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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

From the "Ouachitonian": Sam Conine



By Sophia Talley

December 22, 2021

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – *Previously published in the 2021 Ouachitonian yearbook*

Many students spent quarantine with their eyes glued to the screen, but Sam Conine, a freshman business entrepreneurship major from Little Rock, was on the other side of the camera. Over the summer, Conine wrote, produced, directed and starred in "AEGIS," the film of his dreams.

Conine's passion for creation began in his sixth-grade Spanish class. "I was able to take class and make it more exciting to me, which transformed into the ability to make a subjectively normal idea more fun and make people care about things that they normally wouldn't," Conine said.

From that point forward, Conine sought out opportunities to share his concepts with the world. For two years preceding his major film production, he made low-budget short films shot on an iPhone. Though the pieces succeeded in film festivals, Conine desired more.

“I went to a film festival to pitch myself and projects to an audience of major art schools,” Conine said. “They asked me of my motivation for film production to which I truthfully answered, ‘I think it’s fun and I like being around and inspiring people.’”

Conine walked out feeling confident only to have one of the 50 schools present call him back to inform him that film production was simply about making money, and he was foolish to have any other intention. At that moment, Conine set out to prove his critics wrong. Beginning in late June, he planned to have a completed film before the start of the fall semester. Though he did not know by what means, he says he trusted in God’s provision.

“Literally the next day, I met the two guys who would be my cinematographers,” Conine said. “We set up a GoFundMe, and within 48 hours, we had raised \$600.”

Motivated by both those who doubted him and the friends and family who rallied support for him, Conine wrote the “AEGIS” script in eight days. Though the pieces seemed to fall into place, Conine struggled with an internal conflict.

“The biggest conflict making the film was how it affected me internally. I had to constantly remind myself that my identity lies in Christ and not in the making of the movie,” Conine said.

Nevertheless, Conine and his crew were able to finalize the movie the night before its premier on August 11—a mere two days before Ouachita’s move-in day. The event brought in 175 people dressed to the nines, accessorized with face masks—with many classmates arriving in their prom attire, which would have otherwise collected dust due to COVID-19 cancellations. Conine later got a call informing him that he had hosted the largest student event throughout the churches of Little Rock.

“Seeing the final cut brought feelings of disbelief,” Conine said. “Just seeing people rally around a concept and form a community was the most rewarding part of the production. I thought [to] do this in a way that shows the beauty of Christ’s creation and gets people excited to be a part of something that’s bigger than themselves.”

Photo by Hannah Smith