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NEWS

For immediate release

**Ouachita and Arkadelphia Philharmonic Club to host
Jonesboro Special Needs Music Program in concert Oct. 13**

By Anna Hurst

October 2, 2015

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Huckabee School of Education and School of Fine Arts along with the Arkadelphia Philharmonic Club will present "The Role of Music in the Lives of Children & Adults with Special Needs" Tuesday, Oct. 13, at 6 p.m. The free concert will feature members of the Jonesboro Special Needs Music Program and will be held in McBeth Recital Hall in Mabee Fine Arts Center. A reception hosted by Sigma Alpha Iota will follow.

Sue Shults, director of student teaching and lecturer in education at Ouachita, is coordinating the event. She said she hopes the concert will provide a "firsthand glimpse of how music has enhanced the lives of those with disabilities" and help the audience to "see abilities rather than just the disabilities."

"Music has allowed these students and adults with special needs to get on the same page with everyone else and it is amazing how God has allowed that and created an avenue for that to happen," she added.

The concert also will serve as a hands-on learning experience for education and music students as well as professional special educators and members of the community. Shults said she hopes the concert will inspire and challenge those who attend to seek out ways to assist those with special needs in their families, communities or churches.

Performers for the evening include: Mitchell Griggs on the Native American flute; Vivian Hardin, harpist; Joey Havdala, vocalist; Darren Lane, pianist; Jonathan Lansford, vocalist; Parker McCarthy, violinist and mandolin player; Justin Phillips, vocalist; and Hunter Eugene Rogers, vocalist and pianist. The Thrillin' Three trio, featuring Lane, Lansford and Phillips, will wrap up the concert.

Pat Qualls-Taylor, who founded the program in 2010 and serves as the current director, and Julia Lansford, assistant director of the program and mother of performer Jonathan Lansford, will accompany the group for their Ouachita performance. Sigma Alpha Iota, Regions Bank and The Front Porch Bakery and Gifts are sponsoring the concert.

OBU's student chapters of Kappa Delta Pi international honor society in education and National Association of Teachers of Singing also will provide assistance. They will assist the guest artists throughout the day of the concert, eating lunch with them at the Honeycomb, serving as hosts and hostesses during the performance and guiding the group to their accommodations for the night.

"We are always talking about being difference makers," Shults said. "How can we make a difference? Perhaps this just brings a little bit of 'how can we make a difference' in the lives of students and adults and their families who have special needs."

For more information, contact Ouachita's Huckabee School of Education at (870) 245-5154.