

# NEWS RELEASE

## THIRTY TO GRADUATE FROM LEADERSHIP OUACHITA PROGRAM AND JAMES SHIPP AWARD WINNER TO BE ANNOUNCED

MONROE, LA – Thirty participants are scheduled to graduate from the Monroe Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Council's Leadership Ouachita program Thursday, November 5, during the program's 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary graduation celebration at Bayou DeSiard Country Club. The event will be held at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per person and reservations can be made by calling Daphne McClish at 807-4018.

The purpose of Leadership Ouachita is to develop and empower the emerging leaders of northeast Louisiana to transform the region into a place recognized as one of the best places to live and do business. Class members engage in a series of sessions focused on workforce development and infrastructure.

The program also provides insight on public decision making, practical and in-depth discussions on public issues pertinent to Ouachita Parish, an expanded knowledge and understanding of the community in which we live, and the opportunity to develop lasting relationships with growing and established leaders in a neutral environment.

Each year, Leadership Ouachita targets those who have demonstrated a commitment to Ouachita Parish by their involvement in civic and community affairs. A representative group of participants is selected from business, government, education, religious, civic, arts, labor & minority organizations & community groups.

Announced during the graduation ceremony will be the **24<sup>rd</sup> Annual James M. Shipp, Jr. Memorial Young Business Leader Award winner**. The award is presented annually to a young man or woman in Ouachita Parish who has displayed outstanding leadership and service. Considerations for the award include contributions to community progress, evidence of civic leadership ability and evidence of personal, professional and/or business standing in the parish.

Past recipients of this prestigious award include: Brent Henley, Tom Nicholson, David Cattar, George Cummings, Harvey Hales, Ed Major, Debbie Sawyer, Mike Ryan, Bruce Hanks, Dr. David Uth, Terry Baugh, Jerry Daigle, Taylor Cagle, Jim Crotwell, Judge Manning, LJ Holland, Aimee Kane, Christian Creed, Stephen Harrison, Kevin Woods, Stuart Keyes, Michael Echols, Laura Kilpatrick Marchelos and Ashley West..

2016 Leadership Ouachita class nominations are being accepted now and are encouraged from all segments of the community. Individuals may apply or nominate those they feel best exemplify the philosophy of Leadership Ouachita. The application deadline for the 2015 class is January 8, 2016. Applications may be picked up at the Monroe Chamber of Commerce or interested parties may contact Daphne McClish at 807-4018 or [dmcclish@monroe.org](mailto:dmcclish@monroe.org) for more information.

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*The Monroe Chamber of Commerce's mission is to create an environment in which our businesses thrive.*