing receives Governor's Quality Award**

Felley Lawson

Ouachita News Bureau

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press\\_releases](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases)



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

---



For immediate release

**Ouachita Department of Nursing receives Governor's Quality Award**

*by Felley Lawson*

November 18, 2021

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

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—Gov. Asa Hutchinson presented the Ouachita Baptist University Department of Nursing with the 2021 Governor's Quality Award earlier this semester during a banquet hosted by the Arkansas Institute for Performance Excellence (AIPE), award sponsors, in the Grand Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel in Little Rock.

"I couldn't be more pleased with the progress our nursing program has made in such a short period of time," said Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the J.D. Patterson School of Natural Sciences at Ouachita. "To be recognized in this way affirms our efforts to have a quality nursing program at Ouachita."

According to its website, the AIPE works in partnership with the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce to offer training and assessment for all industries throughout the state in order to encourage excellence in performance, as well as economic growth. The Governor's Quality Award honors outstanding progress in areas including strategic planning, leadership, workforce, knowledge management, operations and accomplishing results.

One of 12 organizations from across Arkansas to be honored this year, the Ouachita Department of Nursing is the only nursing program that received the Governor's Quality Award independent of its governing organization. Dr. Brenda Trigg, director of nursing at Ouachita, accepted the award from Hutchinson on behalf of the department.

Trigg said that feedback from the AIPE about the selection process indicates Ouachita's nursing program received the award based on the department's overall practices and quality awareness—which includes support from Ouachita's administration, financial support, student and faculty resources and an effective, systematic plan for evaluation to ensure that Ouachita's nursing students meet end-of-program learning outcomes.

"We are excited to receive this prestigious award from Gov. Hutchinson," Trigg said. "Ouachita's nursing program is fortunate to have faculty members who value and implement program assessment and evaluation," noting the work of Dr. Carol McKeever, assistant professor of nursing, and Dr. Becky Parnell, associate professor of nursing. She also credited the department's utilization of Baldrige Excellence Framework, a tool that helps organizations innovate, promote diversity and inclusion, digitize and build resilient, competitive programs.

The Governor's Quality Award comes as Ouachita's Department of Nursing embarks on a new phase of expansion. In Fall 2018, Ouachita launched its nursing program with a distinctive [RN-to-BSN dual enrollment completion program](#) in partnership with Baptist Health College Little Rock. The Department of Nursing has since added a [fully-online RN-to-BSN degree](#) program for students who already have a valid registered nurse license.

Additionally, Ouachita has developed a third degree track, a four-year, residential pre-licensure program offering a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The new program has been granted prerequisite approval by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. Pending initial approval, from the ASBN, new students will be able to enter the program in the Fall 2022 semester. Currently enrolled freshmen and sophomore nursing majors, which number approximately 70, will have the option of continuing in the on-campus program without delaying their graduations.

Renovations also are underway on a 6,600-square-foot Nursing Education Center at Ouachita. This simulation and teaching center will be home to a clinical skills lab, five simulated hospital patient rooms, a pharmacy and several high-fidelity mannequins that will allow students to perfect their assessment, clinical and communication skills.



*Photo 1* Dr. Brenda Trigg (right), Ouachita's director of nursing, receives the Governor's Quality Award from Gov. Asa Hutchinson.

For more information about Ouachita's [Department of Nursing](#), contact Dr. Brenda Trigg at [triggb@obu.edu](mailto:triggb@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5384.

Lead photo: Ouachita faculty, staff and students who attended the Governor's Quality Award luncheon are (front row) Rebecca Martinez, administrative assistant in the School of Natural Sciences; President Ben Sells; Dr. Brenda Trigg, director of nursing; Dr. Carol McKeever, assistant professor of nursing; Dr. Tim Knight, dean of the School of Natural Sciences; (back row) Dr. Becky Parnell, associate professor of nursing; Department of Nursing students Jana Milam, Suzette Handwork and Jacob Moreno; and Dr. Kelson Henley, vice president for institutional advancement and chief of staff.

-30-

**PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <https://obu.edu/stories/news/2021/11/dept-of-nursing-receives-gov-quality-award.php>**