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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

From the "Ouachitonian": Allie Bailey



By Addie Woods

October 17, 2022

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – The Ouachita Baptist University Elrod Center has provided many opportunities for students to get involved with various programs to serve the Arkadelphia community along with students and professors alike on campus. In particular, ElderServe allowed students to be paired with an elderly couple or elder and visit them, bring them food or write them letters.

Allie Bailey, a freshman biomedical sciences and psychology double major from Benton, Ark., was involved in TranServe on campus, and through the Elrod Center and TranServe became involved in ElderServe.

"I enjoy reading and writing poetry and learning about history, so when Mrs. Duvall sent an email asking for someone to just listen to and talk with a retired professor of literature who has written books on history and loves poetry, I knew immediately that it was something I wanted to do," Bailey said.

Bailey began visiting Charlie and Marie Hughes at their home in Arkadelphia at the beginning of her freshman year. Hughes is in hospice care, and his wife is his full-time caregiver. Hughes was a close friend of Dr. Johnny Wink, the Betty Burton Peck Professor of English at Ouachita, and taught literature at

Henderson State University for the majority of his life. Bailey jumped at the opportunity to visit with him and his wife because of their shared love of history and poetry.

“One of my favorite things about visiting them is to hear Mr. Charles recite some of his favorite poems by memory that he and Dr. Wink had loved decades ago,” Bailey said. “It was just an incredible connection as I heard and appreciated the same words they had read and memorized years before.”

Along with the countless poems and pieces of literature Bailey has learned, she has also gathered priceless life lessons from the Hugheses.

“One major lesson I learned from Mr. Hughes was that it is okay if you have many different passions and things you want to do in life. In fact, it is adventurous and joy-filled to pursue everything you love in life, no matter what age you are,” Bailey said. “Mr. Charles worked various jobs throughout his life including a medic in the Marines and a cryptanalyst.”

Bailey used her time with the Hugheses to gain experience of talking to someone who has lived through so many years of change and to hear their story; ElderServe allowed her to have the opportunity to do just that.

“I knew immediately that meeting with an elderly couple was something that I wanted to do, and it turned into such a rewarding and humbling experience that I would not trade for anything,” Bailey said.

Photo by Levi Dade