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Photo 1 Students whose work is published in "Assayers 31," (from left, back row) Abbie Moix, Taylor Koeth, Sydney Motl, Kaitlyn Stoddard, Caroline Derby, Seth Curl, (front row) Lauren Bridgeman, Ashlyn Seibert, and Emma Dennis. Photo by Jennifer Pittman.

For immediate release

Ouachita students honored for their work published in "Assayers 31"

By Kaitlyn Stoddard and Kaelin Clay

April 26, 2023

For more information, contact Ouachita's Office of Communications & Marketing at comm-mark@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. — The Department of Language & Literature in Ouachita Baptist University's School of Humanities honored nine students for their academic and creative writing featured in "Assayers 31," the department's annual academic journal used for instruction in all Composition I classes. The students were recognized during a fall awards ceremony at the Elrod Center for Family & Community.

Ashlyn Seibert, a junior English major from Wylie, Texas, was awarded first place for her essay "Marginal Truths."

"I'm really glad to have gotten to share my writing in such a meaningful way," Seibert shared. "I wrote the paper to share an experience that really changed my perspective on life."

"As an aspiring author, having my essay selected to be a part of 'Assayers' was a validation of my work here at Ouachita and what I want to do with the rest of my life," said second prize winner Sydney Motl, a junior English major from Arkadelphia, Ark. Her paper "Sex and Subversion: The Duchess in Jacobean Tragedy" focuses on gender roles and influences in a tragic play from the Jacobean era.

In third place was Emma Dennis, a senior communications & media/visual media & film major from Garland, Texas. Her essay "Outstanding" explored her personal journey for identity.

"It was something I worked on throughout the entire semester. I didn't think it would be as important to me as it was when I first started writing it," Dennis recalled. "However, as I began to develop my own voice in my writing, I started to care more deeply about what I was trying to say."

Six students were awarded honorable mentions in "Assayers 31," including Lauren Bridgeman, a senior English and secondary education double major from Plano, Texas; Seth Curl, a senior biomedical sciences and psychology double major from Russellville, Ark.; Caroline Derby, a senior communications & media/multimedia journalism major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; Taylor Koeth, a junior English and secondary education double major from Greenwood, Ark.; Abby Moix, a freshman music major from Conway, Ark.; and Kaitlyn Stoddard, a junior political science and English double major from Paragould, Ark.

"I was ecstatic to be published in 'Assayers.' While the publishment itself is exciting, it is also so cool knowing that my essay is being used in classrooms here at Ouachita for Composition I students," said Stoddard.

Student work is chosen for publication in "Assayers 31" by a panel of faculty members from the Department of Language & Literature, including Jennifer Pittman, department chair, director of the Speer Writing Center and writing program administrator; Jason Doroga, assistant professor of Spanish; and Sarah Smith, assistant professor of English.

"As my dear and former colleague Dr. Doug Sonheim once put it, 'This is how we can love God and build His Kingdom,'" Pittman reflected, on the importance of publishing student work. Sonheim is professor emeritus of English at Ouachita.

For more information about the Department of Language & Literature in the [School of Humanities](#) or about "Assayers 31," contact Jennifer Pittman at pittmanj@obu.edu or (870) 245-5553.