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**Ouachita Singers earn showcase performance at ACDA Southwestern Division conference**



*By Taylor Tomlinson*

April 30, 2014

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. -- The Ouachita Singers, Ouachita Baptist University's premier choral ensemble, recently was selected by audition to perform at the Southwestern Division of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). The concert was held at Robinson Center Music Hall in Little Rock, Ark.

"This is quite an honor for Ouachita Singers to be recognized among our ACDA division as one of the top choral ensembles," said Dr. Gary Gerber, chair of the division of music and director of choral activities. "Being selected to sing at the conference is like winning the regional conference of the NCAA basketball tournament and going to the Final Four."

The Southwestern Division of the ACDA is comprised of seven states, including Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. For this year's convention, 34 college choirs submitted an audition CD. Ouachita Singers was one of only three choirs selected to perform.

"This concert was highly significant for our choir because we were showcased on such a high priority situation," said Connor Goad, a junior Christian studies/Christian theology major from Hot Springs, Ark. "It was also a very big deal for Dr. Gary Gerber, as it showed his expertise in choral conducting to his colleagues. It also showed off Ouachita's excellence wonderfully and provided the public and other huge schools a little taste of what we are capable of."

The ACDA hosts division conferences every other year for high school to college level choirs. According to ACDA's website, the "performances by accomplished choirs" is one way of providing other members in attendance with a "practical forum in which to develop their skills and professional knowledge."

"The fact that we were selected to perform was a huge win for the music program at Ouachita," said Ashley Briggs, a senior worship arts major from Alexander, Ark. "Because we gave a wonderful performance, choir directors from multiple high schools around the southwestern part of the country saw that Ouachita has a good music program and that there are talented professors and students here."

"I am proud to be able to show to the other choral programs in our ACDA division the quality of our students, our music division and the university," Gerber added.

Selections performed by Ouachita Singers included "Exsultate Justi" by Thomas Juneau, "I Will Lift Mine Eyes" by Jake Runestad, "There Will Come Soft Rains" by Ivo Antognini, "Vi Adoro" by Manolo da Rold, "Fair Ines" by Eric William Barnum and "Let There Be Light" by Craig Courtney.

Ouachita Singers is an auditioned choral ensemble of 46 students that represents the Ouachita Division of Music in concerts in schools and churches throughout Arkansas, the surrounding region and around the world. The choir's latest European tour featured a performance at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Formed in 1957, the Ouachita Singers have a rich and varied history of outstanding choral performance.

For more information, contact Dr. Gary Gerber at [gerberg@obu.edu](mailto:gerberg@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5128.