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A vision for change energizes DI grad student Latina Robinson



By MacKenzie Hall

April 05, 2022

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – In March 2016, Latina Robinson, a Dietetic Internship graduate student from North Little Rock, Ark., lost her grandmother to Type 2 diabetes—a deadly disease that, according to the Centers for Disease Control, affects 37.3 million people in the United States.

“With the loss of a loved one due to Type 2 diabetes complications, I was discouraged from pursuing my life goals. However, I witnessed the hardship of complications stemming from the disease during my grandmother’s life and knew I had to do something to make a change,” Robinson said. “I ultimately realized the increased risk of these complications within the African American population. I desire to advocate for diabetes awareness and provide the public with the right tools and resources.”

Although Robinson already had earned a bachelor’s degree in health science and administration, she returned to school to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition at the University of Central Arkansas. This decision began the road to achieving her life goals. Upon earning her second degree, Robinson applied to the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Service to be matched with a graduate program. Her decision to select Ouachita Baptist University for her dietetic internship made it possible for Robinson to attend school close to home.

Even while pursuing graduate studies, Robinson also works two jobs and is a single mother. When Robinson is not continuing her education, she works as a diet clerk at Arkansas Children's Hospital and as a pharmacy technician at Kroger.

"As a woman with many jobs, I grow and adapt my life to situations as they come. For instance, I balance my education, work and parenting as a single mother with the courage to sustain a stable life for my son," Robinson said.

To achieve her long-term goal of advocating and helping communities where Type 2 diabetes is prevalent, Robinson hopes to open a diabetic wellness center to meet the needs of minority communities by providing resources and tools to fight the disease.

"My vision is to become a premier resource through a diabetic wellness clinic and center in pursuit of lowering the incidence of diabetes mellitus. My goal as a registered dietitian is to be a part of the change that will bridge the gap in combating Type 2 diabetes within minority communities," Robinson added.

To learn more about Ouachita's Dietetic Internship, one of only seven faith-based DI programs in the nation, visit obu.edu/dietetics/gradprograms or contact Holly Kyzer at kyzerh@obu.edu or (870) 245-5546.

Photo by Abby Blankenship