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Office of University Communications
Administration Building, Room 103
(870) 972-3820

News Release

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College of Education and Behavioral Science Alumni To Be Recognized At Homecoming

JONESBORO —Arkansas State University will honor five graduates of College of Education and Behavioral Science (COEBS) as distinguished alumni during Homecoming activities, Saturday, October 4.

The COEBS alumni recognition ceremony will take place at 3 p.m. in the foyer of the Health, Physical Education and Sport Sciences (HPESS) building, 315 University Loop Circle. The honorees are Dr. Catherine Rasberry, Heather Baxter, Rachel Barker, Dana McFarland and Kathy Farris.

Dr. Catherine Rasberry is a health scientist for the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Ga. After earning her bachelor of science in health promotion degree from Arkansas State in 2001, she went on to earn a master of science degree in health promotion from Purdue University and a Ph.D. in health education from Texas A&M.

During her years in graduate school, Rasberry honed her teaching skills by independently teaching more than 30 health promotion and education classes to over 1,000 students. She went on to spend one year as an assistant professor in health education at Morehead State University.

In June 2007, her love of research led her to leave academia for an opportunity to join the CDC as a health scientist in the CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health. Over the last seven years, she has become an expert in school health, particularly in evaluating school-based health programs.

Rasberry has written and managed more than \$7 million worth of evaluation contracts, and her CDC research has covered many types of school-based health programs and practices, including physical activity, asthma management, HIV and other sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention, and creating safe and supportive environments in schools. She has authored more than 40 national presentations and more than 25 publications, including peer-reviewed scientific articles, book chapters, and government reports.

Heather Baxter earned a B.S. in psychology and an Ed.S. in mental health counseling. After graduating in 2010, she began working at a residential crisis unit through the local community mental health center, MidSouth Health Systems. In 2011, she assisted Craighead County with the implementation of the first mental health court in the state of Arkansas. Since 2012, she has functioned as the coordinator for an inpatient forensic unit with MidSouth Health Systems in Jonesboro.

Baxter works closely with the Arkansas State Hospital and the local court system to ensure quality care for clients that have been acquitted of crimes by reason of mental illness or defect. She also serves as a member of a mobile crisis team where she

provides crisis intervention services to jails and hospitals in the area and continues to stay involved in the development of future counselors by serving on the advisory board for the clinical mental health counseling program at Arkansas State.

Baxter provides clinical supervision to students and instructing courses such as crisis and trauma counseling. Her education and experience with the A-State psychology and counseling department have allowed her to enjoy a fulfilling career where she can work both in clinical and educational settings.

Rachel Barker is a 2006 and 2009 graduate of Arkansas State. As an undergraduate student, she completed her bachelor of science degree in psychology, earning magna cum laude honors. While enrolled in graduate school, Barker was awarded graduate assistant and teaching assistant positions and earned her master's degree in rehabilitation counseling.

She is currently employed as an instructor in the department of psychology and counseling at Arkansas State. Her primary responsibilities include teaching and advising first year experience students. She was named "University College Outstanding First Year Experience (FYE) Instructor" for the 2011-12 academic year and received the "You Made a Difference Advisor Award" for the 2013-14 year.

A sixth grade math teacher at the Health, Wellness and Environmental Studies in Jonesboro, **Dana McFarland** earned her bachelor of science degree in accounting and a master degree in educational leadership at Arkansas State, as well as completing the program of study in middle-level education.

She was awarded the District Cane Award for 2011-12, and Teacher of the Year for Health, Wellness and Environmental Studies Magnet School for 2012-13.

McFarland has served on several committees including school leadership, math leadership, and Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Planning Committee for Math. She also served as a clinical supervisor for a field II middle-level student.

Kathy Farris is a fourth grade teacher at the Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School in Jonesboro. She recently began her 37th year as a classroom teacher. During this time, Farris has distinguished herself by serving on the reading language arts committee for the state benchmark testing program for fourth and fifth grades.

She also helps on the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation committees for Arkansas State, assisting in the beginning development of the field and intern placement guidelines for the teacher education program at A-State as well as various additional services.

A leader within her school community, Farris was named West Elementary Teacher of the Year in 2006-07 and received the Golden Apple Award for the Jonesboro Rotary Club that same year. She received her bachelor's degree in 1977 and master's in 1978.

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