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Felley Lawson

Office of Communications & Marketing

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For immediate release

Ouachita's Fall 2023 enrollment highest in 57 years

By Felley Lawson

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. — Ouachita Baptist University has reported its highest enrollment in 57 years, with a Fall 2023 headcount of 1,815.

Since 2016, the university has sustained momentum that's reflected in a 20% increase in total enrollment and a 14% growth in undergraduate enrollment. Residential undergraduate enrollment now numbers 1,581. There are 81 students enrolled in Ouachita's six graduate programs this fall, more than doubling the number who enrolled when graduate programs were reintroduced in 2020 through the university's expanding catalog.

Of last year's freshmen, 83% returned for their sophomore year – a retention rate 22% higher than the average most recently reported for all 4-year colleges and universities in Arkansas.

Among this year's 469 first-time freshmen at Ouachita, there are two National Merit finalists and 33 Arkansas Governor's Distinguished Scholars. The cohort earned a collective high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.8 out of 4.000; almost half earned a high school GPA of 4.0 or higher.

"Ouachita is attracting growing numbers of outstanding, committed students who find close-knit community here where they can thrive academically, spiritually and personally," said Dr. Ben Sells, Ouachita president. "These numbers tell us they're finding exceptional personal and financial value in the Ouachita experience."

Sells emphasized the university's strong student outcomes, including a 99% job or graduate school placement rate within six months of graduation.

"In everything we do, we're committed to ensuring a transformative educational experience for our students and to preparing them for lives of meaningful work," Sells said. "This is part of the Christ-centered mission that distinguishes Ouachita from public universities."

Total university enrollment includes residential, online and graduate students, as well as high school students taking Ouachita courses for concurrent credit.

Ouachita Baptist University, a private liberal arts university, is in its 138th year as a Christ-centered learning community and is ranked nationally by *U.S. News & World Report*. Learn more about the university's highly personal approach at www.obu.edu.