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Living the Dream

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Living the dream



By Jonah Eriksson

August 25, 2022

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – What a year it has been! As I reflect on my first year at Ouachita and the opportunity to co-create learning, engage with students and do life in Arkadelphia, having the opportunity to “build a better you” personally, spiritually, professionally and academically in a vibrant and caring environment has been good – and a lot of fun!

Pivoting from industry into higher education has been very rewarding, and the support from our administration, faculty team and, most importantly, our students has been fantastic.

This year, I'm excited to continue innovating and developing our entrepreneurship program by initiating a design framework we call E6. The aim is to create new entrepreneurial opportunities, revise our educational offerings, provide new and meaningful outlets for our students, enable new networks and encourage new ventures that will enrich our value proposition.

At Ouachita, we pride ourselves on the close connections we make in the classrooms and on our campus. Like a flywheel, E6 is aimed at strengthening these connections and further expanding connectivity with alumni and industry experts.

This fall, we will see the relaunch of our student-led Dr. Jack's retail team; the launch of our e-store; a new venture challenge and leadership assessment; new positive exposure opportunities for the School of Business; and the continuation of our annual Business Plan Competition, where student innovators and entrepreneurs compete and proudly represent Ouachita at the Arkansas Governor's Cup. These are exciting days!

I had the great blessing and opportunity early in my career with Walmart to be mentored by Paul R. Carter, a legacy leader within the company. He shared a poem with me in one of our first meetings together. We promised each other we would do our very best to honor the challenge given in the poem and help others do so, as well.

God said, "Your task is to build a better world."

I answered "How? The world is such a large, vast place, so complicated.

I am so small with all my weakness, there's nothing I can do."

God smiled and replied, "Just build a better you!"

– Author Unknown

My family and I are so thankful for Ouachita granting us this opportunity. I am living my dream.

Lead photo by Levi Dade