

Belhaven arts programs among nation's elite

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Belhaven College is among a stellar group of America's institutions with all four of its arts majors — theatre, visual art, music and dance — nationally accredited.

The private Jackson college celebrates its achievement in the summer issue of The Belhaven Tartan, a magazine distributed to alumni, parents and friends of the school.

Belhaven is among only 25 colleges and universities in the nation that can boast arts accreditation by four independent national organizations, said President Roger Parrott.

"We really are playing with the big boys of higher education in the arts," Parrott writes in the magazine that spotlights the School for the Arts.

Belhaven recently joined other schools with that honor including the University of Southern Mississippi, Florida State University, the University of Alabama, James Madison University, Ohio University, Arizona, and Ohio State. Belhaven is among four schools in the Southeast with that distinction.

Affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, Belhaven offers its students top-notch facilities, including the Center for the Arts that's home to a concert hall, a theater and music recital hall, private practice rooms and classrooms.

The Bitsy Irby Visual Arts and Dance Center is headquarters to four professional dance studios, a dance performance theater, computer design labs, photography studios, art gallery and much more.

"This makes a huge statement about the commitment to excellence in our arts programs," said Colin Harbinson, dean of the arts at Belhaven, of the national recognition.

If you would like to comment on this story, contact Andy Kanengiser at 601-961-7034.