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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita to host 52nd Miss OBU Scholarship Pageant Feb. 2, 2019



By Tiffany Lee

January 25, 2019

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

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. — Ouachita Baptist University will host the 52nd Miss Ouachita Baptist University Scholarship Pageant on Saturday, Feb. 2, at 7:30 p.m. in Jones Performing Arts Center. Fifteen contestants will compete for the crown, which is twice the number of contestants in the last few years. Tickets are \$12 at the door.

The winner of the pageant will compete in the Miss Arkansas Scholarship Pageant, part of the Miss America Organization, this summer. Along with the honor of representing Ouachita at Miss Arkansas, the winner will receive a \$2,000 scholarship, along with a prize package. Throughout the year, Miss OBU's responsibilities will include volunteering for various organizations in the community of Arkadelphia and the state of Arkansas.

The Miss OBU Pageant, which began in 1967, has yielded five Miss Arkansas winners, beginning with the first Miss OBU, Sharon Evans Bale. The event is directed by alumna Becky Hartsfield.

"Miss OBU needs to be a woman who exemplifies the high standards and values of Ouachita Baptist University," Hartsfield said. "We look for someone who is strong academically, well-spoken and can enthusiastically represent our university in the state of Arkansas."

The 15 students competing for the crown in this year's pageant include: Kat Allen, a sophomore social justice and psychology major from Texarkana, Ark.; Lila Buchanan, a sophomore psychology major from Benton, Ark.; Kara DeLaune, a junior Spanish and Christian studies major from Conway, Ark.; Hannah Hill, a junior musical theatre major from Alexander, Ark.; Tabatha Huckabee, a junior nutrition and dietetics major from Fort Worth, Texas; Stormi Leonard, a senior finance, mass communications and Spanish major from Decatur, Texas; Madeline Martin, a sophomore musical theatre and mass communications major from Sheridan, Ark.; Molly Mattingly, a junior social justice studies and psychology

major from Flower Mound, Texas; Abigail Sanders, a sophomore music industry major from Little Rock, Ark.; Gracie Stover, a junior communications and media/multimedia journalism and pre-pharmacy major from Little Rock, Ark.; Hannah Tingle, a senior business administration major from Sherwood, Ark.; Anni Williams, a sophomore speech communications and philosophy major from Red Oak, Texas; Julie Williams, a senior mass communications and political science major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; Meagan Woodward, a junior communications and media and theatre arts major from Cleburne, Texas; and Felicia Valdez, a junior psychology and Spanish major from Terrel, Texas.

The contestants will be judged in talent, evening wear, onstage question, private interview and fitness categories.

The competition also will pay tribute to Miss OBU 2018 Emma Pitt's year of service.

"Being Miss OBU has given me such a new appreciation for Ouachita and all the people I get to represent as Miss OBU," said Pitts, a senior music education major from Rogers, Ark. "It has helped me gain the confidence to feel like I can reach out and serve anyone on campus ... and has given me many opportunities to speak with prospective students about what makes Ouachita special and how this university has helped me."

Along with their personal platforms, each Miss Arkansas contestant works with the Miss Arkansas Scholarship Foundation to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network. In 2018, the Miss Arkansas Scholarship Pageant awarded \$194,000 in scholarships, allowing women the opportunity to further their education and professional goals debt-free.

"Being Miss OBU at Miss Arkansas was one of the most special parts of my time as Miss OBU because every time I took the stage I knew that there were so many great Ouachita people supporting me," Pitts said.

Pitts received the best overall vocalist award during Miss Arkansas 2018. "I was so excited to be recognized and get to bring that back home to Ouachita," she said.

Additional entertainment during the pageant will be provided by the Court of Honor, which will include: Miss OBU 2018, Emma Pitts; Aaron George, a senior accounting major from Rogers, Ark.; Clay Mobley, a junior music industry major from Wylie, Texas; Zach Myers, a senior musical theatre major from Greenwood, Ark.; Paige Price, a sophomore musical theatre major from Plano, Texas; and Bethany Courtney, a sophomore Christian studies major from Little Rock, Ark. Alumni Stephen and Abby Curry serve as musical director and choreographer, respectively.

Tickets for the pageant are \$12 each for the general public and \$7 each for current Ouachita students with a valid student ID. Tickets are available for purchase at the door.

For more information, contact Becky Hartsfield at rahartsfield@comcast.net.



Picture 1 Miss OBU 2018 Emma Pitts