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4-30-2015

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Recommended Citation

Cranford, McKenzie and Ouachita News Bureau, "Ouachita Enactus team places in top 12 at national competition" (2015). *Press Releases*. 981.

https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases/981

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Ouachita Enactus team places in top 12 at national competition



By McKenzie Cranford

April 30, 2015

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. -- Competing against 180 other schools from across the nation, the Ouachita Baptist University Enactus team placed in the top 12 at the Enactus United States National Exposition in St. Louis, Mo., earlier this month.

Enactus is an international non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together people who are committed to using entrepreneurial action to improve the quality of life and standard of living for people in need. Business leaders from around the nation judged the annual competition.

"The students in our Enactus chapter have worked so hard throughout the years to generate the results necessary to enable our presentation team to thrive at the competition this year," said Bryan McKinney, dean of OBU's Hickingbotham School of Business and the Ouachita Enactus faculty advisor. "So many students have paved the way for much of the success that we enjoyed this year, and this was the first

year we actually felt like we could be one of the best teams. I have always said that our best students could compete with any school's top students, and this result is another indicator of that reality.”

Beating three former national champions, this was the first year Ouachita made it to the semifinal round of the competition. Each school presents projects their teams have achieved over the past year, and only 16 teams make it to the semifinals.

Ouachita presented three projects: a Mobile Pack project, which sends meals to impoverished children across the world through a partnership with an organization called Feed My Starving Children; Dr. Jack's, a social giveback coffee company started by the Enactus team; and a campus bookstore project, which provides internship positions for Ouachita students in order for them to gain real-world business and marketing experience.

In the past year alone, Ouachita's Enactus team raised money and brought together volunteers to pack 209,000 meals to feed 575 Central American children for an entire year. Through selling Dr. Jack's coffee, which is imported to help support farmers and communities in Rwanda, the team was also able to donate several thousand dollars for the benefit of orphans in Honduras as well as children served through the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home.

“Obviously, we'd love to win the national competition in the future,” McKinney said. “However, what I really want for OBU Enactus is for our projects to continue gaining momentum. We are finding ways to use business skills to carry out the New Testament mandate of caring for the least of this. Ultimately, creating opportunities for others is far more rewarding than winning a competition. But we'd like to do both! I hope moving forward that more and more students at Ouachita from all majors will join the Enactus team and partner up to do some good for others!”

Echoing that perspective, Ouachita Enactus President Jessica Chang said, “After seeing the great things Enactus was doing on our campus, community and internationally, I knew it was something I needed to be a part of.”

Chang, a senior business administration/finance and accounting major from Olathe, Kan., has been plugged into Enactus since her freshman year and has traveled to many competitions with the group. “There's a great sense of camaraderie on the trips and many opportunities to develop friendships. It is also encouraging to see so many schools from all over the country participate in a service-minded organization like Enactus and showcase work they have done, which helps us get some ideas to incorporate into our own chapter,” she added.

Citing the opportunity Ouachita Enactus has given him to combine his interest in both business and missions through his role as general manager of Dr. Jack's, Jayson Harris, a senior business administration/finance major from Maumelle, Ark. explained: “I've had the opportunity to share the Dr. Jack's story to hundreds of pastors, business leaders and churchgoers across the state, and it's been an incredible opportunity to network and meet people who are doing business outside of Ouachita as well as cast vision for the future of Dr. Jack's.”

“What I thought was truly special about our projects is that two of them are missions-based,” added Meredith Ellis, a sophomore accounting major from Southlake, Texas, who served as the Enactus presentation team leader this year. “Being in the top 12 meant that we were able to share to a larger audience how God is moving, and it was amazing to see all of our hard work pay off.”

A video of the team's presentation can be viewed [online at https://vimeo.com/125844894](https://vimeo.com/125844894). For more information about OBU Enactus, contact Bryan McKinney at mckinneyb@obu.edu or (870) 245-5513.