

12-2015

Gardner-Webb, The Magazine 2015, Fall (Volume 50 No. 2)

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Gardner-Webb University

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GARDNER-WEBB

VOL. 50, NO. 2, 2015

THE MAGAZINE

A white bulldog with dark eyes and a black nose is the central focus, wearing a bright red long-sleeved shirt. It is sitting on a green lawn, and the background is a soft-focus field of many colorful flowers in shades of red, orange, and white. The dog's expression is calm and slightly somber.

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ONLINE PROGRAMS ON THE RISE

APOLLO 13 - A PROFESSOR'S MEMORY

INTERNATIONAL CULTURE THRIVES AT GWU

ALUMNA DISCOVERS ULTRA MARATHON GLORY

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FEATURES

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

The Importance of Maintaining Quality Programs in Traditional and Online Environments

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll



Developing online courses that maintain a standard of excellence typically shaped by instructors throughout years of face-to-face, classroom delivery is a challenging task for both university administrators and faculty members. Yet, holding on to traditional delivery alone does not appear to be a viable long-term option for most institutions of higher education. According to the economic, significant financial changes are forcing middle-tier colleges and universities to seriously consider entering the online environment, or face the threat of being replaced by online courses at competing institutions.

"Students at universities below Ivy League level are more sensitive to the rising cost of degrees, because the return on investment is smaller," the economist reported in 2015. "These colleges might profit from expanding the rate of online learning to classroom teaching, lowering their costs while still offering the price of a college education conducted partly on campus."

Gardner-Webb University entered the online classroom environment during the 1999-2000 academic year, totaling nearly 950 course hours completed. Over the past 15 years, that number has grown nearly 40 times to over 37,000 online or hybrid course hours completed for the 2014-2015 year. No matter the institution, a driving concern remains consistent within the realm of higher education: how to ensure quality in face-to-face, hybrid and online formats simultaneously.

"At Gardner Webb, assessing the quality of learning that takes place in all modes of delivery is not a peripheral concern. It's at the top of the list," GWU Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. Ben Leslie declared. "Our faculty are actively engaged in strategies not just to improve the effectiveness of what they're doing in the classroom, but at an even more fundamental level, they're developing strategies just to better understand what kind of learning is really taking place. It's about far more than simply assigning grades."



Dr. Janet Lond is a professor of English at GWU and she also serves as the director for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Through her work with CETL, she has noted a variety of opportunities and challenges as course evolve from primarily face-to-face delivery into online or web-enhanced, hybrid versions.

"As an instructor, I'm thrilled to meet and work with strong, intelligent, motivated students," she shared. "Many professors fear the loss of community in online courses. Fortunately, I've learned that it is more than possible to maintain these interactions."

GARDNER-WEBB.EDU

950

Online Course Hours Completed
1999-2000

37,000

Online Course Hours Completed
2014-2015

20

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WILLING HEARTS

Ready Feet



Willing Hearts

Ready Feet



LIVING WATER

Standout Student, Swimmer Connor Bos Finds Ultimate Success Through Faith



DIVINE NEGOTIATIONS

GWU Professor Discusses Role in Apollo 13 Rescue Mission



FINDING YOUR CENTER

Blind Alumnus Explores Vision Through the Business of Sociology



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Gardner-Webb--The Magazine
Volume 50, Number 2, 2015

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The Gardner-Webb Magazine is the official magazine for Gardner-Webb University. The Office of University Communications and the Division of Enrollment Management and Marketing publish this magazine.

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Gardner-Webb University introduces "Roebuck" to the University family. Our new bulldog friend and living mascot was named after long-time GWU staff member Mike Roebuck, who passed away this year. Roebuck is under the care of Brooke Greene, who raises English Bulldogs.

A LESSON FROM YOGI

The world of sports, and baseball in particular, has lost a true great. On September 22, Yogi Berra died at the age of 90. Everyone knows of Yogi's legendary career in baseball both as player and manager. He was certainly one of the most popular sports figures of all time. Sports writers have called him "lovable" and reminded us that even a cartoon character was named for him—Yogi Bear.



Yogi was almost as well known for his "Yogi-isms" as for his baseball achievements. "Déjà vu all over again" has become part of our language, redundant as it is, though Yogi denied that he really said it. Nor did he really say, "Always go to other people's funerals; otherwise, they won't go to yours." (Yogi Berra with Tom Horton, *Yogi: It Ain't Over . . .*, New York: Harper & Row, 1989.) There were disputes over what he really said, or did not, to the point that Yogi wrote a book, *The Yogi Book: I Really Didn't Say Everything I Said*.

The great thing about many Yogi-isms is the element of truth that goes along with the humor. My own favorite, whether or not Yogi really said it: "The future ain't what it used to be." Current events shape the future, and as those change so does the outlook for the future.

In American higher education, the future surely is not what it used to be. The question facing a university today is just how to anticipate and prepare for the future. Should the University undergo "disruptive innovation"? Should it change its mission and character in order to address certain expectations of the education market place?" Should it retrench in order to address affordability?

The question for us is, just how good can Gardner-Webb University be while successfully preparing for and meeting the demands of the future.

I propose that our trajectory be upward, toward greater and greater levels of excellence by all of the measures that truly matter. Recently, I invited one of our professors to a discussion over coffee. After describing the tremendous successes of some of our recent graduates in not only being admitted to prestigious graduate schools but also gaining significant scholarships, he suggested that Gardner-Webb can offer an "elite" education at a cost much less than that of the elite schools. Though I prefer a descriptive term other than "elite," it struck me that this might be the key to how we address the future, adding to this formula a strong Christian community where spiritual growth and commitment to faith in action come together. It will not be easy, and we will need help from our friends and supporters. We will not get there tomorrow, but we will chart our course.

Just how do we achieve this in the face of ever-increasing challenges? Well, stay tuned. The future really "ain't what it used to be," but we will be ready for it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Frank Bonner
President, Gardner-Webb University



University Establishes Education Hall of Fame

The induction ceremony for the inaugural GWU School of Education Hall of Fame was held over the summer and offered the unveiling of the new Education Hall of Fame, located in the Tucker Student Center.

School of Education Dean Dr. Doug Eury said that nominees for the Hall of Fame will be Gardner-Webb alumni and others who have distinguished themselves in the field of education as either a practitioner or benefactor locally, regionally or at the state and federal level. “The individuals recognized have each made a significant impact in both their field and in the community at large,” Eury shared. “These folks are role models both personally and professionally.”

The 2015 inductees included Dr. George Litton, Hoyt Bailey, and Ezra Bridges (posthumously), and each has contributed to education in significant ways.



Dr. George Litton

Litton, former head football coach at Gardner-Webb, served the community for dozens of years as a school administrator and longtime principal at Crest High School. He later became a longtime member and chairman of the Cleveland County Board of Education. He was the recipient of the Raleigh Dingman Award for Most Outstanding School Board Member in 2009 and was an active member of the Communities in Schools Board of Directors and the Cleveland Community College Board of Visitors.

“The young people today need to understand that their path to success goes through the school house one way or another,” Litton declared. “My journey through education has been one that has been a lot of fun. I’ve enjoyed it, and I’d do it all over again.”

Bailey, who passed away in August, (see page 81) founded the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland County and was a former chairman of the Cleveland County Board of Education. He received the Raleigh Dingman Most Outstanding School Board Member award in 1995. He served as a former trustee at Gardner-Webb and received an honorary doctorate from the University in 1997. His philanthropic commitment to children of the community is evident. The building that houses the Shelby City Park Carrousel is named for his wife, the late Anne Dover Bailey. His leadership as a board member of the Dover Foundation, started by his wife’s family—owners of Dover Mill in Shelby—has been instrumental in providing thousands of dollars in college scholarships to high school students. The board has also supported countless other educational endeavors in Cleveland County. Bailey said he was reared in an environment where education was highly valued.



Hoyt Bailey

“I was raised in a very religious family—and a very educational family,” he shared. “My mother thought there were only three things in the world, and that was God, family, and education. If you don’t get involved in something constructive, what are you going to do? I mean, what is better than an education?”



Ezra Bridges

Ezra Bridges (1905-2010) was a devoted educator who tirelessly served the Cleveland County community in immeasurable ways. She worked for former North Carolina Governor Oliver Max Gardner and his wife, Faye Webb-Gardner, the namesakes of Gardner-Webb University. An African-American woman, Bridges was not allowed to attend Shelby High School after she completed the eighth grade. She attended Scotia Seminary for teachers and taught for 46 years in the Shelby schools, many of those at the segregated Cleveland School. A lifelong learner, Bridges earned a bachelor’s degree from Hampton Institute in Virginia in 1942 and a master’s from Columbia University in New York in 1946. She served for 20 years on the Cleveland County Planning Board, and on the Board of Trustees for Cleveland Memorial Hospital. She also helped found Holly Oak Park in Shelby.

“I’ve had some good opportunities and I don’t have any right to snub anybody,” Bridges said in a 2005 interview. “I made the best way that I could, but I felt all the time that advanced training was what I needed and what I should have. And I was supported in getting it. You better believe it.”

New Standing Helps GWU Graduates Become Certified Financial Planners

Gardner-Webb University’s Brinkley Financial Group Master of Wealth and Trust Management was awarded standing with Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (CFP Board). With this status, graduates of the Wealth and Trust Management program will be eligible to become a Certified Financial Planner without having to pursue additional coursework. The degree is offered through the Godbold School of Business.

“CFP Board is pleased to approve the program at Gardner-Webb as a CFP Board Registered Program,” said Ray Ferrara, chair of CFP Board’s Board of Directors. “As student interest



in financial planning careers continues to grow, we anticipate that Gardner-Webb’s program will contribute significantly to the number of qualified candidates seeking to attain the CFP certification, the standard of excellence for competent and ethical financial planning.”

An independent certifying organization, CFP Board owns CFP and Certified Financial Planner certification marks, which it awards to individuals who meet its education, examination, experience, ethics and other requirements.

“The program will reach more of an audience than ever,” said Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, professor in the GWU Godbold School of Business. “For CFP to approve such a young program proves the quality of the Wealth and Trust Management degree.”

GWU Trumpet Ensemble Performs in Second Straight National Competition

People across the country are hearing about the growing success of Gardner-Webb University’s trumpet program. For the second straight year, GWU students delivered a strong performance in the semifinals of the National Trumpet Competition, held last spring.

Hosted by Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pa., this year’s competition also included classes with master trumpet players and performances by groups like the “The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band and the U.S. Army jazz band.

“The national competition offers the best of the best. It’s the Rose Bowl of trumpet,” explained Tim Hudson, assistant professor of music at Gardner-Webb. “Just getting invited is a really big deal. It speaks volumes about the work ethic and dedication of our students.”

The group, which included three freshmen, qualified for the large ensemble competition after a successful video-taped performance in the preliminary round. Ensembles had eight minutes to perform the polished audition piece for judges in the national semifinals.

GWU’s trumpet ensemble included Melody Bubar (Raleigh, N.C.), Kevin Clary (Gaffney, S.C.), Robbie Collins (Tarboro, N.C.), Ben Dawkins (Greensboro, N.C.), Julia Katelyn DeSerio (Pacolet, S.C.), Anthony Lacivita (Greensboro, N.C.), Brandon Taylor (Hickory, N.C.) and Adam White (Asheboro, N.C.).



GWU Welcomes Japanese Engineering Students



Gardner-Webb University welcomed four Japanese engineering students during a two-week visit to experience English, engineering and American culture. The study abroad visit was made possible through the University's English as a Second Language program, facilitated by World Languages and Cultures Associate Professor Dr. Lorene Pagcaliwagan.

The group consisted of three undergraduate students—Ryosuke Mori, Yoshitaka Toeda, and Kyouhei Miyama—and one graduate student, Hironori Sakamoto, from Chiba University in Chiba, Japan, a suburb of Tokyo.

"I have been completely impressed with these four young men and their efforts to absorb all they can and use English as much as they can," said Pagcaliwagan, who teaches French and Spanish. "This was their first visit to America, so the myths or exaggerated perceptions they may have believed through movies and media are now reframed by their own experiences and newly gained knowledge."

In addition to their academic studies, the students toured several points of cultural interest across the Southeast, including the Duke Energy Cliffside Steam Station, Facebook Data Center, Baldor Electric Company, Hattori Racing Enterprises, NASCAR Hall of Fame, World of Coca-Cola, and the cities of Charleston, S.C., and Atlanta, Ga.

Pagcaliwagan taught English as a foreign language at Chiba University for 13 years before coming to Gardner-Webb. In early 2014, she founded the English as a Second Language program as a partnership between GWU and Chiba University. The students' visit was a pilot study abroad program, and both universities will evaluate its future this year to decide on factors such as the frequency and number of participants.

Pagcaliwagan hopes for the program's expansion. "My hope for the students is a greater understanding of American culture and how Japanese culture compares," Pagcaliwagan shared, "in addition to developing their ICC (Intercultural Communicative Competence) skills to become more effective in their communication and navigation of interactions with people whose values differ from theirs."



Japanese students touring Facebook

Academic Plan to Benefit Gardner-Webb Transfer Students

Students who transfer to Gardner-Webb University from a North Carolina community college stand to save both time and money in completing a four-year degree, thanks to an updated Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA) approved by GWU and other college leaders across the state.

The ICAA will provide further planning and support for students to complete a bachelor's degree program with courses at both a community college and a four-year institution.

"The old agreement had no provisions for guiding the community college student through a curriculum—other than the graduation requirements of the program," explained Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU provost and executive vice president. "Under the new agreement, the four-year institution can specify many of the courses that a student should take while still at a community college. This encourages the student to plan an entire associate degree with the four-year institution in mind. Thus, students should be even better prepared for their last two years of study than they have been previously."

In addition to the ICAA, Gardner-Webb has formed Pathways agreements, named for the structured paths of study, with several of the state's community colleges to help students complete degrees in certain programs.

"The ICAA makes good sense for North Carolina community college students," Leslie offered. "Because it cuts down on student enrollment in courses that do not count toward graduation, it helps keep down the cost of education. And whatever keeps down the costs of education and increases the number of graduates is good for the student, good for the institution and good for the North Carolina economy."



University Magazine Receives Accolades in Recognition of Publication Excellence

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Gardner-Webb University Office of Communications and Marketing was honored with several awards of distinction for various issues of the University publication, Gardner-Webb The Magazine.

Continued on next page.



Niki Bliss-Carroll

GWU Magazine Associate Editor/
Assistant Director of University
Communications



Ryan Gunter

GWU Magazine Design Editor/
Graphic Designer



Mark Houser

GWU Magazine Photo Editor/
Digital Media Specialist

University Magazine Honored

Collegiate Advertising Awards (CAA)

Gardner-Webb University was named among the top in the nation in the 2014-2015 Collegiate Advertising Awards (CAA) program. The elite program recognizes higher education organizations for excellence in communications, marketing, advertising and promotions of their institutions. Only five institutions were honored with a gold award for an individual magazine issue.

The submission, Gardner-Webb The Magazine (Vol. 49, No. 1) earned a “Gold Award” in the category of single magazine publication, an achievement reached by only five schools in the nation. Judging criteria included creativity, layout and design, functionality, message effectiveness, production quality, and overall appeal. GWU’s entry earned the highest marks for single magazine publication among institutions with 2,000 to 5,000 students.

“This award is a testament to the talent we have serving on the Gardner-Webb University Communications and Marketing team,” said Noel Manning, associate vice president for Communications and Marketing and managing editor of the publication. “Our writers, designers, researchers, and photographers have earned this honor, and I feel blessed to work in partnership with such an amazing group of individuals. They represent their professions and Gardner-Webb with the highest caliber of quality and dedication.”

The 2014-2015 CAA program drew more than 900 entries from across the U.S. representing a diverse range of educational facilities from small community colleges to very large schools and universities. Submissions were reviewed and scored by a national panel of industry experts and then competed against similar-sized organizations in their specific groups and categories.

CASE Awards

Gardner-Webb The Magazine and its staff were recognized for excellence among higher education publications throughout the Southeast with a pair of awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

The University magazine received a special merit award for print and digital publications, and Gardner-Webb The Magazine (Vol. 49, No. 1) earned a special merit award for cover graphic design in the 2014-2015 CASE District III contest. Honors were announced during the CASE District III annual conference in Orlando, Fla.

CASE District III advances and supports educational and professional institutions in the southeastern United States by enhancing the effectiveness of the alumni relations, fundraising, communications, marketing and other advancement professionals who serve them. The organization’s colleges and universities submitted more than 900 entries in 68 competition categories in the 2014-15 awards contest, including 222 entries in graphic design alone.

Gardner-Webb was honored for the graphic design of its magazine cover that

University Magazine Honored

featured a flame and shield depicting the University’s brand pillars. An additional special merit award for print and digital publications saluted the GWU magazine’s excellence across the board, including writing, graphic design, photography and production.

AIVA Awards (The Communicator Awards)

The Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts (AIVA), based in New York, N.Y., honored Gardner-Webb The Magazine and its production team for national and international excellence among marketing and communications publications with a pair of awards.

The issue (Vol. 49, No. 1) earned a 2015 Gold Award of Excellence in the category of cover design and a 2015 Silver Award of Distinction in the category of educational institution magazine. Gardner-Webb was recognized for both graphic design (cover) and overall publication (writing, graphic design, photography, and production) for the magazine edition that featured a flame and shield depicting the University’s brand pillars.

The Communicator Awards are judged and overseen by the AIVA, a 600-member organization of leader professionals from various disciplines in the visual arts who are dedicated to embracing progress and the evolving nature of traditional and interactive media. The 2015 awards received more than 6,000 entries from ad agencies, interactive agencies, production firms, in-house creative professionals, graphic designers, design firms, and public relations firms.

Hermes Creative Awards

Gardner-Webb The Magazine (Vol. 49, No. 2) was named a Platinum Winner in the annual Hermes Creative Awards competition, administered by the Association of Marketing & Communications Professionals (AMCP), which is based in Dallas, Texas.

According to AMCP, there were approximately 6,000 entries from throughout the United States and more than 20 foreign countries. Just 15 percent of entries earned Platinum recognition, while 22 percent received gold recognition and 11 percent received honorable mention.

The foundation for AMCP began in 1995 as a means to honor outstanding achievement and service to the communication profession. It was founded by a group of communication professionals who were involved in competitions for several of the national and international trade organizations.

“I continue to be humbled by the honors we receive for the Gardner-Webb magazine,” shared Noel Manning. “This has been a stellar year for our team. I have always been impressed by what we’re able to accomplish together in the magazine efforts. But when the quality of our collective work is acknowledged, it serves as a reminder that others recognize these talents as well. These recent honors are greatly appreciated, and I’m extremely proud of the team.”



Noel T. Manning II

GWU Magazine Managing Editor/
Assoc. VP for Communications & Marketing



Jeff Powell

GWU Magazine Research Assistant
Operation Mgr/Prog.Dir WGWG



Matt Renfer

Staff Writer/Content Developer



Matthew Tessnear

GWU Magazine Assistant Editor
Public Relations Specialist

Television Program Features Work of GWU Faculty Members



Buffalo Creek Gallery

at Gardner-Webb, approached Lawrence in the spring of this year with the idea of producing regional segments for the “North Carolina Weekend” show. A public television producer in Raleigh, N.C., expressed interest in two of those ideas, Buffalo Creek Gallery and the Flat Rock Playhouse in Hendersonville, N.C., where Fair now works as director of education, Lawrence said, adding that the playhouse segment is still being considered for television programming.



Dr. Jim Lawrence

“We spent a morning in Shelby filming at the gallery, then we shot the Flat Rock story that afternoon,” Lawrence explained. “In addition to shooting the episodes, I also edited them.”

The Buffalo Creek production included the faces of several local residents and an interview with Bell in front of some of her original work in the artist-owned gallery, which formed almost 10 years ago and features dozens of local artists. In addition to Bell, the gallery offers work by other GWU community members such as pottery by Doug Knotts, professor of art and chair of the art department, and photographs by Dr. Michael Kuchinsky, assistant professor of political science.

“Eighty percent of our artists are from Cleveland County, so supporting the gallery is truly shopping local,” Bell said. “Artists take turns operating the gallery, which helps cut costs and raises the portion of sales that go directly to the artists. Hometown residents often think they need to travel to bigger places to get unique handcrafted pieces of art and expect to pay high prices, while they are neglecting the wonderful art available locally.”

A North Carolina public television program featured the work and faces of several Gardner-Webb University faculty members in a segment spotlighting a local art gallery.

Public broadcasting network UNC-TV featured Uptown Shelby’s Buffalo Creek Gallery during “North Carolina Weekend,” a weekly show that highlights places, people and activities across the state. The segment was filmed and edited by Dr. Jim Lawrence, professor of communication studies, and it included an interview with Susan Carlisle Bell, a GWU art professor for 30 years and one of Buffalo Creek’s artists.

“Being a part of the gallery has been a way to exhibit my work and make it available to a wider audience,” Bell reflected, “but it has also meant a lot that friends, acquaintances and students who may not be in the market for original art are still introduced to my work and therefore know me better.”

Plans for the art gallery segment began when Sue Fair, previously a theater arts instructor and theatrical designer



Susan Carlisle Bell

GWU’s Sport Management Degree Earns National Ranking



Dr. Gerald Gilsdorf

Gardner-Webb University offers the best bachelor’s degree in sport management in the Carolinas and one of the top 10 programs nationwide among institutions with fewer than 3,000 undergraduate students, according to an online publication.

Sports Management Degree Guide (*sports-management-degrees.com*), an online source for information on the field’s programs and careers, recently ranked Gardner-Webb No. 6 nationally in its “20 Great Small Colleges for a Bachelor’s Degree in Sports Management 2015.”

GWU ranked ahead of other North Carolina institutions that made the top-20 list, including Catawba College (Salisbury, N.C.), Barton College (Wilson, N.C.), and Johnson C. Smith University (Charlotte, N.C.). The recognition excites leaders of Gardner-Webb’s sport management program and provides a measure of success, said Dr. Gerald Gilsdorf, assistant professor in the GWU Godbold School of Business.

“The overall goal of the sport management program at Gardner-Webb is for each student to become an effective and efficient sport leader who is well-versed in the field, possesses strong analytical and problem-solving skills and is equipped with an ethical and moral compass grounded in Christian principles,” Gilsdorf shared.

University’s Online Offerings Earn Top Ranking in State

Gardner-Webb University is being recognized for exceptional web-based learning opportunities and was recently honored as a 2015 Top Online College in North Carolina by Affordable Colleges Online (ACO), based in Reno, Nev. Gardner-Webb ranked 15th out of 62 institutions of higher education in the state that offer online options, and the University was selected for the quality and value of its online programs.



With a score of 90.85 percent, GWU ranked ahead of several larger institutions, including North Carolina State University (Raleigh, N.C.), North Carolina A&T University (Greensboro, N.C.), and Johnson & Wales University (Charlotte, N.C.). Less than eight points separated GWU from the number-one institution on the list, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

“We are delighted to see this ranking for Gardner-Webb’s online programs by Affordable Colleges Online,” said Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU Provost and Executive Vice President. “Controlling costs and tuition rates is indeed a priority for Gardner-Webb, because we recognize the critical importance of keeping higher education affordable and achievable for every income bracket. But our greatest priority

is ensuring that the online educational experience is of the highest possible quality. At Gardner-Webb, we value affordability and emphasize an engaging online experience, flexible options, and above all, quality academic programs.”

Through the Degree Completion Program (DCP) at Gardner-Webb, students can take online courses to earn a bachelor’s degree in accounting, business administration, computer information systems, criminal justice, elementary education, entrepreneurship, healthcare management, nursing, and religion. Master’s degrees in accounting, business administration, international business administration, nursing, and sport pedagogy are also available in online formats at GWU.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Online Business Programs Receive Nationwide Attention

Gardner-Webb University's Godbold School of Business has garnered numerous national rankings throughout the years for outstanding online education programs and services. Several accolades in recent months have continued to affirm the GWU business school's excellence by recognizing the University's outstanding online offerings.

The University's most recent recognitions include placement in the:

- Best Online Programs for a Bachelor's in Accounting (BestColleges.com)
- 25 Best Online Bachelor's Degrees in Accounting (Accounting.com)
- Top 45 Online Master's in Accounting Programs 2015-2016 (Accounting-Degree.org)
- Top 25 Online Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degrees with Concentration in Healthcare Management (TheBestSchools.org)
- 50 Most Affordable Healthcare MBA Degree Programs in 2015 (MBA-Healthcare-Management.com)
- Best Online Programs for a Master's Degree in Finance (BestColleges.com)
- Top 50 Best Online Accounting Degree Programs 2015 (Online-Accounting-Degrees.net)



Dr. Earl Godfrey



Dr. Van Graham

"To offer this caliber of business education in an online environment speaks very well of the expertise and time investment of our world-class faculty," offered Dr. Van Graham, interim dean of the GWU Godbold School of Business. "We are committed to providing quality graduate and undergraduate business programs that are current and relevant to the contemporary business environment. We are honored by these recognitions of our hard work."

The honors have steadily ranked Gardner-Webb ahead of similar business programs at institutions across the country, including Liberty University (Lynchburg, Va.), St. Joseph's University (Philadelphia, Pa.), Auburn University (Auburn, Ala.) and Washington State University (Pullman, Wash.).

Gardner-Webb's past online business accolades have also included two No. 1 rankings from U.S. News & World Report, one for student services and technology in graduate programs nationwide in 2012 and another for best programs for military veterans in the Carolinas in 2014.

"We want our graduates to be able to excel in all levels of the businesses where they are placed," Graham shared. "The positive feedback we get from students and employers assures us our graduates are very positively received by employers. The numerous national rankings we receive for our programs show that what we are doing is receiving wider attention and appreciation. This clearly helps the quality of our business programs to be recognized by a wider constituency, and it provides significant motivation for us to continue to improve the quality and relevancy of our business programs."

GARDNER-WEBB COLLEGE
1905 1943
PRO DEO ET HUMANITATE

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT

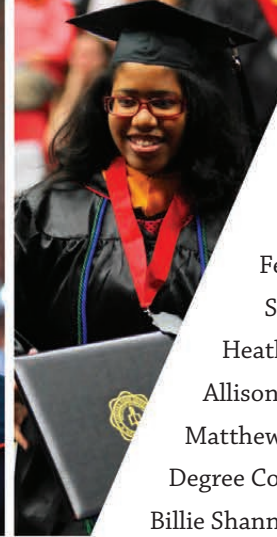
Gardner-Webb University hosted Spring Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 9, in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center and Summer Commencement exercises on Saturday, Aug. 1. Nearly 900 graduates were honored during the ceremonies.

Spring Commencement Ceremony

Over 550 degrees were awarded in the Spring Commencement exercises.

Several graduates were honored for outstanding leadership, citizenship, and academic excellence. The Most Outstanding Male Graduate medal was presented to Delton Wayne Barnes of





Conyers, Ga., while Charity Anne Byrum of Winston-Salem, N.C., was awarded the Most Outstanding Female Graduate medal.

Senior Scholastic Award recipients included Byrum, Heather Briane Feldman of Eden, N.Y., Kristin Nicole Allison of Old Fort, N.C., Matthew Taylor Yelverton of Matthews, N.C., and Megan Ashley Polzin of Cary, N.C. The Degree Completion Program Scholastic Award was presented to Billie Shannon Pierce of Gaffney, S.C.



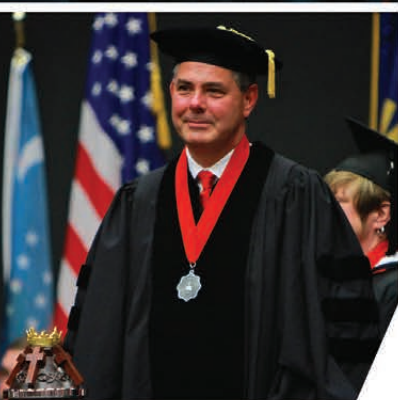
Barnes, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Sport Management, offered a commencement address in which he shared thoughts on the wisdom and knowledge he gleaned from his time at Gardner-Webb. “You will never be able to repay those who have sacrificed and invested to see that you get to this place,” he said. “So starting today, use your knowledge and wisdom—physically represented by this diploma—to begin making graceful payments into the lives of those who will never be able to repay you. And I assure you that a generation committed to compassion will see the overthrow of sorrow in their own world.”

Scott Johnson of Wilmington, N.C., who received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, also offered words of wisdom through his commencement address. “Give back to the community and Gardner-Webb in some way,” he encouraged fellow graduates. “It’s an ongoing cycle that needs to continue to grow. The more the class of 2015 does after graduation, the more of a name we build for Gardner-Webb and to return that investment is one of the most valuable things we can do as alumni, citizens, and people of this world.”

The ceremony also featured special recognitions and the conferring of two honorary degrees and one posthumous degree. The GWU School of Nursing awarded an honorary posthumous degree to the family of Kate Barnett (Fairview, N.C.), who was tragically killed in a car accident last November. At the time of her death, Barnett was enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees were conferred to C. Neal Alexander of Denver, N.C., and Frank Stewart of Belmont, N.C.

Elizabeth Hope Arnold of Drexel, N.C., who earned a Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies, offered a speech during the exercises. She shared how thankful she was to be given the opportunity to fully embrace the Gardner-Webb experience. “From the first day of class, it was apparent that we would not all think alike, but we began to understand that our identity as the Kingdom of God does not depend on our uniformity, but rather on our love for one another,” Arnold reflected. “Today, we celebrate our success, the accomplishment we could not have obtained without each other. I am profoundly grateful for this community of faithful, loving people and the privilege to walk alongside them as friends. I was asked to summarize my experience at Gardner-Webb School of Divinity. To put it simply—it was absolutely divine!”

Doctor of Ministry graduate Garin Hunt Hill of Shelby, N.C., also shared gratitude on behalf of the graduating class. “In the end, most of all, we thank our only wise God: the first Igniter of faith that seeks understanding, knowledge that captures our minds, and love that sets us free,” Hill declared. “May we forever, with reckless abandon, proclaim, “Thank You.”



Summer Commencement Ceremony

Many graduates participated in the summer ceremony through prayer, scripture reading, and commencement speeches. Joseph Sanders Macgregor (Brooksville, Fla.) offered the invocation, while Britney Nicole Hudgins (Golden Valley, N.C.) shared passages from the Old and New Testaments. Awards were also given to stellar graduates. Kimberly O’Shay Simpson (Clinton, S.C.) and Trina C. Winkler (Lenoir, N.C.) each received the Degree Completion Program Academic Award; Kaycee Myers (Gastonia, N.C.) was given the Senior Scholastic Achievement Award; and the 2015 Darlene J. Gravett Citizen Scholar Award was presented to Sara Nicole Arndt (Greer, S.C.) for her doctoral dissertation “The Perception of Gendered Participation in a Whole-Class English Discussion: A Mixed-Methods Case Study.”

Commencement speakers were Cynthia Brown Stiltner of Danbury, N.C., who earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice/Human Services through the Degree Completion Program. Also providing words of wisdom for graduates was Rodney Lee Alderman of Galax, Va., who earned a Doctor of Education.

“While we may never know why we make the choices we do, we must all understand that God has a plan for everything,” Stiltner shared. “There are no words to describe the impact that my instructors had on my life. I will forever be grateful to the GWU faculty for supporting, pushing, and encouraging me to reach my goals.”

Alderman agreed. “I am thankful to have graduated from a university that has such high standards for its students and pushed me to not accept less than excellence,” he offered. “We chose this university because we felt a personal connection to the mission and goals, and we subscribed to the policy of becoming lifelong learners with a desire to use our service and leadership for the benefit of others. As we prepare to face new and exciting challenges in our lives, let us remember that we have the power to overcome adversity—with the help of God and through a spirit of friendship and cooperation with our fellow colleagues and with the Gardner-Webb University community.”

Five Gardner-Webb graduates became the University’s first-ever alumni of the Brinkley Financial Group Master of Wealth and Trust Management Program during the summer ceremony.

The program, named in appreciation of a founding gift by David and Marie Brinkley of Kings Mountain, N.C., began in fall 2013 at the University’s Charlotte Center as only the nation’s second master’s degree in wealth and trust management. “For any new program, your first graduating class is a milestone,” offered Dr. Van Graham, acting dean of the GWU Godbold School of Business. “That’s when you know what you’re doing is viable, that you’re serving students and that there’s something established for the students behind those first graduates.”



University Honors Faculty and Staff Members



Russ Gribble



Barry Johnson



Susan Manahan



Lou Ann Scates

Gardner-Webb University honored outstanding faculty and staff members on May 1 during the annual “Apples and Accolades” program. Dr. Joseph Webb, professor of Communication & New Media and a faculty member since 2007, was recognized with the 2015 Excellence in Teaching Award. “He entertains and inspires his students with detailed descriptions and imaginative lectures,” said GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner. “A colleague described him as ‘one of the most engaging professors I’ve had the pleasure to watch. He is always well-prepared and delivers his message in a most intriguing way. The students respond to him enthusiastically.’”

Also honored for excellence in teaching was Russ Gribble. He received the teaching award for Adjunct Professor of the Year for his leadership role in American Sign Language courses.

Staff Member of the Year Awards were presented to Cindy Wallace, Barry Johnson and Mike Roebuck (posthumously), who were nominated by colleagues for their work for the University community and its students.

Roebuck worked for more than two decades at Gardner-Webb in financial aid and then as assistant athletic director for academic services, where he served as a liaison between student-athletes, faculty and staff members. He passed away in March. “He understood his most important goal was to help student-athletes excel in the classroom and ultimately earn a degree,” Bonner shared. “As one nominator stated, ‘His dedication, love, concern, expertise, creativity, and enthusiasm were the tools he used to get the most out of every single student. He wanted to do all that he could to help them be successful.’”

Johnson has served as chief of Gardner-Webb University Police since 2000. “He manages to be a compassionate and comforting presence, even while holding students accountable for their actions, which is sometimes a difficult balance to strike,” Bonner offered. “For nearly 20 years, he has put the needs of the students first and has provided essential leadership in managing a variety of challenging situations.”

Wallace came to Gardner-Webb in 1994 and now serves as director of counseling services. “Her care and concern for others goes before her each day,” Bonner said. “Her colleagues have witnessed her steadfast commitment to those around her, both in her professional and personal life. Across the University campus and even beyond it, she has garnered a positive reputation as one who exemplifies service, collaboration and teamwork.”

Community engagement awards were presented to Susan Manahan, assistant professor of biology and director of service learning, and Dr. John Karriker, associate dean for Degree Completion Program regional management.



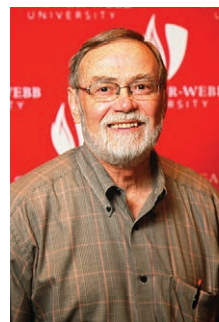
Dr. Joseph Webb



Mike Roebuck



Cindy Wallace



Dr. John Karriker

GWU employees were also recognized for their tenures of service to the University. Lou Ann Scates, Gardner-Webb’s registrar, was honored for 30 years of service.

Awards for 25 years of service were presented to:

David M. Carscaddon

Ralph W. (Scoot) Dixon Jr.

Tammy C. Hoyle

James C. Johnson

Wayne E. Johnson Jr.

Audrey M. Sloan

David K. Yelton

Awards for 10 years of service were presented to:

Suzanne H. Bonner

Cary L. Caldwell

Joe W. Collins

Karen C. Ferree

Jeffrey M. Hartman

M. Lynn Hicks

Deborah T. Hill

Steven G. Johnson

John M. Karriker

Natetsa M. Lawrence

David W. Morrow

Summer G. Nance

Elizabeth M. Pack

Shannon P. Pruett

Pamela L. Skinner

Rebecca L. Toney

Deborah M. Ware

Teresa White

Retirement awards were presented to April Harrill (not pictured), Ralph W. (Scoot) Dixon Jr., Oscar Zamora, and Harrison Williams.



Ralph W. (Scoot) Dixon Jr.



Oscar Zamora



Harrison Williams

GWU Athletics Administrator Honored for Service to Community

Pam Scruggs, associate athletics director and senior women’s administrator at Gardner-Webb, was recognized in April with the Paris Yelton Memorial Award at the Cleveland County (N.C.) Sports Hall of Fame Banquet in Shelby.

The award, first presented in 1987, recognizes individuals who have given distinguished service in many ways to the sports life of the community, beyond the field of competition. Given each year by Bob Yelton, in memory of his father, the award has recognized many leaders and supporters of Gardner-Webb.

“It’s a privilege to be on a list with so many wonderful people,” Scruggs offered. “I was completely humbled and overwhelmed to be honored in the same category as individuals I’ve admired for many years.”

Scruggs, who grew up in the Boiling Springs area, joined Gardner-Webb in 1980 as administrative assistant to GWU Athletics Director Dan Moore. She went on to serve as an assistant director in the cafeteria before returning to athletics and receiving promotions to assistant athletic director and then associate athletic director in the early 1990s. In her role as senior women’s administrator, she helps provide guidance and mentoring to the University’s female athletes.

In 2009, she was recognized with the Gardner-Webb Athletics Hall of Fame Emeritus Service Award.

“I’ve received so many wonderful opportunities at Gardner-Webb,” Scruggs shared. “I’ve stayed at Gardner-Webb all these years because of the people. It’s such a wonderful family atmosphere.”



Pam Scruggs

CAREERS START *here*

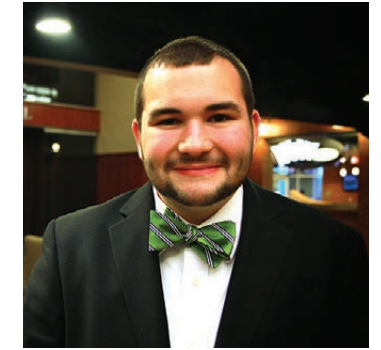


THE RIGHT MAJOR



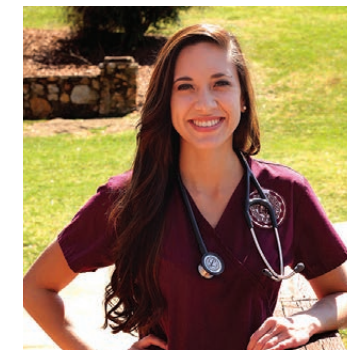
Erica McCray ('15) found her path to Exercise Science through guided exploration of career fields and ongoing mentorship.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS



Zachary Parker ('14) prepared for life and work after college by participating in professional image events that taught him how to showcase his skillset to potential employers.

A POST-COLLEGE JOB



Ashley Goins ('15) prepared for her career in Nursing at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center by working a summer job at the Winston-Salem (N.C.) hospital and receiving one-on-one career counseling.

HIGHER EDUCATION



Anna Honea ('15) improved her graduate school applications and essays, and was accepted into the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine, where she plans to complete doctorate work.



RESOURCES AFTER GRADUATION

Jim Crews ('15) improved his professional portfolio and received support for decisions about how to navigate his career path.

The Gardner-Webb Center for Career Development will work for you, too. Call 704-406-2077 or visit gardner-webb.edu/career-development.



GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY
CENTER for CAREER DEVELOPMENT



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CHARTING A NEW COURSE

The Importance of Maintaining Quality Programs in Traditional and Online Environments

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll



Developing online courses that maintain a standard of excellence typically shaped by instructors throughout years of face-to-face, classroom delivery is a challenging task for both university administrators and faculty members. Yet, holding on to traditional delivery alone does not appear to be a viable long-term option for most institutions of higher education. According to *The Economist*, significant financial changes are forcing middle-tier colleges and universities to seriously consider entering the online environment, or face the threat of being replaced by online courses at competing institutions.

“Students at universities below Ivy League level are more sensitive to the rising cost of degrees, because the return on investment is smaller,” *The Economist* reported in 2015. “Those colleges might profit from expanding the ratio of online learning to classroom teaching, lowering their costs while still offering the prize of a college education conducted partly on campus.”

Gardner-Webb University entered the online classroom environment during the 1999-2000 academic year, totaling nearly 950 course hours completed. Over the past 15 years, that number has grown nearly 40 times to over 37,000 online or hybrid course hours completed in the 2014-2015 year. No matter the institution, a driving concern remains consistent within the realm of higher education: how to ensure quality in face-to-face, hybrid and online formats simultaneously.

“At Gardner-Webb, assessing the quality of learning that takes place in all modes of delivery is not a peripheral concern. It’s at the top of the list,” GWU Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. Ben Leslie declared. “Our faculty are actively engaged in strategies not just to improve the effectiveness of what they’re doing in the classroom, but at an even more fundamental level, they’re developing strategies just to better understand what kind of learning is really taking place. It’s about far more than simply assigning grades.”



Dr. Janet Land

“As an instructor, I’m thrilled to meet and work with strong, intelligent, motivated students,” she shared. “Many professors fear the loss of community in online courses. Fortunately, I’ve learned that it is more than possible to maintain those interactions.”

Dr. Janet Land is a professor of English at GWU and she also serves as the director for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Through her work with CETL, she has noted a variety of opportunities and challenges as courses evolve from primarily face-to-face delivery into online or web-enhanced, hybrid versions.



In 2014, the GWU Department of English transitioned the Master of Arts in English program from a seated, classroom environment into a fully online delivery. Dr. Jennifer Buckner, assistant professor of English, serves as an advisor and instructor in the program, and understands the appeal of online options for students.

“We live in a world that grows increasingly flat with each new technology, no longer limited by geography or traditional workday schedules,” she offered. “Online learning provides more flexibility for individuals whose schedules, locations, or personal lives don’t permit them to sit in traditional classrooms. I feel like I know my advisees personally. When I started, I was afraid that I wouldn’t really know the students in our program. I’ve been fortunate to work with them closely, and I consider them as individually recognized as any of our on-campus students.”

To help ensure that Gardner-Webb is delivering the very best in online courses, the University has partnered with Quality Matters (QM), an organization that uses a peer review approach to assure quality in online classes and provides professional development for faculty members who teach Internet-delivered courses. Recently, two online courses authored by Gardner-Webb University faculty members earned QM national recognition. Dr. Sydney Brown and Dr. Jennifer Putnam designed the course “EDCI 700: Theory

Development” as part of the GWU School of Education’s Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction program; Dr. Tracy Arnold developed “NURS 600: The Nurse Educator” as part of the Hunt School of Nursing’s Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program.

“The QM standards incorporate a relational component into the courses, so we’ve been very intentional in the way we’ve done that,” Brown explained. “It’s the opposite of limiting in

terms of what we can bring to class. We are able to rely on the knowledge and expertise of our candidates in a lot of ways, and we are able to bring in the knowledge and expertise of people in the field that we would not necessarily get to do in a face-to-face environment.”

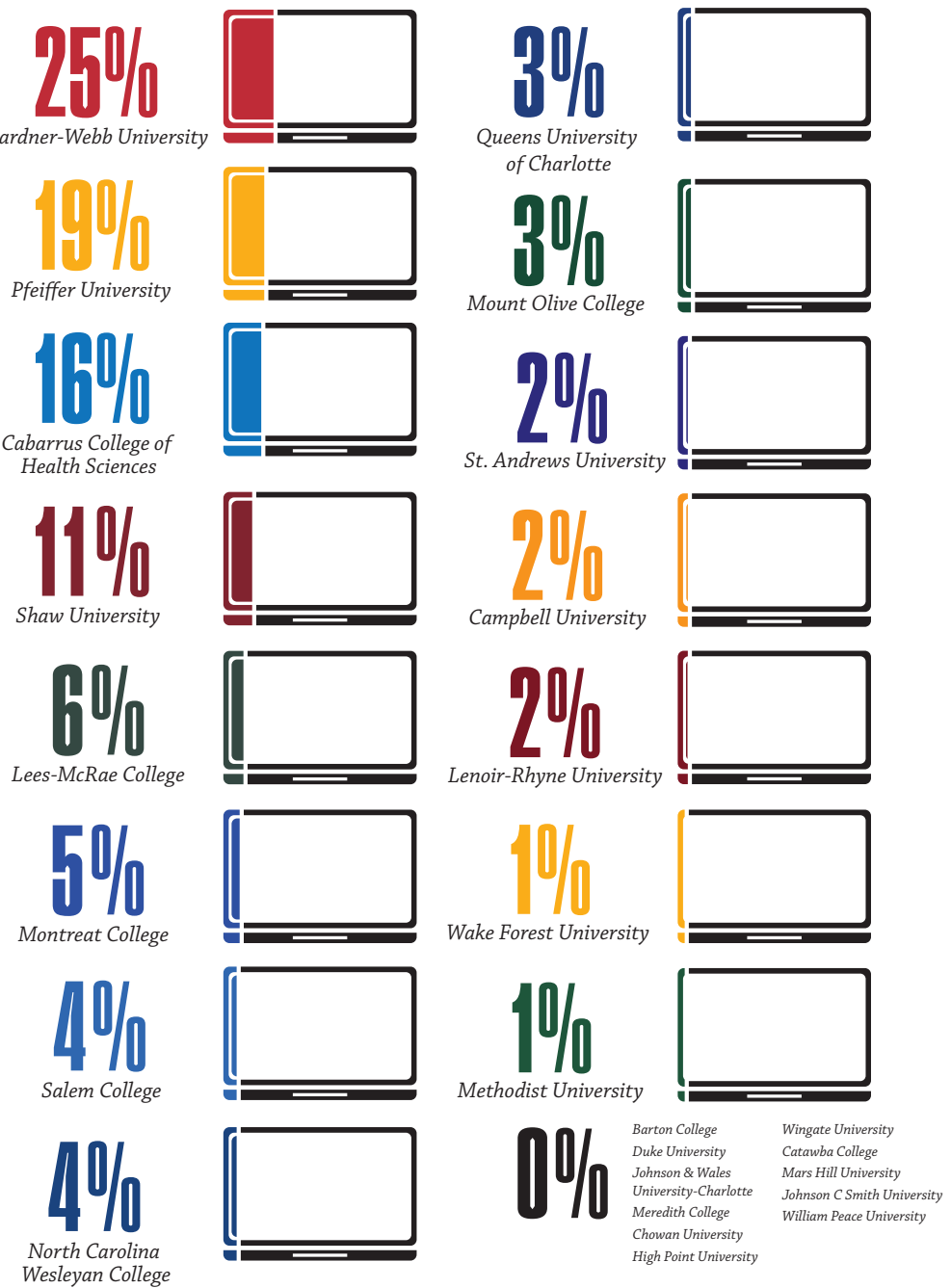
Perhaps the important element to note is that there are benefits and drawbacks to a variety of learning environments. Simply put, face-to-face, hybrid, and online modalities aren’t meant to be identical.

“Face-to-face classrooms have a different personae than online learning,” Buckner shared. “Online learning is, perhaps, more structured simply because it has to be in order to provide clarity and navigation for students who don’t have a professor there to answer instant questions. Face-to-face classes provide a more spontaneous, real time response in the learning process. Though, I would argue that responsive professors can still exhibit those characteristics online, such as humor and spontaneity, using a range of media for content delivery.”

As Gardner-Webb continues to lead the way in online learning among private institutions in North Carolina (see graphic on this page), administrators and faculty members remain committed to providing the very best in quality and value.

“Some have speculated that the pure face-to-face class may soon be a thing of the past as the ubiquity of the Internet means that almost all classes are evolving toward some form of blended learning,” Leslie reflected. “Gardner-Webb was part of the first wave of universities experimenting with online learning in the early 2000s, and we have certainly learned a lot. But most importantly, we’ve learned how critical it is to keep up with what’s going on in a rapidly-changing field, to pay attention to innovation, to focus on the needs of the online student, and to ensure that our online faculty have the resources and support they need to excel.”

Percent of NCICU (North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities) students enrolled exclusively in distance education
* courses in 2013-2014



Source: IPEDS**

*Distance education – Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously.

**The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is the core postsecondary education data collection program for the National Center for Education Statistics, a part of the Institute for Education Sciences within the United States Department of Education.



IMMIGRATION PROCLAMATION

Former Brazilian Banker Finds Growth, Opportunities in America, Gardner-Webb

Written by Matt Renfer

For 30 years, Antonio Duarte worked as a successful banker in Brazil. He was thriving in his career, furthering his education and teaching business on the side. Still, something was missing.

“My wife always dreamt of coming to the United States,” Duarte said. “She begged me for about 20 years to move here. I said, ‘No way. I’m comfortable here teaching and banking.’”

His sentiment changed dramatically when a gang of criminals broke into his home to gain access to the bank’s safe, kidnapping him and his family for several hours.

“They sent the youngest to kill me,” Duarte said. “In Brazil, if you shoot someone while under 16 years of age, you don’t go to jail. You go to a children’s jail. In there, you can escape very easily. This young man could have shot me in front of my children like a dog. God preserved my life that night. It was a turning point. I said ‘I must get out of this business.’”

With newfound conviction, Duarte left the financial world to move with his wife and three children to America, where he strengthened his English-speaking skills and began to earn a master’s degree in divinity at Gardner-Webb.

Soon after arriving, he found himself in yet another life-altering transition at 56 years old. “I always said that I would never be a pastor. When I came to divinity school, I thought I would work on the business side of things. I said, ‘Lord, maybe this can wait until I graduate, because I want to serve in finance. I’m good in finance.’ But serving God is not about what you can do. Pleasing God means obedience, nothing else. Working in finance was not God’s plan, and I always prayed that I would not go to the grave without fulfilling God’s will for my life.”

Today, Duarte is pastor of a Hispanic ministry in Gaffney, S.C. For this role, he had to learn to speak Spanish—a language both similar to and different from his native Portuguese—after having just learned English.

“The people I serve make about \$10 an hour, and usually only one of them in a large family works,” Duarte explained. “As a pastor, I try to live in a very frugal way. I live with the money God gave me, and when I’m in need, I pray, and we manage to finish the month. When I graduate from Gardner-Webb, I will continue to pastor the congregation.”

Duarte, who earned a master’s in business while in Brazil, is set to graduate in May 2016 with a Master of Divinity from Gardner-Webb. He also works as a graduate assistant in the school of business, providing income to pay for his oldest daughter’s college education. “I am most grateful for the people of Gardner-Webb,” Duarte said.

After living in America for four years, Duarte and his family are purchasing their first home in Gaffney. Raised in a populated Brazilian city, he has come to appreciate rural life in North Carolina.

“Psalm 68:20 says, ‘Our god is a God of salvation, and to God, the Lord, belongs escape from death.’ What is this if not God?” Duarte posed. “How can a foreigner come to a country like this and be given the opportunities I’ve been given? I have a new beginning. Everything is new. It’s a miracle.”



Seeing things in a Different Light

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll

At 12 years old, Nathan Buckner may not have realized the impact his family's move to China would have on his own future career goals. In the seventh grade, his mom, dad, and sister moved from their home in Clemmons, N.C., to Hong Kong where his father served as head of an international Christian school. His passion for global studies was kindled during those years, and his decision to attend Gardner-Webb University has offered even more opportunities for him to further develop his international inclinations.

Now a junior at GWU, Buckner is majoring in global studies and took advantage of an opportunity to complete an international internship over the summer while his parents were living in Bangladesh. Dr. Michael Kuchinsky, assistant professor of political science and Buckner's advisor, encouraged him to connect with World Vision Bangladesh (WVB), a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to the wellbeing of children, families and communities.

"It was a great opportunity for skill-building for Nathan, but also to give him insight on the new policy direction that this development community has to move towards," Kuchinsky reflected. "Every organization involved in international development has to be willing to see and process things differently."

Buckner emailed WVB and inquired about the possibility of a summer internship. "Dr. Kuchinsky and I initially decided it would be great for me to work towards an internship with an NGO (non-government organization)," he shared. "Bangladesh is a third-world country with tons of things going on. I knew it would be a really cool opportunity to see development first hand."

He was offered an internship position and spent the first couple of weeks in the national office, where he worked on research for the United Nations' "Sustainable Development Goals" for international development. "The new goals focus on resource management, population control, improving health care,

maternal health, disease, and other efforts," Buckner offered. "One of the main things I saw were the 'Millennium Development Goals,' which were established about 20



years ago by the United Nations to help improve maternal care, reduce diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria, increase primary education for children, reduce hunger, things like that."

After a few weeks in the office, he embarked on a weeklong trip to Pergande in the northwestern portion of Bangladesh near India. "I was able to work with a great area development program there, which is like tiny offices set up in each region," he explained. "I really got to see the needs of the individual communities. World Vision has helped get into these areas and offer proper training, for instance on hand washing and basic hygiene. The goal is that the development program can begin to focus on other important needs."

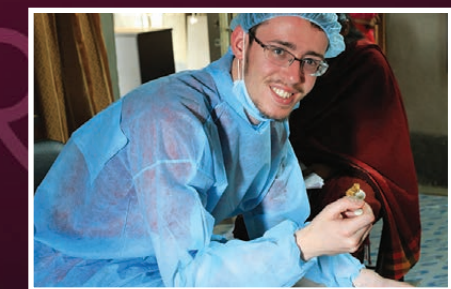
Because the economy is mostly agricultural, Buckner said children have not had as many educational opportunities. "You hear about it all the time, but it just breaks your heart to see



12-year-olds who chop wood all day to earn a dollar," he said. "World Vision has helped set up schools in these areas to give basic education to the children. One of the kids I met couldn't read when he was 10 years old. Through help with World Vision, he has school supplies, books, and is reading on a second or third grade level. He is 13 now, so it's not perfect, but it's way better than it was."

Buckner is considering work with another NGO next summer, perhaps in China, since his family is back in Hong Kong now. "It was a really eye-opening experience. I had no idea just how NGOs worked and how they help communities," he offered. "People go to these countries, gain trust, develop relationships, and really work with the citizens. They foster a bond and share the love of Christ. It was really helpful to see and a blessing to know that Christians all over the world are working together to help those who need it."

World Vision Bangladesh (WVB), a Christian humanitarian organization, is dedicated to the wellbeing of children, especially the most vulnerable children, their families and communities. It is committed to serve and partner with people



in need regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender and ability. At present, World Vision Bangladesh is serving around five million people including one million children under 31 districts.

BANGLADESH

Hallo! Ahoj! Üdvözlöm!
Bog! SALUT! Ciao! Cześć!

HELLO! Jambor!
VITAJTE SEMANO!
KON'NIGHIWA! Hej! i Hold!
YAH sahs! Ni Hao Svenska

CULTURE SHOCK

*International Students Share Their Native Traditions
With Local Children*

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll

Whether viewing photos, learning a native dance, or playing a steel drum for the first time, select elementary students from Cleveland County, N.C., have been exposed to a range of unique cultures and customs during events and activities involving Gardner-Webb University's Office of International Programs.

Local school children learned some inside information about several faraway countries from GWU International Programs representatives during a Cultural Awareness Day, held at Fallston Elementary (Fallston, N.C.) in spring 2015.

The daylong event—coordinated in part by GWU Assistant Director of International Programs Gail Peace—featured presentations by university international students Steve Jones of Great Britain, Ronia Hutterli of Switzerland, and Christal Ransome of Trinidad and Tobago. Chloe Boucquemont of France, a one-year teaching assistant in the Department of World Languages, also represented the University.



Left: Christal Ransome, Chloe Boucquemont, Steve Jones, and Ronia Hutterli



Boucquemont talking to students

"Many of our international students had never worked with children before that day," Peace shared.

"I think sometimes, upon arriving here in the States, they wonder, 'What do I have to offer?' This event helped them realize that what they have to offer is valuable and can be long-lasting."

Students in kindergarten through fourth grade took part in the event, which was organized by Rebecca Lane, the English as a Second Language Coordinator for Fallston Elementary, Casar Elementary, and Burns Middle schools. She began the day as a way to help students learn about and appreciate cultural differences among a variety of groups.

Catherine Frailey is a fourth-grade teacher at Fallston, and she thinks students benefit from participating in the awareness day in a variety of ways. "We can connect ideas we've read in both fiction and non-fiction to what we learn about a country during a presentation," Frailey explained. "For instance, we've talked about the lost colony, so when we saw Chloe's presentation, the kids realized it's real. It's not just what they've seen in a book."

Psychology major Ransome took advantage of an opportunity to showcase a steel drum during her presentation, and she encouraged the kids to get on their feet and dance to music that is common in Trinidad and Tobago. She gave the group high-fives when their time was up and thanked them for learning more about the land she calls home. Other presenters used photos, maps, and historical information arranged in a slide show to help students understand more about the cities and towns they are from.

"How many of you know what this is?" Boucquemont asked Frailey's fourth-graders as she pointed to a photo of a frog on the screen. The class raised their hands to answer. "And do you know what we do with frogs in France?" she continued. "We eat them! And they are quite good. I encourage you to try frog legs."

Lane, who is from New York, is planning additional awareness days to help demonstrate more about customs and practices among people from a variety of U.S. regions as well. Other events will "involve people from Alaska, New York, Illinois, and other locations," she reported. "There is so much we can learn from each other, and this is a great way to illustrate that for the students."

Peace agreed. "Many of the international students didn't know each other prior to the day at Fallston Elementary," she shared. "There was a real sense of being thrown into the deep end, and they swam together that day. They came away from the experience with a real sense of pride in being able to share something valuable with the local community."



Ransome with steel drum skills



To hear more about Gardner-Webb University's Office of International Programs, visit gardner-webb.edu/international.



"It was the best and the hardest week of my life," said one Gardner-Webb student of her spring break experience. Cassie Helms and Amanda Rymer were two of seven Gardner-Webb University students who participated in a life-changing mission trip to Honduras during their spring semester break.

In March 2015, Helms and Rymer joined GWU Associate Minister of Students Neal Payne and five other students to spend five days backpacking in the mountains of Honduras. As part of a partnership with Louder than Words Ministries, the goal of the trip was to bring the message of Christ to the remote villages of the Lenca people, some of whom had never even seen Americans before.

"I was really drawn to the idea that the emphasis of the trip was simply hiking and carrying the Gospel, nothing else," shared Payne. "Just getting to each village is as much the mission as what we do when we arrive at the village. The fact that we go through so much physically is probably more of a witness to the people than anything else."



Prior to their departure Cassie Helms, Amanda Rymer and the rest of the team (Amanda Collins, Natalie Green, Sarah Guynes, Lydia Hill, and Dee Lowery) had prepared both spiritually and mentally. They trained for the physical strain of the trip as they hiked outdoor trails and climbed football stadium bleachers with their loaded packs. However, nothing could have fully prepared them for the challenges they would encounter.



"Before I left, a friend wrote out scripture cards to serve as a source of encouragement for each day. As I carried my hiking pole in one hand and that day's scripture card in the other, I experienced the idea of clinging to scripture in a very real way," Helms explained. "When I felt discouraged or fatigued I would hold the card tighter, reminding myself of the promises of God written on them."

Each day, the team rose at 4:30 a.m. to get an early start on their hike in an effort to try to beat the heat. In order to reach a new village every evening, the team hiked up to five miles a day. For Helms, the journey didn't get easier as the days passed. The longer they were there, the tougher it was to push past the fatigue and stay motivated in their purpose.

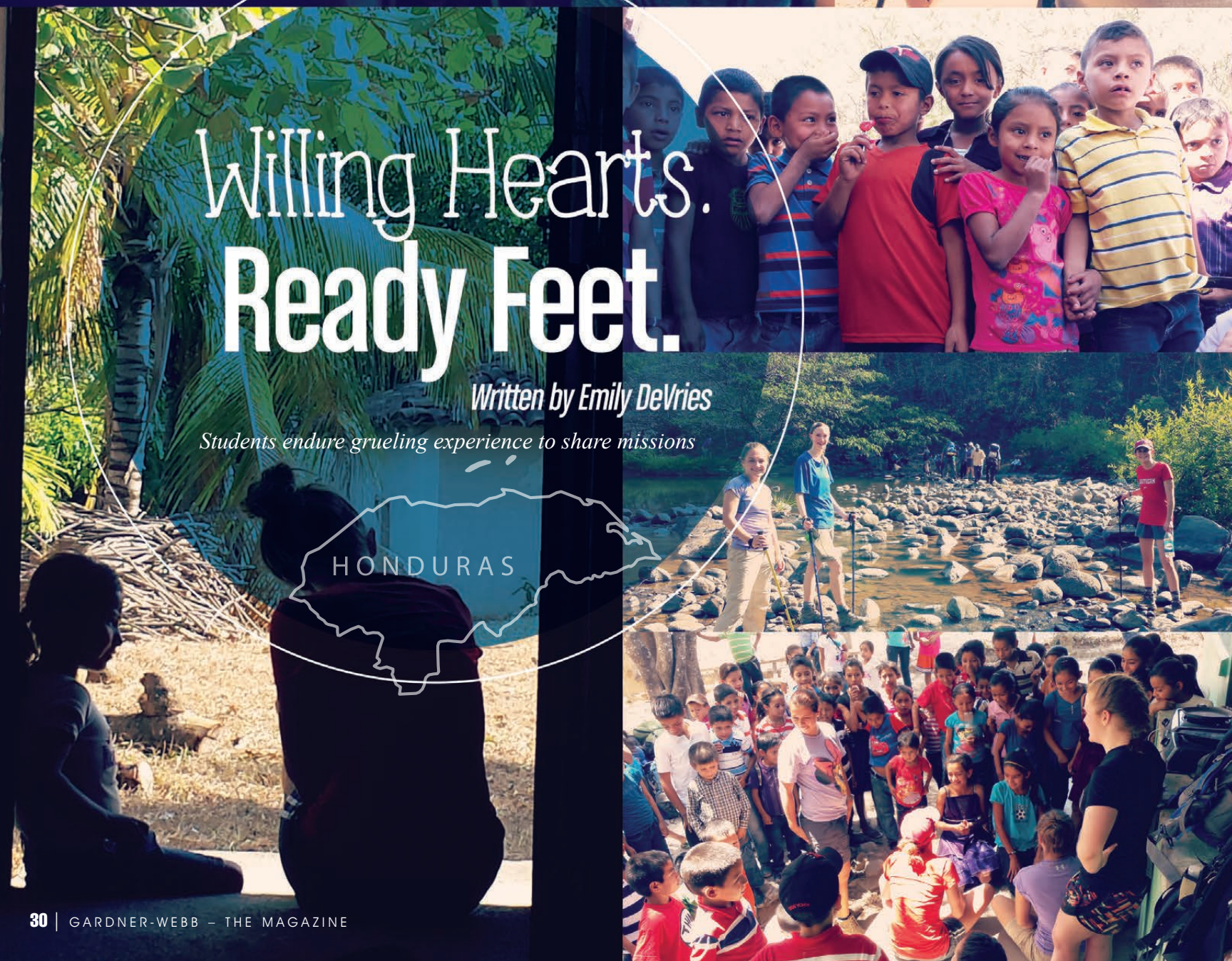
"On the fourth day of the trip we were hiking in weather of over 100 degrees without the slightest breeze and we were literally down on all fours using our hands to claw our way up," said Rymer. "For me, it was by far the toughest moment of the trip, but also the most rewarding as we reached the mountain's peak and in any direction you turned you could see out for miles. It was the most beautiful view of the trip."

During their time in the villages, they had the opportunity to teach English in one of the schools and to play many soccer games using balls they brought for the children. In the evenings, Helms, Rymer and their team shared music and sermons, as well as personal testimonies.

A special moment for Rymer came unexpectedly. "We ended up at a village we didn't intend on visiting," she recounted. "That evening a woman from the village was praying and she thanked God for the mountains, the stars and her American friends. It all reminded me of how small I am and how vast God is. The whole experience was incredibly humbling."

Despite the great difficulties the team faced, both girls describe their week as one filled with real-life examples of God's plan and provision. "It was a huge part of my time in Honduras," said Helms, "in everything from the strangers who loaned us their trucks to carry people up part of the mountain on the hardest hike, or a breeze coming from out of nowhere on a day deadened by dry heat."

Rymer agreed, "There was no plan, but everything happened just as it needed to."



Willing Hearts.
Ready Feet.

Written by Emily DeVries

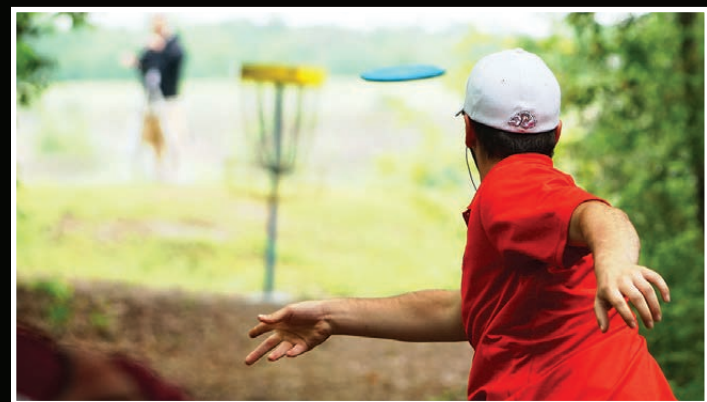
Students endure grueling experience to share missions

HONDURAS

The Spin Cycle

Gardner-Webb Students Participate in National Disc Golf Championships

By Matthew Tessnear



Gardner-Webb University has fielded a disc golf team for a little more than a year, but the program already holds a national championships appearance and an individual collegiate record.

The GWU team finished 38th in the 2015 National Collegiate Disc Golf Championships, ahead of schools like Clemson, Auburn, Texas A&M and Purdue. GWU team member Chase Richards set an individual collegiate distance record during the event, throwing a disc 620 feet, 6 inches.



“As a team, we were able to accomplish great things,” Richards shared. “Since it was our first year and first time at the national championship, our team hadn’t played together as much as some of the other teams we competed against. We just wanted to have a great time playing disc golf together, and we did. I never really realized how far I could throw a disc until now. It took a lot of practice.”

After participating in tournaments through the fall and spring, the GWU team advanced through a national qualifier to reach the championships in North Augusta, S.C., on April 15-18. The national tournament offered stiff competition from schools like eventual champion Ferris State (Big Rapids, Mich.) and difficult weather conditions during a week of heavy wind and rain.

Players hope their first-year success will raise awareness, said Heredia, a graduate student who is working toward a Master of Divinity degree.

“One of our mottos in disc golf is ‘Grow the Sport,’” Michael Heredia revealed. “Disc golf has grown tremendously in the time it has existed, and the next step at Gardner-Webb is finding more people who are excited about competing at the collegiate level. When all of the current team members leave, I would love to come back and see a disc golf team thriving. We’re on course to do that.”



Men’s Sports:

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Wrestling

Women’s Sports:

- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Volleyball

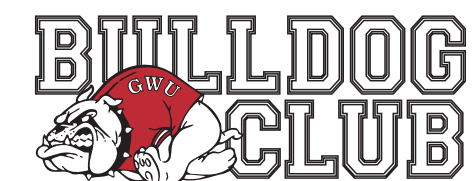
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LEADING SCORERS

GWU Athletes Post Highest Cumulative GPAs in Big South Conference, Receive Prestigious Award

Written by Matthew Tessnear

Gardner-Webb athletes Charity Byrum, Heather Feldman and Matt Yelverton finished their collegiate careers as the Big South Conference’s top performers—in academics.

All three received the prestigious George A. Christenberry Award, which is named for a conference co-founder and annually honors the male and female student-athletes who attain the highest cumulative grade point averages (GPA) in their sports.

Byrum, Feldman and Yelverton each posted perfect 4.0 career GPAs at Gardner-Webb upon graduating in May 2015, and all three shared that the University enabled them to build strong teams of God, family, friends, and coaches to help achieve their goals in academics, athletics, and career preparation.

Charity Byrum
Hometown: Winston-Salem, N.C.
Academic Degree: Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science
Sport: Swimming

Now enrolled in what she described as an “intense” Occupational Therapy graduate degree program, Charity Byrum credited Gardner-Webb with preparing her to manage a busy life schedule.

The four-time Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association (CCSA) All-Academic Team member made deep scholastic enrichment a major part of her undergraduate career, in addition to her success in the pool as a seven-time all-CCSA athlete.

“I participated in independent study research with Dr. Jeff Hartman in Exercise Science and created a laboratory teaching assistant position as a practicum with Dr. David Granniss,” she offered. “I also had the privilege of competing academically through the Alpha Chi honor society with Dr. June Hobbs. These experiences are unique to the Gardner-Webb community and allowed me to go beyond the mastery of a textbook to truly succeed.”

Relationships with faculty and staff members also allowed Byrum, a GWU Most Outstanding Female Graduate, to manage her time and succeed in all phases of college life.

“Gardner-Webb allowed me to grow as a whole person, in my academics, in the pool, and in my faith,” she reflected. “Through every experience and challenge, I was encouraged to turn to Christ for my strength, and I think that is what made the difference in my education and success.”



Heather Feldman
Hometown: Eden, N.Y.
Academic Degree: Bachelor of Arts in Music
Sport: Volleyball

Community support propelled Heather Feldman as she pursued excellence in the music department and on the volleyball court during her baccalaureate career at Gardner-Webb. A GWU Senior Scholastic Award recipient, she also ranks 11th all time in the Big South in career volleyball assists.

“I always had a large community in my corner, both on campus and off campus, pushing me to do the best I could in the classroom and on the court,” she said. “My coaches and teammates gave me a family away from home. And the music department faculty and staff were unbelievably accommodating to my hectic athletic schedule.”

As she seeks a job in the music industry with a dream to perform on Broadway, she hopes that her success will encourage other student-athletes to work hard in the classroom as well.

“It means a lot that the Big South Conference places a lot of value into not only an athlete’s accomplishments in sports but also in the classroom,” Feldman expressed. “I learned many lessons at Gardner-Webb, like perseverance and loyalty, and I am honored and excited to be taking the Gardner-Webb name out into the world.”



Matt Yelverton
Hometown: Weddington, N.C.
Academic Degree: Bachelor of Science in Biology
Sport: Golf

Golf helped provide Matt Yelverton a course on which to pursue a college undergraduate education, and the sport’s Big South Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Year plans to continue his academic pursuits in Gardner-Webb’s Physician Assistant Studies program.

Also a GWU Senior Scholastic Award recipient, Yelverton spent numerous hours on the golf course in middle and high school, in hopes of preparing himself to play for a college team.

After that dream became a reality, he said his collegiate student-athlete experience was nerve-racking at times but ultimately rewarding. He shared that time management, often completing assignments ahead of time, and strong relationships with accessible faculty members were huge factors in his ability to succeed on the course and in the classroom.

“Being able to go to class and actually get to know your professors goes a long way in effectively learning the course material,” Yelverton assessed. “Additionally, because Gardner-Webb is a Christian university, I was constantly in an atmosphere that encouraged me to grow in my faith. I experienced a number of challenges in my four years as an undergraduate student, but my faith allowed me to press on and lean on God, which had a tremendous impact on my academic and athletic successes. Taking on the responsibilities of being a student-athlete allowed me to mature into the man I have become.”



Scenic Impressions

"You may not be the biggest raindrop falling from the sky, but you sure know how to make a splash." – actor/director Robert Douglas



Living Water

Standout Student, Swimmer Connor Bos Finds Ultimate Success Through Faith

Written by Matthew Tessnear

Before the sun sends rays through the glass surrounding Gardner-Webb's Bost Pool, Connor Bos backstrokes through the water. His 5 a.m. practices several times each week are often followed by weight-lifting sessions and studying, all before he attends his first class of the day.

The GWU junior's constant work in the pool has already helped him shine in two years of collegiate swimming. He won a Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association (CCSA) championship in the 100 backstroke earlier this year, and he followed with intense training toward goals



of making the U.S. Olympic Trials and the NCAA Division I nationals.

At best, swimming comes third in priorities for Bos, who puts more emphasis on his academics and utmost importance on his walk with Christ. Gardner-Webb, Bos shared, has helped him balance and correctly order what matters most in his life, now and into the future.

“When my dad saw me halfway through my freshman year at Gardner-Webb, he said, ‘Your faith and spiritual walk with Christ have taken off,’” Bos remembered. “Having professors, coaches and teammates of the Christian faith around me all the time, those positive influences and discipleship mentors who get involved in my life, has been a major victory in itself.”

In addition to deepening his spiritual focus, faculty and staff members at the University have allowed Bos to excel in his studies while also succeeding in the pool.

“I’ve had professors record lectures for me to watch later and allow me to take tests and quizzes early so I don’t have to worry about learning the material or my grades when I’m away from campus for a meet,” he revealed. “That’s been a big help to me, and I’ve seen professors extend the same opportunities to other athletes time and time again. If you take the initiative, your professors will go out of their way to help you at Gardner-Webb.”

In the Godbold School of Business, faculty members often take students beyond the classroom to teach and offer workplace readiness skills. Bos credits business school professor Dr. Anthony Negbenebor with providing immense opportunities for career preparation

through networking with GWU alumni who now work for companies like BMW, Walmart and Duke Energy. Other mentors have allowed him to apply knowledge within reality-based learning exercises such as designing an iPhone case company and conducting a study on the impact a student’s soda choice has on their GPA.

“Gardner-Webb makes a point to use everyday situations to give you the practice for the real world,” Bos assessed. “And Coach (Mike) Simpson encourages our career preparation with the mentality that we are great students who are also a great swim team. You are a student first and an athlete second at Gardner-Webb. Coach tells us we won’t be in the pool 20 years from now, but we will be working jobs and providing for our families. Having those reminders has played a role in my performance in the classroom.”

Throughout the day, Bos finds times to focus on scholastics outside the classroom, too. Lunch and dinner often come with a side of books, and he finds pockets of time for studying throughout every part of his busy schedule as a student-athlete. His focus on his academic growth has led to a 4.0 GPA toward a major in both business finance and administration, a career path inspired by his father, Jim, who worked his own way up the ranks to take charge of global purchasing for a technology and industrial company.

For Bos, family has been a major guideline for his pathway in life. His sister’s college swimming career at Auburn University in Alabama led to his connection with Simpson and the Gardner-Webb program. His mother was also a high school swimmer, and she encouraged him that he could succeed at a college nearly 800 miles from his hometown of Holland, Mich., a place Bos described as a Christian community with many residents who give back to others.

Bos hopes that his success in the classroom and in the pool can help him give back to the Gardner-Webb family that has helped him grow.

“People should know about Gardner-Webb,” he asserted. “One way to help share the message is to attend big swim meets, put on the Gardner-Webb swim cap and let other people see it. That’s a major way to recruit. It’s also a way to say thank you to the University for what it has done for me and a way to bring glory to God for what He has done for me.”

Bos recalled a T-shirt he received his freshman year at Gardner-Webb. It read, “Swimming for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

As the sun sets on days punctuated by afternoon swimming practice and additional time studying, Bos said his spiritual focus determines his success, regardless of his performance in the classroom or the water.

“If I learn nothing and do nothing faster in the pool, I’m OK with knowing that my faith in Jesus Christ has grown dramatically at Gardner-Webb,” he reflected. “From here, it’s about where Christ wants to lead me. His plan is there, and He will help me execute it. Having a positive, uplifting environment and seeing Christ in all relationships is why I believe there’s so much success at Gardner-Webb. An increased walk with the Lord: That’s the biggest victory for all of us.”



Hear more about Connor Bos and what it’s like to be a GWU student-athlete at gardner-webb.edu/student-athlete

The Apollo 13 Saturn V lifts off from Launch Pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center on April 11, 1970.

DIVINE NEGOTIATIONS

GWU Professor Discusses his Role in Apollo 13 Rescue Mission

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll

He remembers the fateful day as if it were yesterday. It was April 1970, and he had arrived at work in Huntsville, Ala., as usual. Then, he heard the words that sent chills up his spine as someone ran into the room and exclaimed, “Hey! They’re in trouble!”



Dr. Tom Meaders

Dr. Tom Meaders is now a professor in the Gardner-Webb University Godbold School of Business. Prior to his career in higher education, he worked for more than 33 years as an industrial engineer for IBM. For 22 of those years, he served in IBM’s space program. He and his team programmed the software for the Saturn V rocket’s navigation system.

The rocket served as the vehicle of choice for nearly all of NASA’s Apollo moon missions, including the nearly-disastrous Apollo 13 lunar landing mission that launched on April 11, 1970, and involved three crew members: astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert, and Fred Haise.

“NASA was running the [space] program, but they contracted everyone else—including IBM—to do the work,” Meaders explained. “When Apollo 13 happened, Apollo 11 had landed, Apollo 12 had done wonderfully. Everybody expected Apollo 13 to be wonderful. Nobody ever thought anything could go wrong because we just had string after string of flawless flights. It had become routine.”



Mission Operations Control Room during the Apollo 13 flight

The mission became everything but routine two days after its April 11 launch. Set to land on the moon to explore the Fra Mauro highlands, the lunar landing was aborted after an oxygen tank exploded on April 13. The explosion crippled the Service Module, upon which the Command Module—and the mission’s three astronauts—depended. Several unique and life-threatening events ensued.

“Space is very unforgiving. If anything the least bit wrong happens you could have a catastrophe,” Meaders shared. “And that’s what happened on Apollo 13.”

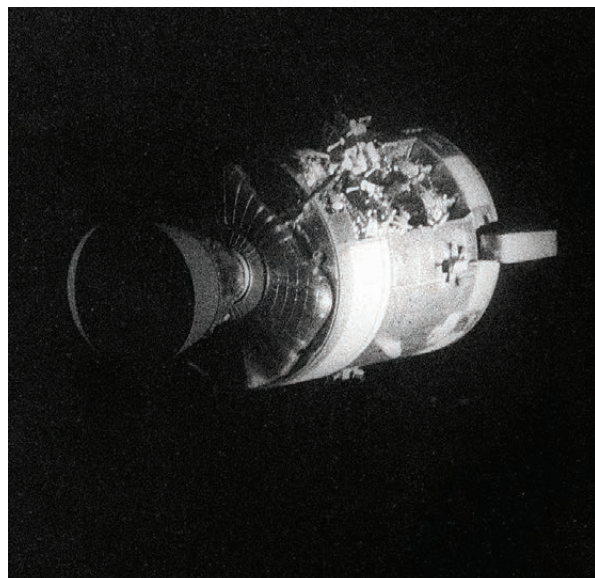
He recalled his work environment on the morning on April 13, 1970. “I remember I was just going in and somebody came and hollered, ‘Hey! They’re in trouble!’” he offered. “We immediately gathered together and were wondering what the heck was going to happen when they [NASA teams in Houston] sort it

“Space is very unforgiving.”

out and realize that these guys are coasting to the moon and they have no more rocket engine that works for them on that service module. That’s all gone. All the fuel has leaked out and it’s gone. They can’t do anything.”

Not long after those conversations of concern, Meaders said IBM received a call from Houston. “They said, ‘We’re dividing up the problems and we’re putting together a team of you software people who wrote the programs for all of these pieces of equipment and ultimately we need to figure out how to use the lunar module’s rocket engines to bring them home,’” he recollected. “Nobody had ever thought about doing that. And oh, by the way, ‘you have to fire when you’re behind the moon,’ which was two and a half days away.”

For the team, the task seemed nearly insurmountable. Normally the software programs took a minimum of six months to test for accuracy. This time, the team had only a matter of days. Because the lunar module and the service module would need to stay together instead of separate as initially planned, the combined weight of the vehicles would throw their initial navigation system trajectory program off track, resulting in the need for a new trajectory program so that the craft could successfully re-enter the earth’s atmosphere.



Damage to the service module after an oxygen tank explosion on the Apollo 13 mission

Any mistakes in the new program code could cost the astronauts their lives. The software teams would need to work quickly, testing trajectories and trying to find the code that placed the craft in the right place for re-entry.

“There was no forgiving. If you miss that deadline, you’ve got to negotiate with God,” Meaders shared. “They would have to send up any software changes to the lunar module computer before it went behind the moon. At that time, computers were primitive and massive. They had a memory of only about 150 kilobytes. It took 20 minutes to run one trajectory program. You don’t just run it and get an answer. You run it and if it doesn’t meet the objectives, you look at how can we tweak and change things.”

Meaders said the process of coding was different in the late 1960s. “There was no computer science at the time,” he reported. “You were a mathematician who did numerical methods and you took assembly language and numerical analysis and then you became a person who wrote scientific software, which is what we were doing.”

Incredibly, within about a day and a half, the teams tested a trajectory program that worked. Next, four different teams in various locations tested the program, and they all got the same answer. “We knew this was the best we could do,” he said, “and we had to go with it.” He attributes the fortune of a quick and correct programming answer to the constant prayers that were being offered for the safe return of the mission.



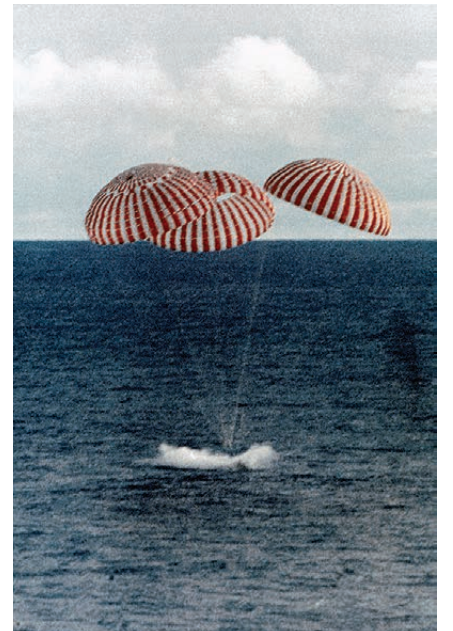
The crewmembers of Apollo 13, from left, Fred Haise, Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert, step aboard the USS Iwo Jima following splashdown and recovery operations in the south Pacific Ocean on April 17, 1970

they could watch the mission’s live video feed from NASA. “When I came home, I’d been up over 100 hours straight,” he reflected. “It took a while to unwind.”

On April 17, 1970, after six days in space, the crew of the Apollo 13 returned safely to earth. The 1995 film *Apollo 13*, directed by Ron Howard and starring Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, Bill Paxton, Gary Sinise, and Ed Harris, chronicled several of the dangers that had to be navigated in order to save the crew and bring them home.

These days, Meaders reviews his experiences as an industrial engineer with Gardner-Webb University business students. He teaches information systems courses and shares his knowledge about the space program in the classroom environment. He believes students benefit richly from instructors who can connect business principles with real-world experiences.

“I think it’s a wonderful thing for people who have been successful in business to transition to higher education and teach what they know,” he offered. “And the Godbold School of Business is full of people like that. It’s the best second career a person could have.”



Apollo 13 splashes down after successfully coming back to Earth on April 17, 1970

“Most of the people on the rescue teams were devout Christians,” he reflected. “There were lots of prayer groups going on and we prayed whenever we got a break. I actually think God was part of the team. When I think about how many changes were made to get Apollo 13 back, especially in the software area, there is no doubt in my mind.”

Meaders continued, “Nobody found any errors in the changes that were made in the reprogramming of the lunar module, and that is unheard of in software programming. All of the coding went in clean the first time, meaning it did not have to be retransmitted to the craft’s computer several times. People often do not appreciate—or are quick to forget—how important it is having God on your side in any sort of critical situation.”

Once the code was successfully transmitted, the teams were free to leave. But Meaders said they were fully invested in seeing whether their efforts would pay off. He and others went home to shower and change clothes, but quickly returned to IBM where



Listen to the full [WGWG.org](https://www.gardner-webb.edu/NASA) interview with Dr. Tom Meaders at [gardner-webb.edu/NASA](https://www.gardner-webb.edu/NASA)

TWO RHODES DIVERGED

AFTER CHOOSING RIGHT PATH, GWU STAFF MEMBER, ALUM
KEITH RHODES COACHES OTHERS IN BASKETBALL AND IN LIFE

WRITTEN BY MATTHEW TESSNEAR

Keith Rhodes remembers sitting at the back of the class.

He recalls slouching deep into his seat, following an example of a friend and teammate, to avoid the teacher. His schoolwork and grades were slipping, too.

At the time, he was a middle school student who lived in a single-parent home in an impoverished neighborhood in the Boiling Springs, N.C., community.

Then things sharply changed.

“God came to me one night and said, ‘You’ve got to make a change, son,’” Rhodes recounts. “There are two roads you can go down—a road where you can fail and possibly end up in jail, or a road where you can be successful, educated and help others.’ I know that all came from my family praying for me.”

Rhodes chose to move to the front of his classroom and suggested to his friend that they challenge each other to make good grades. While his friend thought he was joking that day and eventually ended up in prison, Rhodes shares that he decided to make his own life about finding ways to pass along the encouragement he found to others.



Keith Rhodes
with the Carolina
Panthers’ Sir Purr

“My whole purpose is to give back to the community,” he offers. “If I can find a way to help someone else, I’m going to do it.”

Rhodes incorporates mentoring into every facet of his life. He credits his family—his mother Janade as a church choir director, one grandfather as a pastor, and another grandfather as a senior deacon—with instilling in him the importance of helping his community.

As a student at Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C., he led the school’s Student Government Association and the state community college system’s student athletic programs while also working as an advisor at Isothermal Community College in nearby Spindale, N.C.

In 2012, he completed a bachelor’s degree in human services through Gardner-Webb’s Degree Completion Program (DCP), which offers traditional undergraduate courses at convenient times and locations for working adults. The next year, he joined the University’s staff as a DCP counselor, and he now serves as associate director of DCP admissions, a role that allows him to share with students his story and how the right mindset toward education can change life.

“When students hear my story, they can’t say they can’t do it,” Rhodes relates. “Is it hard? Yes, but you can do it. I tell students that so many doors can open in your life with that bachelor’s degree from Gardner-Webb. God gives the strength to make it possible. My family has had a big hand in helping me, too.”

Rhodes and his wife, Shanta, have nine children. As a father, Rhodes has coached his children in the sport of basketball, while also coaching many other kids in the community, from the elementary to the varsity high school levels. He grew up

playing basketball in GWU’s Bost Gym, and he has served as a guest coach for the University’s men’s team in recent years. Many parents in the community have asked him to mentor their children on a one-on-one basis, but time is limited with his responsibilities at home and at work.

So eight years ago he started Camp Coach Rhodes, now both a nonprofit organization and a week-long day camp held each year during the summertime to provide athletic and life fundamentals to dozens of local children between the ages of four and 14. Even the proceeds from each camper’s small fee to attend go to other local basketball programs in the community

to impact additional children.

“The earlier we can reach kids, the bigger the impact on their lives,” he explains. “I’ve been around basketball my whole life. I grew up playing in Bost Gym in the 80s, and I enjoy any



activity that’s involved in engagement with people. Through athletics and educational programs, you can learn a lot about relationships and life.”

Parents of children who attend his basketball camp and adults who consider continuing their education through Gardner-Webb’s DCP also now seek advice from him for their own lives. Rhodes, as the admissions professional and the athletics coach, takes the opportunity through both pathways—as well as other community boards, organizations and activities through which he serves—to share the value of an education. He also imparts his experiences of how God has offered a positive outlook on life.

Rhodes desires to help both children and adults find the front of their classrooms, too.

“I don’t believe people fail. I believe people learn from experiences,” he says. “Sometimes we need learning experiences to grow. I could have been that statistic that everyone talks about—a child in a single-parent household, living in poverty, getting in trouble, and becoming just a number. A lot of my friends took a different path than me, but I’m not a number, I did make it out, and I can make a difference.”

Wrapped in Service

Written by Matthew Tessnear

GWU's Kevin Jones Honored as Best Athletic Trainer in NCAA Division I Athletics

Kevin Jones opened his college mailbox and found a letter from the National Football League's (NFL) Philadelphia Eagles. Inside the envelope, Otho Davis, the Eagles' head athletic trainer for more than 20 years and a member of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Hall of Fame, invited Jones to participate in an internship program, the first professional sports organization to offer such an opportunity. Jones had emailed Davis about the career development possibility after his mother had seen an article about the program inside Parade magazine in the Sunday newspaper.

Jones took advantage of the opportunity, completed two internships with the Eagles and embarked on an athletic training career that has now spanned more than three decades. For the past 31 years, he has served as head athletic trainer and has developed the athletic training education program at Gardner-Webb.





He coordinates the connection between athletic training education and service at the institution, which includes work as an assistant professor in the School of Preventive and Rehabilitative Health Sciences.

This year Jones, who also earned his master's degree in physical education at GWU in 1986, was honored as the 2015 NCAA Division I Athletic Trainer of the Year by NATA's College/University Athletic Trainers' Committee.

"It's an honor to be recognized among peers, and it's great for Gardner-Webb to get the University's name out there," Jones offered. "The award is recognition for our students and our staff, and I would not have won without their hard work. Those people like Otho Davis who took the time to invest in me are a real motivator to give back what has been given to me and invest in other students."

The national athletic training award itself is evidence of Jones' efforts to advance the lives and careers of his students, and not just because former student and Gardner-Webb graduate Allen Shelley nominated him for the Division I award. Shelley, who has served as head athletic trainer at Mars Hill University for 21 years and served with Jones as a graduate assistant while earning his master's degree at GWU, received this year's NATA Division II Athletic Trainer of the Year honor.

Another of Jones' former students and graduate assistants at Gardner-Webb, Patti Denny, received the national trainer of the year recognition for junior and community colleges in 2014. Denny now serves as head athletic trainer at Eastern Florida State College.

"You must have a servant's heart to be an athletic trainer," Jones shared. "It's a hard, service-oriented profession without a lot of recognition. Your thank-yous go unspoken and come from seeing athletes returning to play after an injury."

The comfort of having trained athletic medical assistance available during competition has not always existed in the quantity and quality that it does today. As a high school student-athlete, Jones suffered a stress fracture in his heel while participating in the long jump and a sprain in his ankle while playing football.



"I remember having to crawl off the field on my hands and knees and calling my parents to come get me because I didn't have anybody to take care of me," Jones reflected. "I basically had to figure out, with a doctor's recommendations, how to take care of myself because there was no trainer. Coaches would do the best they could to tape your ankle in those days, but there was no science involved in taking care of your injury. I was very fortunate that my mom was a school nurse. That helped me know what to do and pushed my interest in working in a medical-related field to help people."

Jones, who completed his high school career in suburban Philadelphia, chose what was then Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory, N.C., where he met head athletic trainer Dr. Rod Walters and fell in love with the occupation. Following his undergraduate work at Lenoir-Rhyne, Jones hoped to work for the Philadelphia Eagles, but the job opportunity didn't happen. In 1984, Jones accepted a position as a graduate assistant at Gardner-Webb, an offer he previously turned down for a shot at working with the Eagles. The Gardner-Webb job offered him the opportunity to stay closer to his girlfriend Shelly, who later became his wife.

At the time, Gardner-Webb had never employed a certified athletic trainer. Jones came to GWU and worked with one student in an athletic training program that mostly served the football team because of the sport's potential for injuries. He reached out to Dr. Dee Hunt, who then served as volleyball and softball coach and now serves as vice president of student development, to help provide training coverage for the college's female athletic teams. Now, Gardner-Webb maintains a staff of eight full-time athletic trainers and four graduate assistants to provide services for nearly 400 student-athletes on 22 NCAA Division I athletic teams.

As Gardner-Webb's athletics department grew, so did the school's athletic training education program. A minor in athletic training developed as the University transitioned from National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) to National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II and then Division I status. At the same time, NATA officials advocated for the importance of accredited athletic training programs, and Jones helped garner support at Gardner-Webb for the creation of an undergraduate major with accreditation.

More changes are on the horizon today, Jones revealed, as the program transitions from a baccalaureate degree to an entry-level master's program in the School of Preventive and Rehabilitative Health Sciences.

"Students would complete an undergraduate degree and then a master's program to become a certified athletic trainer," Jones explained. "It's the way the profession is headed. It has a lot of implications for what we do on the athletic side because it would eliminate the ability to have graduate assistants the way we do now, challenging us to change how we staff events and care for our teams."



Gardner-Webb has been blessed to be part of a community that has embraced athletic training support through the University's education and service programs and through the employment of athletic trainers at the local high schools, Jones said. He added that local sports medicine professionals including Warren Ariail, Jim Prevost, Jack Hamrick and Kevin James have advanced the presence and capabilities of athletic training in Cleveland County, N.C., as well as serving as mentors to Jones and the Gardner-Webb program.

"I've had some great mentors and want to share what I've learned with a younger generation. It's important working with student athletes, but educating students and teaching them the profession I love has always been very important to me," Jones related. "Working as an instructor helps me keep my skills sharp and allows me to pass on those skills. Even more than awards, teaching and seeing student-athletes returning to play after an injury is the reward. Knowing you did what you could to help them return to competition and seeing them succeed is the thank you."

CARVING THE KEYS OF LIFE

**GWU Police Captain Larry Thomas Keeps
Building on Career, Hobby**

Written by Matt Renfer

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American job tenure is 4.6 years. Not so for Larry Thomas, who has worked in his current position as Gardner-Webb's police captain for nearly 40 years.

But it wasn't always that way for Thomas. As a GWU student and graduate, the Shelby, N.C., native assumed a number of surprisingly varied roles.

Thomas came to Gardner-Webb in 1960 after attending six different grade schools between the 1st and 12th grades. Initially he majored in psychology and found himself filling in as president of student government.

"As a student, I played football as a linebacker when I weighed only 165 pounds," Thomas recalls. "Then I was asked to be manager of the basketball team. I didn't even know what that was. But I took the job, and we had two great years."

Thomas took a break from school to serve as a medic and psychiatric specialist in the U.S. Army. After returning to Boiling Springs, he graduated with a degree in religion and began working on campus. Prior to serving as a campus police officer and current captain, he worked as sports information director for the public relations office and head of the Bulldog Club, the athletic fundraising arm of Gardner-Webb.

Thomas, who never imagined being employed by campus police, first heard of the job by happenstance. "I was working with my brother-in-law building houses and just happened to be over here visiting one day when Chief Washburn, who was head of security at the time, out of the blue said, 'You wanna come work for me?' and I said 'sure.' That was on a Friday. I started on Monday. Been here ever since," Thomas said.

Along with security-related duties that come with being a campus police captain, Thomas is the University's locksmith, a position with a skillset he's developed since the beginning of his tenure.

"The first morning I came in, Washburn threw me a ring of keys. 'Go find out what these fit.' That was my start in the key business. I unlocked some doors that hadn't been unlocked in 10 or 12 years. I've loved it ever since," Thomas said.



GWU Police Captain Larry Thomas

Times have changed since Thomas began working at Gardner-Webb. Back then, he remembers female dormitories and the library closing at 9 p.m.

"I've always had three rules: Don't tear anything up, don't hurt anybody, and don't park on top of any of my buildings," Thomas said. "If students followed those rules, we got along."

Right around the time he began working his current position over 35 years ago, Thomas decided to start a new hobby: woodworking. Little did he know his work would be featured in a campus art exhibit decades later.

"I started building stuff and just got better," he shared. "I take wood, cut it apart, put it back together and create. Now I usually go home and go to the shop until suppertime. Just getting home, taking off the

uniform, putting on shorts and a T-shirt and going into my shop is a good feeling. It's relaxing."

At a point of life when some may consider retiring, Thomas has no plans for that or for ceasing to work. "As long as I'm physically able and enjoy it, I plan on being right here. I've still got some good left in me to help out around here. Besides, I've got to make money to buy some lumber for woodworking."

Thomas is an avid reader. Stacked in his office bookshelves are the entire "Jack Reacher" series and a number of Robert Ludlum books, author of "The Bourne Identity" series.

"I like the people here. I've always said that I work for the students. I get paid by the University, but I actually work for the students. Most of the kids on campus are like my kids, and that's the way I treat them. I love this place. It's a good place to go to school."



In the classroom,
On the field,
In life...

‘It’s all about your teammates’

GWU Supporters Celebrate Success

Written by Matthew Tessnear

In his pocket David Brinkley carries a piece of paper with a translation of Proverbs 14:28. The passage reads:

The mark of a good leader is loyal followers; leadership is nothing without a following.

“You have to have good teammates,” Brinkley shares. “My wife Marie and I have been blessed to have great teammates who trust us and believe in what we do. They get behind us when we raise money. If you have good people around you, in church, in work, anywhere, people can enjoy life.”

The Brinkley family has become strong teammates with Gardner-Webb.



Marie and David Brinkley (top photo), the Brinkley family (bottom photo)

“We support children,” Marie explains. “And we feel we should support local causes, mostly in Cleveland County, because we feel there’s such a large need here.”

The Brinkleys moved to Kings Mountain, N.C., in the late 1970s, and raised three children in the community. Their two daughters, Kristie (‘04) and Carrie (‘06), played volleyball for Gardner-Webb and graduated from GWU, linking the Brinkley and university families. The original connection, however, developed years ago through the sport of football.

Before venturing into the insurance business and then investments, where he now works and operates Brinkley Financial Group, David coached high school football. In the same era, Woody Fish, now vice president for external affairs and special assistant to the president at Gardner-Webb, coached high school football in the area and later, the Runnin’ Bulldogs football team.

“So we got to know each other through football back then,” Fish remembers. “After his daughters played for the University, we got back in touch and restarted our friendship. David has worked for everything he’s gotten in life, and I think it’s a great example for our students. You have an opportunity at Gardner-Webb to get a degree, and from there you have to work hard. David and Marie have the same qualities that Gardner-Webb tries to instill in students. They have a love of God, a love of family and they want the University and its people to excel.”

A desire to see success led the Brinkleys to support the University’s Wealth and Trust Management program—to provide opportunities to business students—and GWU’s campus softball stadium, which caught David’s attention as a need for improvement. He connected with GWU Softball Coach Tom Cole to learn more about the state of the program and its facilities. Following this meeting, the Brinkleys committed to a lead gift to rebuild the stadium. The new facility also includes a synthetic playing surface, added practice space and other amenities.

“The impact the stadium will have for our program and this university community is tremendous. It really is a game-changer,” Cole praises.

“Previously, our team had to help me get the field ready before we started warming up for games, which was an advantage to the other team coming from a comfortable hotel room. Everybody has been wowed by the new facility, including recruits who will impact our program into the future. Without David and Marie Brinkley, that would have never happened. I am grateful to them for what they’ve done for our team.”

The Brinkleys want to see student-athletes benefit from the facility, and they challenge others to support the University, its people and its programs. David keeps the Proverbs passage in his pocket as a reminder of what teamwork and leadership mean.

“It’s important to work together to give kids an opportunity in life,” he says. “If you get an opportunity to go study and play at the college level, enjoy it, give everything you’ve got, walk away with a good education and start blessing others. It’s all about your teammates.”



GWU Softball Coach Tom Cole talks with Marie and David Brinkley



The Brinkleys, Coach Tom Cole, and V.P. for Athletics Chuck Burch in the new softball training room



BOOKMARKS

**In each issue of the Gardner-Webb Magazine we will publish notes focusing on books written by Gardner-Webb authors in this section.*



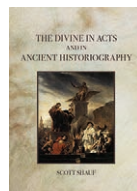
DR. JOYCE BROWN, Professor Emerita of English, GWU

published a book of poetry, “Bequest,” which recalls childhood stories from her family. She taught English at Gardner-Webb for 39 years before retiring in 2005 and now writes a column for *The Star* (Shelby, N.C.) in the “Boomers and Beyond” monthly section with her husband, Dr. Les Brown, GWU Professor Emeritus of Biology, who taught for 40 years.



DR. CANDICE ROME, Chair of the Traditional BSN Program, Hunt School of Nursing, GWU

authored the book, “The Impact of Simulation Experiences on Critical Thinking Acquisition.” The book is based on her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Capstone project, which was a comparative experimental project comparing the impact of simulation-based learning experiences to traditional clinical rotations on critical thinking acquisition of associate degree nursing students in a maternal-child course. The study results indicated that simulation and traditional clinical experiences are equivocal regarding critical thinking acquisition of nursing students.



DR. SCOTT SHAUF, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, GWU

published a book, “The Divine in Acts and in Ancient Historiography,” through the Fortress Press. The book compares the portrayal of the divine in Acts with portrayals of the divine in other ancient historiographical writings. In the work, he explores how the divine is represented as involved in history, through themes including the nature of divine retribution, the partiality or impartiality of the divine toward different sets of people, and the portrayal of divine control over seemingly purely natural and human events.



DONNA HARVEY TURNER, Gardner-Webb graduate '82

published “Miss Donna is Really a Dinosaur,” her second book. She is also the author of “No Soccer Today for Rinnie Ray.” She is a pastor’s wife, a mother with a son and daughter, and she teaches preschool and helps with a fifth-grade Sunday school class. She and her family live in North Carolina.



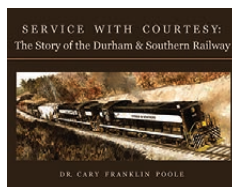
DR. JOSEPH MOORE, Assistant Professor of History, GWU

published a book titled, “Founding Sins: How a Group of Antislavery Radicals Fought to Put Christ into the Constitution.” It was published by Oxford University Press. The book tells the story of the Scottish “Covenanters,” a group of fundamentalist Presbyterians who vowed to maintain the Presbyterian doctrine and policy as the sole form of religion of their country, for the first time. It also argues that America’s original religious right, the “Covenanters,” shatters the logic that America was founded as a Christian nation.



DR. FRANK PAGE, Gardner-Webb graduate '73

visited Gardner-Webb in the spring and shared experiences chronicled in his book, “Melissa: A Father’s Lessons from a Daughter’s Suicide.” Page and his wife, Dayle, lost their daughter to suicide in 2009. His book examines scriptures that helped him through the painful time and through continuing challenges. A 1973 GWU graduate, Page now works as president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee.



DR. CARY POOLE, Assistant Vice President for Title IX Compliance, GWU

authored his fourth book covering railroad-related topics. The book, titled “Service With Courtesy: The Story of Durham & Southern Railway,” covers the history of the Durham, N.C.-based railroad, which was founded by the Duke brothers, Benjamin and James. The brothers tapped into the naval stores found in the local pine forests, importing cotton to supply the many cotton mills and hauling coal that powered those mills. A portion of the railroad survives today as part of the CSX system.

If you would like to submit your information to Bookmarks, please email Matthew Tessnear at mtessnear@gardner-webb.edu or click on the “Submit a Class Act” link at gardner-webb.edu/magazine



ClassActs

The 1970s

MIKE ANTHONY '72

served as the commencement speaker for the University of South Carolina-Union. He is a Union native who has been director of the South Carolina Coaches Association and is a former member of the Board of Directors for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes for Union and Gaffney. In 2002, he was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives. He was named Legislator of the Year in 2003 by the South Carolina Education Association and was named Champion of Public Education in 2004.

THOMAS EDWARD BOUKNIGHT '72 was inducted into the Batesburg-Leesville (S.C.) High School Athletic Hall of Fame. In the 1960s, he was an all-conference football tailback on a Batesburg-Leesville team that went 12-1. After attending Gardner-Webb, he embarked on a 37-year

coaching career at Saluda and Lexington high schools and was an assistant coach for the 2005 North-South All-Star game.

STEVE PADGETT '72

was named director of the Small Business Center at Cleveland Community College. He has several years of experience as an adjunct instructor of business and entrepreneurship, all with Cleveland Community College. He spent over 45 years in corporate and private business environments, with more than 40 years of involvement with information technology and management. He grew up in Bostic, N.C., and earned his bachelor's degree at Gardner-Webb.



ROBERT GRANT '73

became the resource development director with the Baptist Foundation of South Carolina (BFSC). He has served as a member of the South Carolina Baptist Convention staff

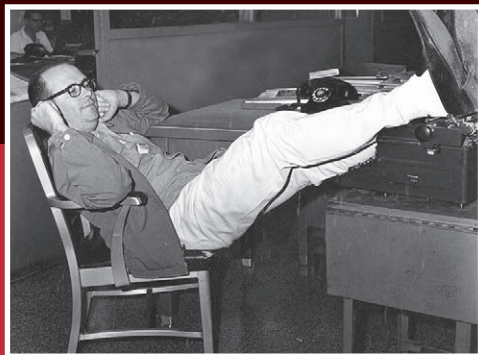
for 31 years. The BFSC is an independently managed ministry partner of the state convention, with offices in Columbia, S.C. Grant will coordinate development efforts for planned gifts, endowments and institutional money management funds to be administered by the foundation. He will also direct educational activities related to estate stewardship planning, planned giving, endowments, capital campaigns and institutional money management.

DAVID WILLIAMS '76

retired from teaching and coaching after 37 years. He earned a bachelor's degree in physical education and health at Gardner-Webb. He now lives in Lady Lake, Fla., and looks forward to more time for family, friends and fishing.

REBECCA LEGGETT '77

joined the team at the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU). She previously worked at William Peace University for 30 years. She also serves as a board member of the Wake



David McHam

GW Alum Retires After Half-Century as Journalism Professor

David McHam ('53) taught journalism for 54 years. He started the career in 1961 at Baylor University (Waco, Texas), where he taught until 1974. He worked at Southern Methodist University (Dallas, Texas) from 1974 to 1998, at the University of Texas at Arlington from 1998 to 2001 and at the University of Houston since.

One of his students won the Pulitzer Prize, and he taught several best-selling authors, including Thomas Harris, who wrote "The Silence of the Lambs."

"I set the record for the longest teacher in journalism," he shared in The Cougar, the University of Houston's newspaper. "Nobody has taught for 54 years; I'm the only one in Texas, and I'm proud of that."

After graduating from Gardner-Webb Junior College in 1953, he earned a bachelor's degree at Baylor and a master's degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University in New York.

Alumna Retires After 43 Years as Church's Music Minister

Susan Wilson started working at Eastside Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C., when she was 22 years old and a recent graduate of Gardner-Webb.

That was 1972.

"I was looking for a job," she said. "Did I think I would be here 43 years? But it became my love and then my life. God knew what I didn't know: That I would become his instrument. The only reason I've been here all these years is because this is where God wanted me to be."

Wilson retired from the church this year after more than four decades of service. She had the longest tenure of all the full-time music ministers in the Greater Cleveland County Baptist Association.

In her retirement, she plans to be an active member at Eastside Baptist, where she has built friendships with four generations of families. "I don't want to walk away from that," Wilson shared.

Jackie Bridges/The (Shelby, N.C.) Star contributed



Susan Wilson

County Community Foundation and its scholarship committee and volunteers with several other nonprofit organizations.

The 1980s

JOHN OWENS '81

married Susan Lynn Bertelsen on March 21, 2015. John is retired, and Susan works at the Paradies Shops at Charlotte Douglas International Airport in Charlotte, N.C. The couple resides in Charlotte.

CYNTHIA KELLY '85

joined TNB Financial as director of trust services for the Palmetto Trust division in Spartanburg, S.C. She has more than 20 years of experience in the financial services industry and is a certified trust and financial advisor. She is an active member of Uptown Sertoma, Rotary, Greenville/Spartanburg Estate Planning Councils, Leadership Spartanburg and Spartanburg Regional Fellows. She and her husband, Keith, have three daughters and two sons-in-law.

DEBORAH COCHRAN '86

became assistant clerk of courts in Surry County, N.C. She previously served as

mayor in the town of Mount Airy, N.C., and has worked in public service since 2007. Prior to her career in public office, she worked in the radio business for 35 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in management from Gardner-Webb.

The 1990s

KENNY FORD '90

retired as head football coach at Owen High School in Black Mountain, N.C. Ford won 230 games and 14 conference championships in 29 years of coaching, the most wins of any football coach at one school within the Buncombe County (N.C.) school system. An Asheville, N.C., native who received a master's degree at Gardner-Webb in 1990, he began his career in Marion as an assistant football coach at McDowell High School.

PAM LENDERMAN '93

was honored with the 2014 Laity Service Award at the First United Methodist Church of North Wilkesboro (N.C.). The program is sponsored by the Western North Carolina Conference Board of Laity and recognizes the dedicated church members who serve within and beyond churches across the conference.

Lenderman has been a member of the church since moving with her family to Wilkes County at age 4. She has served the church in many capacities. After getting her bachelor's degree in social work at Gardner-Webb, she has worked at Wilkes Regional Medical Center for more than 30 years.



NOEL T. MANNING II '94

led a dialogue and discussion at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, N.C. on the life and impact of filmmaker Earl Owensby. With

Owensby on hand, Manning

hosted a question and answer session with the audience complete with clips from Owensby's films. Manning produced an award-winning biographical documentary on the filmmaker in 1997. Manning was also asked to serve as a film juror for the Longleaf Film Festival in Raleigh for the 2016 event. Manning earned his Master of Arts in Higher Education Leadership from Appalachian State University in Dec. 2015, and was a speaker at commencement.

YIELD of DREAMS

Inspired by his Father, Gardner-Webb Alum Drew Bridges ('67) Gives Support to Help Others in their Fields

Written by Matthew Tessnear



Drew Bridges believes everyone deserves a chance to reach for dreams and succeed in life. The Gardner-Webb family planted that spirit in him as a student in the 1960s, but it wasn't until the 1990s that he realized that the greatest lesson in opportunity came from his father, Charles.

Charles Bridges left his tenant farm home just a few miles from Gardner-Webb for an orphanage after losing both of his parents as a young child. When he grew up, he was again separated from his family for a long period of time as a member of the U.S. Army in the World War II era.

After he completed his military service and returned home to Hildebran, N.C., a town about an hour north of Gardner-Webb, Charles helped to develop a youth sports program in the community, spending time with his sons in the process. Drew played for his father on a baseball team and eventually became a basketball player as well. His success on the court earned him a scholarship to play collegiate basketball at Gardner-Webb for the legendary coach Eddie Holbrook.

"A basketball scholarship was the only way I was going to college. I had no money," Drew remembered. "When I got to Gardner-Webb, there were people who had a zeal for learning that I had not experienced before. Gardner-Webb had this quality of giving everybody a chance."

Drew's time at Gardner-Webb also brought Charles back to Cleveland County, and it offered an opportunity for the father to introduce his son to more of his life story. Visiting a cemetery at nearby Trinity Baptist Church, Drew learned about his father's family and his childhood.

"But I didn't get interested in his life and his story in a meaningful way until much later," Drew revealed. "I sort of kick myself for not pushing him harder into talking about his early life and service. He was like a lot of the GIs who didn't talk about their experiences."

After Charles died in 1997, Drew and his siblings discovered a stack of 100 letters their father sent to their mother during his time in the military.

Drew took custody of the letters and started reading them.

"He was so sweet and romantic toward my mother," Drew shared. "I wondered, 'who is this guy?' By the time I was old enough to remember, he had five kids and the sweet and romantic stuff was not there. The letters very much told the story of a soldier wanting to come home from war and their



"Baseball is a metaphor for life," Bridges offered. "Look at our common language and phrases such as 'three strikes and you're out' and 'swinging for the fences.' The game seemed like a natural vehicle for telling his story. He put an enormous amount of time into establishing the Little League program in Hildebran. When he first started baseball games there, he used his old Army duffel bag to carry around the balls, bats and gloves. That illustrated the link between his war experience and his involvement in baseball."

Writing the book, as well as owning The Storytellers Bookstore with his wife Lauren in Wake Forest, N.C., has helped Drew return to his academic roots as a former English student at Gardner-Webb. In the years following his time on campus, he traded English for medical school, which led to a 40-year career in psychiatry.

With his father as an example of the chance everyone has to be successful, Drew now offers support to Gardner-Webb to help others find and reach their dreams. He has supported a variety



"Baseball is a metaphor for life."

of dreams about a life and family together. From the minute I started reading the letters, I knew it was a story worth telling."

Reflecting on his experiences with his father on the baseball field, Drew decided to incorporate Charles' significant involvement in the sport in writing a book about his life before and after the military. The result was "The Second-Greatest Baseball Game Ever Played," which was published in 2014.

The book stipulates that a 1955 World Series finale between the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Yankees is the greatest baseball game in history, followed by Drew's recollections from a June 1957 afternoon with his father on a Hildebran baseball field. The story weaves together his father's military journey and baseball, the catalyst Charles used to connect with and inspire his son's success.

of athletic campaigns, including the naming of the University's basketball court after coach Eddie Holbrook, and he created the Charles and Drew Bridges Health Careers Scholarship, which provides aid every year to a student with an interest in a healthcare career.

"Somebody who got a really tough start in life, my dad, was able to make a contribution to me so that I could make a contribution in his name," Drew explained. "As I wrote in my book, he was not a perfect man. Your life doesn't have to be destroyed by an imperfect start, and you don't have to be a perfect man to make a real contribution to other people. Gardner-Webb still has the quality of giving people a chance, and I've wanted to support that kind of thinking. I hope Gardner-Webb is in some small way healthier because of what I'm doing so the door is open to opportunities for others."

Offering a Helping *hand*

Alum Karen Ellis ('86) Honored as State's Top Social Services Director 25 Years into Career

Written by Niki-Bliss Carroll

Even as a child, Karen Ellis knew she wanted to help people.

She gravitated toward people who needed assistance. The bullied. The poor. The elderly. When she attended Gardner-Webb in the 1980s, she worked part-time at the battered women's shelter in Forest City, N.C., while studying for a bachelor's degree in social science.

"I would finish my week of classes, and arrive at the shelter on Friday evening," Ellis recalled. "I would work there all weekend, running intake, making sure the women and children had what they needed. I was barely 20 years old, and I honestly loved every minute of it. I knew I was making a difference."

In 1986, Ellis graduated from GWU and began working full time. That first job at the shelter prepared her for subsequent professional opportunities at the Cleveland County Department of Social Services (DSS). In 1990, she was hired by then-director Hal Smith as a social worker. Already armed with experience, she moved through the ranks. By 1993, she was promoted to child welfare supervisor. Just a few years later, she became the program administrator over child welfare. Then, in 2006, she was promoted to deputy director. The DSS Board of Directors appointed her to serve as the director of the agency in 2008.

With more than 25 years of experience at Cleveland County DSS—including seven years as director—Ellis was honored by fellow directors as the 2015-2016 North Carolina Department of Social Services Director of the

Year. The award was presented by the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS).

"I was so humbled and surprised," Ellis said. "I feel so blessed to lead a team of amazing individuals who understand the goals and mission of the agency. I believe we have the best DSS agency in the state of North Carolina."

During her time at DSS, she has made collaborative partnerships a priority. Ellis believes that most people aren't looking for a handout, but rather need help up. She has worked diligently with the local Cooperative Extension Services office to provide affordable ways for individuals receiving food benefits to purchase farm-fresh produce through local farmers' markets.

"It's a wonderful program, and it really offers people a way to purchase healthy options at a fraction of the cost of what they would pay in the supermarket," Ellis shared.

She knows there is a stigma placed on people who receive benefits, but she encourages those who qualify for assistance to utilize it. "Around 2009, I remember seeing so many people—particularly older men who had worked hard their entire life—in our lobby for the first time, feeling completely humiliated because they had no other choice but to seek public assistance," she offered. "It was heartbreaking to witness. I just tried to encourage them that it was OK."

"I know that I'm doing what I'm called to do," Ellis shared. "I just want to be able to make a difference for those who need it most."

Ellis serves as one of the chairs for the NCACDSS Children's Services committee, the UNC Chapel Hill child welfare workforce curriculum design team advisory board, and the Western Area Foster Care Improvement committee. In her home county, she is a member of the Healthy Carolinians/Alliance for Health Board, United Way board, Partnership for Children board, Workforce Development board, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Task Force, and the public-private foster care committee, child protection/fatality team, among others. She is currently serving as the guardian for about 40 elderly adults in the area who have no other family members who can advocate for their best interests.



MELINDA CHANCEY '95

was selected Teacher of the Year at Wayne County High School in Jesup, Ga. She currently teaches biology at the school.

CHARLIE HARBISON '95

joined the University of Louisiana at Lafayette football program as an assistant coach in March 2015. Harbison has coached for more than 20 years in the Southeastern and Atlantic Coast conferences. He played football and ran track while attending Gardner-Webb.

ALEX RANUCCI '95

opened a new mobile barbecue catering kitchen and food truck business, Ranucci's Big Butt BBQ, in Belmont, N.C. Ranucci first learned about barbecuing while a student at Gardner-Webb, and he began entering competitions in the following four years. He and his wife, Zoe, previously owned Ranucci's BBQ & Grill in Belmont for two years.



KEITH McKINNEY '96 became the new senior pastor of Boiling Springs Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, N.C., on June 1, 2015. He most recently served as interim pastor of New Bessemer Baptist

Church in McLeansville and previously worked as a staff member with Baptist Retirement Homes of North Carolina. After his bachelor's degree, McKinney earned a Master of Divinity degree at Gardner-Webb in 2000.

SUSAN SAIN '96

became county tax administrator in Lincoln County, N.C. She began working for the county as a real property appraiser in 1997 and was promoted to senior appraiser three years later. She is a certified Real Estate and Personal Property Appraiser and has passed the County Assessors and Appraisers Certification exam.

KIM WILLIS '97

became executive director of the Marlboro County (S.C.) Disabilities and Special Needs Board (DSNB). She has worked with the office for over a decade and has served

nearly 20 years in the disabilities field. As executive director, she leads an administrative staff of 10 and oversees the programs and operations of the board, including its day program residential and supervised living programs, early intervention, case management and contracted services. She first learned about the DSNB when she worked in high school at a grocery store that employed several of the agency's clients.

WENDI BARBER '98

was named principal at Robert L. Patton High School in Morganton, N.C. She earned her master's degree at Gardner-Webb and is working toward an Ed.D at the University.

JANICE BAYNARD '98

received the 2015 Leadership Award from the National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators (NAFEPA), a support organization for educators who work with federally funded programs in their local school districts and states. Baynard serves as director of federal programs for Rutherford County (N.C.) Schools. She was one of four people from North Carolina who were nominated for the award by her peers and received it during the 2015 NAFEPA Conference in March in Washington, D.C.

JANET KENDALL '98

became the "Go Columbia" reporter at The State newspaper in Columbia, S.C. In addition to her degree at Gardner-Webb, she earned her master's degree in journalism at the University of Georgia. She previously worked as a copy editor and education reporter for the Athens (Ga.) Banner-Herald.



CHET ANDREWS '99

received his Doctor of Ministry degree from North Greenville University (Greenville, S.C.) in May 2014. Chet, his wife, and their four children live in Greer, S.C., where he serves

as the discipleship/missions pastor at Fairview Baptist Church.

DORIS DEDMON '99

was recognized by the Cleveland County (N.C.) Commission for Women during Women's History Month in April. She was honored for her work as one of the first nurses with Hospice of Cleveland County, where she started part time in 1985. Dedmon first earned her associate's degree at Gardner-Webb in 1979 and then her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1999.

BRIAN HUNNELL '99

became assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction for Cleveland County (N.C.) Schools. He previously served as director of administrative services and county athletics director. He began his career with Cleveland County Schools as a teacher at Burns Middle School. In addition to earning his master's degree at Gardner-Webb, he also earned his doctorate degree in school administration at GWU.

JEFF PEAL '99

retired as associate superintendent for Alexander County (N.C.) Schools. He plans to work in private industry at Cooks Inc., a sporting goods company, in North Wilkesboro, N.C. He had served as associate superintendent for Alexander County Schools since 2006. He earned his Master of Arts degree in school administration in 1999 and his Doctorate of Educational Leadership in 2006, both at Gardner-Webb.



CORIE WEATHERS '99

was named the 2015 Military Spouse of the Year. Weathers was chosen from among five other military branch nominees as the National AFI Military Spouse of the

Year in May 2015, after being named the Army branch winner in February 2015. Weathers and her husband, Capt. Matthew Weathers, a U.S. Army Chaplain currently stationed at Fort Gordon in Augusta, Ga., met at Gardner-Webb. She earned a degree in counseling from GWU in 1999 and now uses her professional skills to help military families, particularly soldiers who are struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

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BACK FROM THE Brink

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll

Musician Jimi Ray shares his story of grace and redemption.

“My eyes were always glassy, always. You could just tell something was not alive in there. I attribute that to being under the influence. But also, there was a lot of my soul that was gone, too. And I was just...empty.”

For Gardner-Webb alumnus Jimi Ray ('87), closing the chapter on nearly 15 years of success with the contemporary Christian band “Age of Faith” signaled the beginning of a new season—one of darkness, depression, and ultimately, addiction. Yet through the difficulties and challenges, there is a consistent message that Ray wants everyone to understand:

“God never left me, never. The grace of God covered me, and I realized that it was real.”

A native of Troy, N.C., Jimi Ray graduated from high school in the mid-1980s and had thoughts of attending Western Carolina University (Cullowhee, N.C.), where his own parents had earned degrees. On a whim, he and a buddy decided to visit Gardner-Webb University, because his mom was familiar with the institution's Baptist roots and she thought since he was active in youth group, he might appreciate the opportunities for ministry involvement.

“I had previously met two girls at a small church that were GWU students, and those were the only two people I knew on campus,” Ray offered. “So my friend Ron and I took off one day and when we got to the University, we connected with them and they told us where to go, and that was it. We went on a tour—one of the reps showed us around, and we decided, ‘OK, we’ll go here.’ And my best friend and I both enrolled at GWU that fall.”

Although he initially planned to study education—his father was a teacher—he realized that he was more interested in pursuing music. Yet, once he was enrolled in music classes, the traditional styling was also not the best fit for him.

Finally, he ended up seeking a degree in religious studies, which he felt would help him blend his love for God and his love for contemporary Christian music in a unique way.

“When I was here at Gardner-Webb, I played in a couple different bands on campus, and I had a lot of opportunities,” he recalled. “At that point, the contemporary Christian music scene was just starting out. I mean there were a handful of groups at the time. The Imperials, Amy Grant was starting, Keith Green was big at the time. And we didn’t know anything else but that. So I started playing and writing my own songs.”

By the spring of 1987, Ray was engaged to Angie, a fellow GWU student. The couple married a month after they graduated. Deep within him, he sensed a calling to do music, and so he connected with a few other men from the area—including GWU alumnus Rick Harwell—and they decided to write their own songs and perform for church youth events.



“We would go out on weekends and play,” he explained. “We got an opportunity to play a huge youth conference in Orlando in 1988. And we did. What resulted from that was almost 100 bookings for concerts the following year. Nothing we solicited, it just happened. It fell into our lap. Through that, we met others, and we ended up signing with Benson Music Group two years later, almost a fluke. It wasn’t something we pursued. It just happened. They loved our music. They loved our songs.”

Benson Music Group ended up naming the band “Age of Faith,” and Ray and his bandmates toured and performed for nearly 15 years. Following their time with Benson, they signed with the label Gray Dot, who launched contemporary Christian group “Third Day” into the music world. In 1997, Ray wrote a song called “The Love of Jesus” and performed it with Third Day’s Mac Powell. Before he even knew what was happening, the song went to number one.

“All of a sudden, you turn around the next week, and the song is at number one,” he reflected. “And you’ve got DC Talk at No. 2, a group called Point of Grace at No. 3, Steven Curtis Chapman at No. 4, and a group called Anointed at No. 5. So we were in good

company. We stayed at No. 1 for maybe two or three weeks, and that was it.”

Within just a couple of years, Ray began to sense things changing. A dark cloud began to descend upon him and he couldn’t shake it.

“About a year before the band came to an end, I knew it was coming. I could see it. We could all see it,” he shared. “I was in Minnesota and I was sitting out in the audience during sound check while we were setting up, and I just kept thinking, ‘I am so depressed. I just want to be home.’ And we had four more days to be out.”

He didn’t realize it at the time, but later determined that he had based his entire identity squarely upon his value as a musician, basing who he was on what he did. The coming professional transitions highlighted his depression.

“I felt like I didn’t have anything to say. I just felt like I was going through the motions and I could tell it was depression,” he recalled. “I was starting to shut down. I wasn’t a lot of fun to be around a lot, and so when the band stopped, the phone stopped ringing. It just literally wouldn’t ring anymore. And it used to ring all the time.”

In January of 2000, he was out bicycling with his boys Austin and Andrew, then just 10 and five years old. A fall caused a near-broken shoulder, and he was prescribed medication for pain management. He wasn’t expecting what he experienced next.

“When they first gave it to me, those first two pills took that depression away,” he recalled. “And I thought, ‘I love this.’ I didn’t tell anybody that, but I loved it. And then when my wife brought me two more four hours later, which is what the bottle said, and I was ready for four more hours after that. And what started as two pills every four hours ended up at 60 pills a day.”

The accident launched him into more than six years of abusing prescription pain medication, and although he knew he was on a dangerous and life-threatening path, he was addicted. “It started in 2000, and I knew in 2002 that needed to change, but I didn’t want to. I knew it needed to; I didn’t want to. There were numerous times where I would attempt to stop, and I just couldn’t do it. [With opiate addiction], once you stop, you’re getting extremely sick, and it is the worst sickness in the world. And I went through that so many times that I did whatever it took to not be sick.”

Unable to hide his addiction from those closest to him, Angie’s words were what ultimately changed his path. “She finally said, ‘I’m not doing this anymore. I tried it, and I’m not doing it anymore. This is what you’ve got to do. You either get help, be serious about it, or find somewhere else to live,’” Ray shared. “And I knew that she was serious.”

With the help of a pilot program for opiate addicts pioneered at Duke Medical Center, Ray was approved for a new medication designed to help him come off the opiates. Although it took some time, by 2006 he was no longer addicted. He is careful to point out that the new pill was not a fix-all.

“The medication was helping, but I found the right doctor, also. I found an addiction specialist, who became an instrumental part of my life,” he offered. “So, [my healing] was a combination of lots of things, and I also believe that God never left me, never.”

In 2005, Ray authored “I Wish It Would Rain: The Story of Depression,” but has recently updated it to include information relating to his struggle with addiction. “I was too scared to tell anybody, too ashamed, too in fear that people would say, ‘You were addicted? That happened to you?’ So I didn’t tell anybody,” he said. “So now, ‘I Wish It Would Rain: The Story of Addiction, Depression and Redemption’ is the whole story, the whole thing.”

These days, Ray is working on his master’s degree in addiction recovery, so he can help people who are where he once was. He is also writing and performing his original music at venues all over the Southeast. After getting clean, he served as the worship leader at his church for eight years—a role he never expected but one he was tremendously grateful to receive. He continues to be amazed at how far God has brought him, but also never loses sight of the hard work his journey has required.

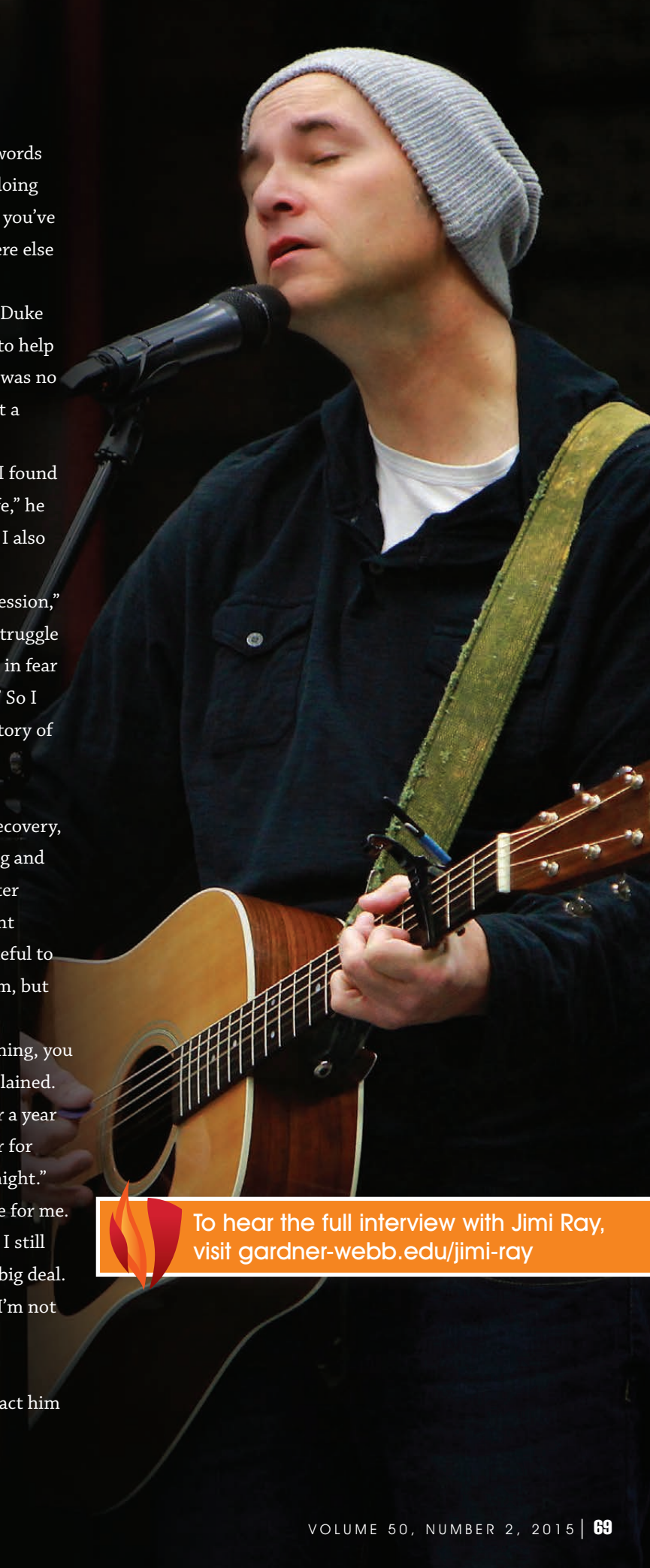
“The danger of addiction is when you open your eyes in the morning, you never know when that voice is going to scream in your ear,” he explained. “You never know. I hear it from addicts all the time, ‘I was good for a year and I blew it.’ I get it. I understand how that works. I’ve been sober for almost nine years now. It’s been a journey, but it didn’t start overnight.”

He continued, “I had to, first of all, forgive myself. That was huge for me. Because I went through a lot of guilt. And, you know what? Today, I still do. I still think, ‘Oh my gosh.’ But starting to forgive myself was a big deal. I finally realized, ‘You know what, that was what I was back then.’ I’m not that today.”

Jimi Ray’s book, “I Wish It Would Rain: The Story of Addiction, Depression and Redemption,” is available at Amazon.com. To contact him or download his music, visit JimiRay.com.



To hear the full interview with Jimi Ray, visit gardner-webb.edu/jimi-ray



CALCULATED EFFORTS

MATH DEGREE OFFERS ALUMI TRACK TO CAREER IN EDUCATION

WRITTEN BY NIKI BLISS-CARROLL



Kevin Parsons

attained a college degree and they really wanted me to go.”

Like many incoming students, Parsons wasn’t sure where to focus his studies. “When I took the placement tests during orientation, I found out I could attain a few free credit hours in math if I took calculus,” he recalled. “Once I earned an ‘A’ in that class, I decided to major in math, in which I had always done well in school.”

He remembers several instrumental individuals who impacted his time at GWU. Dr. Paul Jolley (then the chair of the math department), Dr. Gil Blackburn, and even golf coach Dr. “Doc” Garland Allen all played an important role in shaping Parsons’ future. “I tried out for the golf team and was fortunate enough to make it,” Parsons shared. “Doc was such a good man. I thoroughly enjoyed my time playing golf for Gardner-Webb.”

In 1987, Parsons graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics. He immediately went to work in the racing industry. “Even though I won a few local short track races, I didn’t make it to the ‘big time,’” he stated.

About six years after graduation, he received a call from the vice president for instruction at Richmond Community College (RCC) in Hamlet, N.C. “He had heard that I had a math degree and offered me a chance to teach some developmental math classes,” Parsons reflected. “I loved teaching so much that I started graduate school in 1994 at UNC-Pembroke. When I graduated in 1996, I was offered a full-time instructor position at RCC.”

Following more than two decades as a math instructor at Richmond, Parsons applied for—and was appointed to—the position of vice president for instruction at Richmond Community College.

“A typical day is attending meetings to help the citizens of Richmond and Scotland counties develop a better life than they currently have,” Parsons shared. “We are trying to remove any barrier they may have that is preventing them from being successful.”

In this role, Parsons also serves as an advocate for the Gardner-Webb University Degree Completion Program (DCP), with RCC offering online and evening DCP classes in Hamlet and Laurinburg, N.C. “I am a big supporter of the DCP at Gardner-Webb, and believe the connection between GWU and our students has been a positive influence in helping them achieve a four-year degree,” he offered.

Although his vocational aspirations didn’t quite turn out the way he originally imagined, Parsons is grateful for the twists, turns and unexpected pit stops of his career journey.

“For fun, I still do local racing,” he admitted. “I’ve been doing it for a total of 15 years and I love it now more than ever.”



Kevin following a win on the track



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The 2000s

KIMBERLY BURGESS '01

was honored as the 2015 School Counselor of the Year for the Alexander County (N.C.) Schools district. Burgess, who serves as counselor at Sugar Loaf Elementary School, is a national board-certified counselor whose professional interests include helping children with trauma, Theraplay, academic group interventions, creative arts in groups, and individual counseling.

CERETHA MITCHELL '03

became principal at Tabernacle Elementary School in the Randolph County (N.C.) Schools district. She previously served the Thomasville (N.C.) City Schools district as chief academic officer for curriculum and instruction and worked for the system from 2008 to 2015. She previously worked for the Davidson County (N.C.) Schools district.

RENE STILWELL '03

was honored as Principal of the Year in Alexander County (N.C.) Schools in April. She has been principal of Hiddenite Elementary School since 2012.

KRISTIE BRINKLEY '04

married John Ryan Williams on Feb. 21, 2015. Kristie is employed by Bank of America in Charlotte, N.C., as a Global Wealth Investment Underwriter. Her parents are David and Marie Brinkley, of Kings Mountain, N.C., whose generous

gift to Gardner-Webb University helped facilitate the construction of GWU's new Brinkley Softball Stadium. John, a graduate of Appalachian State University, is employed by LPL Financial in Charlotte as a Fixed Income Structured Products Trader. The couple resides in Charlotte.

JOHNNY DOYLE '04

became senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Mobile, Ala. He earned a Master of Divinity degree in 2004. He previously served as associate pastor for five years at Hominy Baptist in Candler, N.C., and as senior pastor for eight years at First Baptist Church York in York, S.C. He enjoys community and ecumenical involvements and plans to seek similar activities in Mobile. He has worked for the Center for Congregational Health and supports Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. He and his wife, Jan, are the parents of five children.

ERNEST SIMONS '04

joined Pitt Community College in Greenville, N.C., as assistant vice president for information technology and services. He previously served as vice president for information technology and chief information officer at both South Piedmont and Blue Ridge community colleges. A Baltimore native, Simons completed an MBA at Gardner-Webb with a concentration in information systems.

BROOKE ANDERSON '06

was named Midwest communications lead for Uber, a San Francisco-based company that connects riders to drivers via a mobile app. She will serve as a public

relations contact for Uber's operations in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and a few other states in the region. After earning her undergraduate degree at Gardner-Webb, she earned a master's degree in journalism at DePaul University in Chicago. She then worked at Serafin & Associates, a communications and strategy firm in Chicago, and oversaw media relations for former Chicago mayoral candidate Gery Chico in 2011. She joined former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn's gubernatorial staff after the 2011 election and worked as press secretary and communications director for the Governor. She also assisted with Quinn's re-election campaign in 2014. Anderson recently married Lou Bertuca, a former campaign manager for Quinn. He was recently named director of the Illinois Sport Facilities Authority.

DEBOY BEAMON '06

retired from Thomasville High School in Thomasville, N.C., after serving as principal since 2009. He worked in education, his second career, for 11 years. He was selected as the 2010-11 and 2011-12 district principal of the year. He earned his master's degree in school administration from Gardner-Webb in 2006.

DEANNA BERRIER '06

was named 2015-16 teacher of the year for the Wilkes County (N.C.) Schools district. She has taught at Traphill Elementary School since 2002. In addition to earning a master's degree in elementary education in 2006 at Gardner-Webb, Berrier received a doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction in 2009.

JOEY CLINTON '06

was named Wells Fargo Bank Principal of the Year in Gaston County (N.C.) Schools. He serves as principal of Ashbrook High School in Gastonia, N.C., and has 26 years of experience in education as a teacher, coach and school administrator. He earned a master's degree in school administration at Gardner-Webb.

KRISTEN PENCZEK '06

joined Maryland Public Television's management team as managing director for special events and community engagement. She will manage special events and community engagement activities and will play an important role in the preparations for LZ Pimlico, a 2016 weekend event attended by and saluting Vietnam War-era Marylanders. The Hampstead, Md., resident most recently was interim executive director of the Baltimore-based International Dyslexia Association, an organization she originally joined in 2008 as director of conferences.

ROXANNE STILES '06

was named finance director for the town of Forest City, N.C. A certified public accountant, she previously worked as a comptroller with Avery Oil. She managed the financial operations of 17 Avery-owned convenience stores and eight consignment stores. She worked with the company for 19 years. She lives in Boiling Springs with her husband, Bryan.

LT. ELIZABETH BUFF (KIESSLING) '07

earned a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College. She has been serving as an officer and attorney in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps since 2011. She is currently stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

CHRIS PENLEY '07

became principal at Newton-Conover High School in Newton, N.C. He previously served as principal of Lakeshore Middle School in Mooresville, N.C., and he has spent nearly 20 years working in school systems. He completed his master's degree in K-12 Administration at Gardner-Webb.



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ULTRA BEAST

WRITTEN BY JILL BLANK

For Alumna, 100-Mile Runs = Stroll Through the Park

"I'm not the most graceful runner," stated Gardner-Webb alumna Megan Stegemiller. "But I live for climbing mountains, tripping over rocks and roots, experiencing views only available by foot. These views are for those who are willing to put in the effort and hard work."

Over the past six years, Stegemiller has participated in dozens of ultra races. An ultra race, or ultra marathon, is any competition that is longer than a marathon, which is 26.2 miles. Typical lengths for these events are 50k, 100k, 50 miles, 100 miles, or running for a specified time of 24 hours.

Individuals who know Stegemiller professionally might never guess she loves running. She graduated in 2010 with a degree in American Sign Language and currently works as a Sign Language Interpreter for the Department of Health and Human Service in the Administration for Community Living. A typical day for Stegemiller includes

interpreting for the deaf in the federal government at meetings with staff and supervisors, during conference calls with various stakeholders, as well as providing technical assistance to grantees.

On a whim during her senior year of college, Stegemiller decided that she wanted to run a half-marathon. However, before she began training, she sought the help of Dr. Jeff Hartman, exercise and kinesiology professor at Gardner-Webb. Together they devised a training plan and healthy diet to ensure that she was consuming the nutrients her body needed to fuel her runs.

"There was nothing special or fancy about Megan's training program, other than that it was a goal for her to focus on," commented Hartman. "I challenged her to commit herself to this lifestyle change and told her that if she committed to doing this, I would be with her every step of the way." He kept his word and even ran the half-marathon with Stegemiller.

"The morning of my first half-marathon, I was nervous," shared Stegemiller. "My only goal was to finish, and I didn't know if that was possible."

While the last two miles were an uphill struggle, she reached the finish line in just over two hours. Despite her initial apprehension, there was nothing but joy from both Stegemiller and Hartman after the 13.1-mile run was over. Even though she was tired and sore, she was determined to finish her next half-marathon in under two hours. She accomplished this goal by completing the race in 1:48:54.

After her success in the first two competitions, Stegemiller wanted to start training for a marathon. However, when she consulted with Hartman about her decision, he advised against it because it was a big jump in a short amount of time. Once she had competed in a third half-marathon, Stegemiller decided she was finally ready to train and compete at the longer distance.

During the period of training for her first marathon, she participated in a local running group that connected her with new friends. One of them was training to run in a 100-mile race, and in order to spend more time with him, Stegemiller began running even longer distances. Before she knew it, she was completing 40-mile trails prior to competing in her first marathon.

"I was hooked," commented Stegemiller, "I had been bitten by the 'ultra-bug.'" In December 2010, she competed in her first ultra race, a 50k. By that time the following year, she had competed in not only her first marathon and 50k, but also in a 50-mile, and 100-mile run.

It was in these races that Stegemiller found a niche. At the beginning, she ran merely to finish, but as time went on, she found that the longer distances of 100 miles and 24-hour runs were where she could excel. Stegemiller believes that



Megan Stegemiller and Dr. Jeff Hartman

is through consistent pacing that she continues to shine in these grueling competitions. She has finished at the top in several races, and she has set a new course record in the Pistol 100 Mile Ultra Run in Alcoa, Tenn.

One of the keys to remaining healthy is to make the necessary dietary changes before, during and after a race. About three to four weeks before an ultra, Stegemiller will cut caffeine out of her diet, study the course elevation profile and develop a nutrition plan. Right before the run, she will eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or crackers. During the event, her food consumption can be anything from pretzels to Mountain Dew (for the sugar boost). One of the keys during strenuous competitions of this type is to keep eating light snacks throughout the entire run. Stegemiller's post-race recovery includes taking extra walks to decrease stiffness, consuming more protein to help replenish the calories she has expended, increasing her sleep time to 10-11 hours, taking Epsom salt baths, foam rolling her muscles, and getting massage therapy.

A few of Stegemiller's future goals include running a faster 100-mile time. Her current personal best is 16 hours and 24 minutes. She also shared that she would love to qualify and compete internationally for the United States 24 Hour Team in 2017. In order to make the team, Stegemiller would need to be in the top six women in the country for the amount of miles run in a 24-hour race. "I suspect I would need to run 135 miles in 24 hours in order to qualify," stated Stegemiller. She is not far from her goal. In a 24-hour run in June 2015, she was able to run 131 miles while setting a new Virginia state record.

Stegemiller maintains a blog about her ultra runs at runningoffthebeatenpath.wordpress.com.

"Anyone can run a half marathon. Fewer can run a marathon. Fewer still would ever even attempt running 100 miles at one time, never mind continue to win these events and set course records in the process," commented Hartman. "Ultras are not for the faint of heart. Megan is a beast."



DONALD JASON CHEEK '08

was promoted from lieutenant to captain in the Asheboro (N.C.) Police Department by Chief of Police Jody Williams, also a Gardner-Webb graduate (2012) through the University's Degree Completion Program. Cheek and Williams both attended classes at GWU's Montgomery Center on the campus of Montgomery Community College while working full time in law enforcement.

DEBBIE HEGE '08

became assistant principal at Tyro Middle School in Lexington, N.C. She previously served as assistant principal at Southwood Elementary School and before that as assistant principal at Pilot and Friendship elementary schools between 2000 and 2011. She earned her master's in school administration from Gardner-Webb.

CHAD OAKES '08

became assistant principal at Ledford Middle School in Thomasville, N.C. He joined Davidson County (N.C.) Schools in 2004 as a teacher at North Davidson Middle School. He taught six years there before becoming an assistant principal. He earned his master's degree in school administration from Gardner-Webb.

BROCK MILLER '09

married Samantha Adamo on June 13, 2015, in Tampa, Fla. Brock works as a system analyst at Verizon Data Communications in Tampa, and Samantha is an athletic trainer for the Florida Hospital of Wesley Chapel.

CRAIG SMITH '09

became principal at Lake Norman Charter High School in Huntersville, N.C., for the 2015-16 school year. He previously served as assistant principal at Ashbrook High School in Gastonia, N.C., and as dean of students at Hopewell High School in Huntersville. Prior to beginning his duties in administration, Smith worked as a math teacher and tennis coach at Hopewell. He earned his master's in administration from Gardner-Webb.

The 2010s

LINDSEY BOLDT '10

joined the Duquesne University (Pittsburgh, Pa.) women's soccer program as an assistant coach and will work primarily with goalkeepers. She spent the past year at Point Park University (Pittsburgh, Pa.) and three years prior to that at Davidson College (Davidson, N.C.). She worked as a graduate assistant while at Gardner-Webb, where she earned her master's in sport science and pedagogy.

JONATHAN BROWN '10

was named principal of Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy, an industry-focused high school in Davidson County, N.C., that is designed to train future workers in areas such as health sciences, logistics and advanced manufacturing. Brown, who previously served as principal of Ledford High School since 2012, earned his master's degree from Gardner-Webb, and he has worked in a variety of education roles. Those experiences include high school business teacher, coach and assistant principal.

**DOMINIQUE HUDSON '10**

became an assistant basketball coach at N.C. A&T. She spent the past three seasons as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator for Gardner-Webb. During her playing career at Gardner-Webb, Hudson was a two-time Big South All-Conference First-Team selection, a three-time Big South All-Tournament honoree and was tabbed the 2011 Big South Women's Basketball Championship Tournament Most Valuable Player as she led the Runnin' Bulldogs to their first-ever postseason conference championship.

JENNIFER LEDBETTER '10

welcomed her first child, Clayton Jack, with husband Steven. Steven and Jennifer married on Nov. 3, 2012.

MAURICE LOWERY '10

competed in the 2015 Masters Track and Field National Championship in Jacksonville, Fla., from July 23-26. Competing in the 45-49 division and representing the Atlanta Track Club, he took fourth place in the 110 hurdles, second in the 400 hurdles and first in the 4x400.

ADAM VELEZ '10

became relationship manager for the Cleveland County (N.C.) YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program. He previously worked for the Dover Foundation YMCA in Shelby, N.C., as a membership associate. He earned his bachelor of science degree in chemistry at Gardner-Webb and also completed a Master of Divinity in intercultural studies/missiology in the GWU School of Divinity.

HEATHER WALTERS '10

was promoted to office manager of Moore Beauston & Woodham L.L.P.'s full-service accounting and consulting firm office in Hartsville, S.C. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from Gardner-Webb, and she has more than seven years of experience in public accounting. She is also a member of the South Carolina Association of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. She recently published an article in the Georgia Pecan Magazine titled "IC-DISC: A Great Fit for Pecan Growers."

MICHAEL GRAGG '11

and his wife Casey, have launched a non-denominational contemporary church, The Rock in Boone, N.C. The church offers family, youth, and college ministry programs. Gragg has served as pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Boone. More information is available on the church online at www.therockboone.church.



IGNITE YOUR legacy

Gardner-Webb University offers a warm and welcoming environment, a Christian community, and personal relationships between faculty, staff, and students.

The family environment is also present, for many, in the literal sense. Generations of Gardner-Webb students have followed in the footsteps of their grandparents, parents and siblings, choosing to attend the University that educated and nurtured other members of their families. Those next-generation students help strengthen GWU's family history, earning them a place in Gardner-Webb's Legacy Society.

Now, the University plans to strengthen the family ties for new students whose parents, siblings, or grandparents graduated from Gardner-Webb.

Gardner-Webb University is offering a **\$500 Legacy Grant** to all new, full-time traditional students whose family members graduated from any GWU degree program. The grant will be available to all freshman and transfer students, and the aid benefit will be renewable for four years of study.



GARDNER-WEBB
UNIVERSITY

For more information about the Gardner-Webb Legacy Grant, contact the University's undergraduate admissions office via email at admissions@gardner-webb.edu, by phone at 800-253-6472, or on Twitter @FutureDawgs.

HANNAH STANLEY '11

was promoted to senior associate at Butler + Burke LLP in Winston-Salem, N.C. Stanley joined the firm in August 2012 as a tax accountant. She previously served stints as a staff accountant for Larco Construction in Winston-Salem and for Greene & Company, PLLC in Clemmons, N.C. A native of Mount Airy, N.C., she received a bachelor's degree in accounting at Gardner-Webb.

JORDAN WATERS '11

opened a video game store, Game Haven, in Rutherford County, N.C., in October 2014. In addition to his merchandise and game tournaments, he hopes to mentor local teens through his entrepreneurship experience.

BONNIE ZELWAK '11

became vice president and county executive for HomeTrust Bank's Cleveland and Gaston county markets in North Carolina and works in the bank's uptown Shelby and downtown Cherryville offices. She earned an International Master of Business Administration degree at Gardner-Webb.

LINDSEY MARSH '12

married Scott Lorch on Sept. 13, 2014. Lindsey is employed by the State Employees' Credit Union. Scott is employed as a senior master Ford technician at Beachum & Lee Ford. The couple resides in Peachland, N.C.

MATTHEW CRAWFORD '13

now works with Berkeley County (S.C.) DSS in the foster care department. He ensures the safety, permanency and well being of children in the State of South Carolina's custody. He works with children who are abused or neglected and facilitates treatment programs to ensure that the children who are returned to their parents will live in a safe home.

**SUMMER PRUNTY '13**

and her husband, Kyle, celebrated the birth of their first son, Asher Dennie Prunty, on May 2, 2015.

BRANDON HOWARD '15

was named assistant principal at Washington High School in Washington, N.C. He earned a master's degree in executive leadership studies with a concentration in school administration at Gardner-Webb.

Share your news.

If you have a personal or professional accomplishment to share, such as a new job, birth announcement, or a wedding, we would like to hear from you.

Submit your news to gardner-webb.edu/class-acts.

"I am grateful for the seed Gardner-Webb planted within me to grow strong Christian roots and help fulfill my dreams. I am very proud to be an alumnus of the finest University in America and grateful that the Lord placed Gardner-Webb in my life as a stepping stone to a bright future."

DR. LOGAN SWAIM

Gardner-Webb University '10
Chiropractor, Bradenton, Fla.

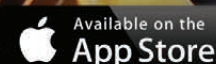
GW-YOU

"I was a small-town, Canadian girl who was blessed to be awarded academic and athletic college scholarships. While at Gardner-Webb, I had many life-changing opportunities. I grew in my faith, competitiveness, discipline and desire to be the best I can be. It is not only a school, but a family you always have close ties with and a place that is always in your heart."

DR. LAURA SWAIM

Gardner-Webb University '11
Chiropractor, Bradenton, Fla.

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Finding Your Center

Blind Alumnus Explores Vision Through the Business of Sociology
Written by Sarah Davis

Before he earned a doctorate from the University of South Carolina, before he joined the faculty at East Carolina University, before he was awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation grant, Mamadi Corra came to Gardner-Webb University.

He was a student with congenital glaucoma at the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon, a residential high school, when he first heard about Gardner-Webb. “During that time, GWU probably had the best program for the visually-impaired—solid services for the blind,” Corra, who lost his sight completely in 1991, explained. And so, Corra decided to apply to the University. He had to delay starting college, however, because he lacked funding. With the encouragement of his high school roommate—who enrolled at Gardner-Webb in 1987—and the help of Sharon Jennings—then recruiter and director of the Noel Program—he launched his academic career in Boiling Springs, N.C. Corra said Jennings “came to have a personal interest in helping me.” She secured a scholarship for Corra’s first semester and worked to guarantee financial aid for subsequent years.

“GWU was a small school. And that made it possible for you to know everyone—business major, biology major—no matter who you were,” he recalled. Faculty and staff, who developed close relationships with students, only added to the feeling of community, Corra explained.

One of his faculty interactions was with Dr. Rudy Boan, a sociology instructor who encouraged Corra’s interest in studying societal interactions and trends. He also enjoyed

courses with Dr. Glenn Bottoms, a professor in the Godbold School of Business, and went on to earn his Master of Business Administration at Gardner-Webb in 1995. Corra came to think of Bottoms, who recently wrote him a reference for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as a personal friend and mentor.

Corra had a love for both business and sociology, and needed to choose which one to pursue. He chose sociology and eventually sought a Ph.D. “Subconsciously,” he explained, “I was also aware that the more education you got, the more likely you are to have some kind of employment—being visually-impaired.” Corra chose the University of South Carolina (USC) in Columbia, S.C., as the place to finish his educational training.

During his time at USC, Corra discovered some things about working at a major research institution. “You teach, you research, and you do service,” both institutionally and professionally, he stated. For him the balance between teaching and researching comes naturally. “For one thing,” he said, “if you are going to be a good teacher, you have to be aware of the research being done in the area.” Corra has achieved that balance as associate professor in the sociology department at East Carolina University (Greenville, N.C.), a position he began in 2003.

“Your teaching informs your research, and your research informs your teaching,” Corra insisted. The conclusions he reaches as he studies different social groups allow him to share the most up-to-date sociological trends with the students in his classroom. And he is obviously succeeding in both arenas.

According to the East Carolina University (ECU) website, Corra was selected for the 2012 ECU Scholar-Teacher award, and he has been nominated for ECU’s Department of Sociology Annual Teacher of the Year Award for Lower Division Courses every year since 2004. After enduring a rigorous review process and placing his proposal in competition with hundreds of other proposals from across the nation and around the world, Corra learned the National Science Foundation would fund his work starting in the spring of 2013.

Since then, he has used the \$191,514 awarded primarily to hire graduate research assistants but also to attend conferences and otherwise present his findings. Corra humbly noted, “A lot of people do research with no money at all. I’ve done that in the past.” He admits that the grant comes not only with professional benefits but also with peace of mind, an affirmation that his work as a sociologist is valued.

Though the funds were awarded in 2013, the research that Corra conducted with the NSF grant is strikingly relevant to current national concerns. As a scholar, Corra focuses on two related areas of interest: power and inequality. He works to describe and clarify recent racial, ethnic, and gender-based tensions in the South and beyond. As Corra described, “Current events help us discuss emerging patterns and explain what has been observed in the past.”

Despite the demands of his teaching and research, Corra manages to make the trip back to Boiling Springs every year as a member of the Board of Advisors for the Noel Center for Disability Resources. Each April, the Board members—alumni, current students, professors and administrators—discuss a wide range of topics, including current legislation on accommodations, funding possibilities and future events.

When he returns to campus, he is reminded of the commitment of the University’s faculty and staff to make a difference for their students and to help guide them toward future careers and personal goals. Dr. Mamadi Corra, with his own commitment to both academics and service, exemplifies the life-long learner and professional that Gardner-Webb University produces:

“It’s always nice to come back. Gardner-Webb has been central to what I have become.”



Photos by Cliff Hollis ECU News and Communication

Cultivating Seeds

Alumna Discovers Passion and Purpose at GWU

Written by Matthew Tessnear

When Samantha Allen Mauldin first visited Gardner-Webb, she already knew she wanted to pursue a career in which she would work with children. At the time, she expected to become a teacher. But the University helped her discover additional avenues for impacting kids' lives, while also providing opportunities for real-world experiences with children.

After coming to Gardner-Webb from her hometown of Fountain Inn, S.C., Mauldin met Dr. David Carscaddon, dean and professor in the School of Psychology and Counseling. "I changed my plans after talking with him," Mauldin shared. "I liked my psychology class in high school, but it wasn't until I came here and saw what the psychology department had to offer that I decided to major in it myself."



Samantha Mauldin during a CentriKid Camp held at GWU

During her freshman year at GWU, Mauldin also connected with LifeWay Kids (Nashville, Tenn.) to work at the organization's CentriKid camps, which offer Bible studies, worship and recreation activities to children in grades three through six. For the past four summers, CentriKid helped Mauldin apply her Gardner-Webb psychology education to reality-based situations at the kids camps.

"I have been able to develop my skills in compassion and understanding that go a long way

when interacting with kids," she explained. "Each summer, there has always been at least one kid who needed their story to be heard, and I was able to lend a listening ear."

After spending the previous three summers on teams that took the camp experience to children in various states like Tennessee, Florida and Missouri, this summer she helped lead CentriKid's first camp series on Gardner-Webb's campus, just weeks after earning her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University. She believes GWU and CentriKid make great partners because their missions are the same.

"Gardner-Webb wants to proclaim the gospel, and that's the same goal for CentriKid. Ultimately, we have the same purpose," Mauldin related. "The people on campus and in the community were really welcoming to CentriKid. A couple of churches close to campus that participated in the camp invited our staff to attend their services, which illustrates how supportive and welcoming the people are at Gardner-Webb."

Mauldin now hopes to build on her experiences in psychology and her work with children. She and her husband, whom she met working with CentriKid, live in New Orleans after getting married. He is attending seminary and she will enter LSU's occupational therapy program in January. She said her time at Gardner-Webb, both as a student and a camp staff member, provided her with lessons for her next steps in life.

"The Lord can use you in a lot of different, and sometimes unexpected, ways," Mauldin reflected. "In camp, some of the kids get things the first time and others take more time. Even when you don't see it right away, there's an impact in their lives. One of the things I take with me is to remember that even when you may not see the fruits of your labor, you can know that you're planting seeds."

Closing the Circle

International Student Discovers
the Power of Partnerships

Written by Niki Bliss-Carroll

Biju Chacko is not your typical Baptist minister—if there is such a thing.

Born in India, Chacko's connection to Gardner-Webb University came through his role as chaplaincy coordinator for Duke University Hospital (Durham, N.C.). He has worked with several Gardner-Webb divinity students as they have participated in clinical education under his supervision. GWU Professor Dr. Doug Dickens, who also serves as a supervisor for the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., encouraged Chacko to consider the University as he sought out Doctor of Ministry programs. Ultimately, Chacko's educational path would come full circle at Gardner-Webb in ways he never anticipated.

"I am a third-generation preacher's kid from Kerala in South India," he shared. "My grandparents were pioneers of evangelical faith in their communities. My parents are Baptist leaders in India. I served in the church from age 13 and then worked with Christian non-profits throughout my life."



He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Kerala (Trivandrum, India) and received a Master of Divinity degree from the Baptist Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines. He holds a Master of Theology (Th.M.) from the South Asia Institute



of Advanced Christian Studies in Bangalore, India. It was while in the Philippines in the mid 1990s that he established a special connection with Dr. Terry Casino, now a professor of missiology

at Gardner-Webb, who served as his mentor and guide as he worked on his M.Div. thesis. "Biju was my former student at the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary and I remembered him—along with his wife Annie—as a top student," Casino recalled. "I got reacquainted with Biju through Dr. Doug Dickens when I relocated to the U.S. from South Korea to teach at GWU in 2010. He came to visit me on campus one day, and we discussed his plan to pursue doctoral studies."

Chacko also met Dickens once when both were in the Philippines, and he later met GWU alumna Donna Seay, who served as a residency chaplain at Duke University Medical Center after receiving her Master of Divinity from Gardner-Webb in 2011.

"It was a joy to work with Donna," Chacko shared. "I heard much about the school and the GWU community through her. I had previously met both Dr. Dickens and Dr. Casino. These connections positioned me well to engage the GWU community. I believe it was providential."

Chacko worked full-time at Duke University Medical Center while working on his degree. He felt encouraged throughout his time in the program and believes it has instilled an even greater sense of compassion for others. "Doing a Doctor of Ministry program along with full-time employment in a hospital was often challenging. I had to learn new ways to manage my time so that I was faithful in my job, my studies, and my family life all at the same time," Chacko declared. "My cohort group and the University faculty were so supportive throughout the program. I have also become more understanding of the challenges faced by students who are under my tutelage."

Passionate about serving churches globally by training pastors, Chacko believes that his Doctor of Ministry education has increased his knowledge and commitment to equip ministers to be better shepherds of God's people and the community.

"The program maintains a good balance of academic excellence and personal mentorship," he explained. "The seminars and coursework offer an environment that is conducive for reflection, trust, and growth. My professors took a keen interest in knowing me as a person more than a student. The program has enabled me to broaden my understanding of pastoral care by introducing me to literary resources and professors who are good role models in ministry."

His commitment to evangelism and mission work remains evident. He has ministered in South Asia, Far East Asia, the Middle East, and the U.S. In 2000, he helped establish the India Baptist Theological Seminary and served as its founding dean, administrator, and interim president. Currently, he volunteers as the vice president for Global Partnerships, leading missions teams of pastors, seminary professors, chaplains, teachers, and nurses to India.

"I was honored to be part of setting up the India Baptist Theological Seminary. These experiences helped me to



Left: Timothy, Biju, Annie, and Jonathan Chacko

learn the importance of education for ministry and the need for compassionate care to those in need," he reflected. "Pastoral care is one of my passions and I have pursued it from my early seminary days. Caring for individuals in their deepest time of distress is a privilege of utmost importance to me."

Chacko is married to Annie, who recently completed a medical office administration degree. His sons, Timothy and Jonathan, are active young men in the church, leading youth activities and music.

In Memoriam

The 1950s

ROBERT McMURRY '50

passed away Jan. 17, 2015. He was the husband of the late Margaret McMurry for 63 years, a veteran of the Army Air Force and a member of the American Legion. He was a deacon at First Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C., and an employee of the Bost Bakery for 33 years. He is survived by two children and four grandchildren.

R.B. DOBBINS '53

passed away March 3, 2015. He was the husband of the late Earlene Stroup Dobbins. He was a retired minister formerly serving at Mt. Paran Baptist Church in Blacksburg, S.C., as well as churches in Forest City and Cliffside, N.C. He was also the former owner and operator of Dobbins Concrete. He is survived by two children, three grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

PAUL DAVIS BREEDLOVE SR. '54

passed away April 12, 2013. He played football at Gardner-Webb and later graduated with a degree in business from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C. He retired from RJR Archer as credit manager in 1988, after 25 years of service. He was a member of New Friendship Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., for more than 40 years, where he taught Sunday school as long as his health allowed. He and his wife Dorothy, also a 1954 Gardner-Webb alumna, were founding members of Unity Baptist Church. After his retirement, he served as president of the N.C. Draft Horse and Mule Association. He was survived by his wife of 59 years, Dorothy, two children and five grandchildren.

NORMAN LIVENGOOD '59

passed away May 9, 2015. He was a member of the N.C. National Guard and a retired pastor of several churches in Guilford and Randolph counties in North Carolina. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Maxine, as well as three children and six grandchildren.

The 1960s

CHARLES DAVES '62

passed away May 27, 2015. He served in the U.S. Army from 1966-68 and retired from PPG Industries in Shelby, N.C., after more than 34 years of work. After retiring, he worked part time as a math instructor at Cleveland Community College in Shelby. He was a member and deacon at Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Shelby and was an avid golfer. He was a member of the basketball team at Gardner-Webb. He is survived by his wife, Ercell Daves, three children, and four grandchildren.

EZRA MUNN '62

passed away March 12, 2015. He retired as a salesman for Wix Filter Company. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in York, S.C., where he served as a deacon. Munn ran track and played football at Gardner-Webb. He is survived by his wife, Brenda, two sons, and several grandchildren.

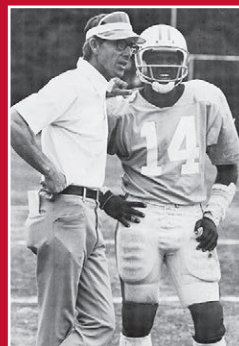
CLAYTON CHRISWELL '63

passed away May 28, 2015. He served in the U.S. Air Force and completed a tour of duty in the Vietnam War. He spent 30 years as a successful athletic director, head football coach, physical education teacher and guidance counselor. He is survived by his wife, Melody, three children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

EMERSON L. THOMAS '63

passed away March 25, 2015. After attending Gardner-Webb, he graduated from Western Carolina University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Drafting in 1966. He spent his entire career in the furniture business, starting in design, manufacturing and merchandising of upholstery and then as a sales representative. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Martha Hoke Thomas, two daughters, and one grandson.

Longtime College Coach, GWU Alum Passes Away



Jim Garrison 1980

He is survived by his wife, Joyce, three children, 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Jim Garrison ('53), who led the Chowan University football program to 185 wins in 37 years, passed away April 3, 2015. He spent more than 50 years of his life serving the Chowan community, including time in his final months.

"Chowan lost its first citizen with the passing of Jim Garrison," stated Chowan Vice President for Athletics Ozzie McFarland. "From the time I met him until the last time I saw Coach Garrison he talked of his extended family—his former players. While the loss is immeasurable, Coach Garrison lives on through the lives of his children and his players."

Garrison is a member of five Halls of Fame, including those associated with Gardner-Webb, the National Junior College Athletic Association, Western Carolina University, Chowan, and the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.



Jim Garrison 1964

Photos provided by Chowan University

Gardner-Webb Associate Professor Emerita Passes Away

Betty Logan Remembered as Business Educator, Community Volunteer

Written by Matthew Tessnear



Betty Logan

Betty Logan dedicated much of her life to educating high school and college business students and to serving the Gardner-Webb community. The Shelby (N.C.) native and longtime Forest City (N.C.) resident passed away Aug. 24 at the age of 89.

After earning her bachelor's degree in secretarial administration at Woman's College in Greensboro, now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Logan began her teaching career in 1947 in the business department at Kings Mountain (N.C.) High School. She then taught in the business department at Cool Springs High School in Forest City prior to joining Gardner-Webb in 1957.

In 1961, Logan earned her master's degree in education from Appalachian State University. She taught typewriting, shorthand, office procedure and office machines classes until 1974 in the business department at Gardner-Webb.

"Gardner-Webb will remember Betty Logan as a professor who dearly loved her students and who went above the call of duty to assist other faculty members by sharing her expertise in the use of office equipment," shared Dr. Bob Morgan, Gardner-Webb professor emeritus of French. "Betty had a very keen mind, which helped her to have a wonderful sense of humor. She was already on the faculty at Gardner-Webb when I joined in 1967. She was one of the people who made me feel so much at home."

After teaching, Logan became a transcript evaluator and worked in the position until her retirement from Gardner-Webb in 1989, when she was named associate professor emerita of business.

"During the years that Betty and I taught at Gardner-Webb, the motto was, 'People Who Care,'" Morgan reflected. "Betty was a living exemplification of that concept."

In her retirement, Logan remained heavily involved in her community. At First Baptist Church in Forest City, she served in various leadership positions, taught Sunday school and was a longtime member of the church choir. She also worked as a volunteer with the Rutherford Hospital Auxiliary and enjoyed a stitchery craft known as crewel. Her husband of 62 years, James Wells Logan, was also well known in the community as co-owner of the family business, Logan Hardware in Forest City.

GWU Alum, Radio Broadcaster Passes Away

Information contributed by *The Star* (Shelby, N.C.)

Dan Greer, known in Cleveland County (N.C.) communities for decades of broadcasting local sports on the radio, passed away April 11, 2015, at the age of 62.

Greer was a 1975 Gardner-Webb alumnus who served as the voice of local high school games and for Shelby Post 82 American Legion baseball.

Greer also worked as a member of the Gardner-Webb radio crew for basketball and football in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

He received the 2000 Paris Yelton Award, along with longtime radio announcing partner Andy Foster, for contributions to local sports at the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) Hall of Fame banquet.

“You don’t find people who stick with it like that, over 40 years,” Foster said of Greer. “He was one of a kind. I couldn’t have asked for a better partner.”



Dan Greer
Photo courtesy of *The Star* (Shelby, N.C.)

The 1970s

CLYDE WESSON ‘73

passed away March 18, 2015. He was the owner and operator of “The Village Pantry,” former owner of “Crest Chevron,” and owned an RC Cola Bottling Company franchise. He also was an advocate and supporter of children during his time as a teacher assistant and tutor at Boiling Springs (N.C.) Elementary School. He is survived by a daughter and four grandchildren.

DR. JANICE SALE ‘74

passed away May 26, 2015. She worked as an educator and administrator, including time at Central School, West Cleveland School, Boiling Springs Elementary School and Springmore Elementary School in Cleveland County, N.C. She later served as an assistant principal at Boiling Springs Elementary, Crest Middle and Fallston Elementary schools in Cleveland County. She was a member of Boiling Springs Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, N.C. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Larry Sale, two children, and two grandchildren.

CHARLES CHILDERS ‘76

passed away March 9, 2015. He was the husband of the late Sylvia Yelton Childers. He was retired from Western-Southern Insurance Company, was a sales associate at Hamrick’s Inc. and was a retired Army National Guard member. He was an active member of Southside Baptist Church in Gaffney, S.C. He is survived by his two children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The 1990s

MAXINE JOLLEY ‘92

passed away April 4, 2015. She was a Rutherford County (N.C.) native and retired as a lab tech in the textile industry. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Don, two children, and three grandchildren.

MATTHEW STEPHENS ‘96

passed away July 26, 2015. He was a seminary-trained pastor, a missionary to Prague, Czech Republic, from 1999 through 2003 and a hospice chaplain. He was also a musician, songwriter and arranger, fluent in multiple languages, and a mentor and counselor. He earned his Master of Divinity from Gardner-Webb. He is survived by his wife, his mother, four brothers and two sisters.

The 2000s

KEVIN CAMPBELL ‘01

passed away May 12, 2015. He served the Newton-Conover City Schools system (Newton, N.C.) for 21 years, beginning in 1994. He served as principal at Newton-Conover High School from 2007-2015. He was a youth group leader and Sunday school teacher at Trinity Baptist Church in Newton. He was an avid hunter and outdoorsman, and he loved spending time with his family. He is survived by his parents, his wife Kim, and two children.

MAURICE MCDANIEL ‘02

passed away July 20, 2015. He served as a longtime educator in the Burke County (N.C.) Public Schools system, was a former president of the Morganton (N.C.) Civitan Club and a lifelong member of Enon Baptist Church. He is survived by his mother, his wife Danielle, two children, and one grandchild.

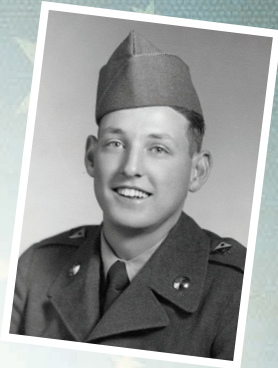
HEATHER HARLAN ‘09

passed away March 6, 2015. She was known for her sense of humor, her enjoyment of fishing and crime TV shows, crafting, exploring her spirituality and spending time with her family. She is survived by her mother and two children.



We are seeking military stories and photos from the Gardner-Webb family of alumni, students, faculty and staff to be displayed as part of a new location on the GWU main campus where we will honor those who have served—or are currently serving—the U.S.A.

If you or a member of your immediate family (mom, dad, sister, brother or child) is currently serving in active duty or is a veteran, please consider sending us a photo that represents your (or your loved one’s) service!



Fill out the following form and mail your photo to Mark Houser, Box 7315, Boiling Springs, NC 28017, email mahouser@gardner-webb.edu or visit gardner-webb.edu/military-stories and send us the information digitally. A formal announcement on this exciting project will be made soon.

Name of Submitter: _____

Name of Military Member: _____

Relationship to Military Member ____self ____ parent ____ sibling ____ child

Military Branch and Years of Service: _____

Current City/State (if living): _____

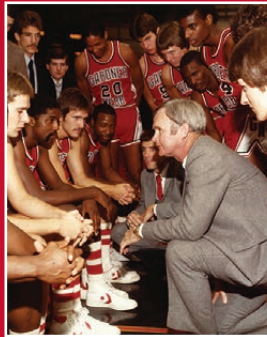
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Permission to use photo (please sign or initial): _____

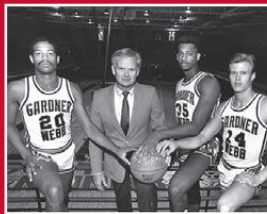
Description of Photo (a few lines about who is featured, where it was taken, the year it was taken, and any other relevant information):

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GWU Mourns Loss of Former Basketball Coach, Hall of Famer Jim Wiles



Jim Wiles



Gardner-Webb Athletics Hall of Famer and former men's basketball coach Jim Wiles passed away Aug. 18, 2015, at the age of 76.

Wiles served as head coach of the Runnin' Bulldogs from 1978-1990, posting a 221-149 record during his 12 seasons at the helm. During that time, Wiles led Gardner-Webb to six 20-win seasons and two NAIA National Tournament berths.

Wiles was inducted into the Gardner-Webb Athletics Hall of Fame on Nov. 1, 2002.

Wiles wasted no time winning games in Boiling Springs, going 24-6 in his first season on the sidelines. That squad topped the 100-point mark six times. He followed by winning 23 games in his second season and 25 as a third-year head coach.

The Wilkesboro, N.C., native coached two NBA Draft picks during his time with the Runnin' Bulldogs—center Eddie Lee Wilkins (New York Knicks) and swingman Ben Davis (Cleveland Cavaliers). Both Wilkins and Davis are now in the Gardner-Webb Athletics Hall of Fame. Wilkins, who earned NAIA All-America honors in 1983 and 1984, ranks second on the school's all-time scoring (2,361 points) and rebounding (1,103 rebounds) lists.

Another standout post player under Wiles—Stan Easterling—ranks third on that same list in both categories, having scored 2,134 points and pulled down 1,062 rebounds from 1985-1989.

Prior to his career at Gardner-Webb, Wiles served as head coach at Anderson Junior College from 1968-1978. He forged a 248-65 record with the Trojans (.792 winning percentage), with three undefeated seasons and five NJCAA National Tournament appearances.

In addition to his place in Gardner-Webb's Athletics Hall of Fame, Wiles is also a member of the Anderson Athletic Hall of Fame and the North Wilkes (N.C.) High School Hall of Fame.



Longtime GWU Supporter, Leader Hoyt Bailey Passes Away

Former Trustee, Hall of Fame Inductee Remembered as Lifetime Advocate for Education

Written by Matthew Tessnear



Hoyt Bailey

Hoyt Q. Bailey's commitment to education started when he was a young boy, and it became a major part of the fabric that wove together the man he was throughout his life. Bailey, who passed away Aug. 15, 2015, at the age of 88, will be remembered as a longtime leader at Gardner-Webb University and in the community.

"My mother thought there were only three things in the world, and that was God, family and education, so she made sure her three children received an education," Bailey shared as he was inducted into the GWU School of Education Hall of Fame's inaugural class. "My grandfather had five daughters who graduated from college in 1917, and that was very difficult in those days. So we've been a very educational family, and I continue to see the needs of it everywhere I go."

Among a host of other education leadership, philanthropic and advocacy roles, Bailey served as a trustee and major supporter of Gardner-Webb, and he received an honorary doctorate from the University in the late 1990s.

Bailey grew up in Shelby (N.C.), earned a bachelor's degree at N.C. State University, and forged a successful career in textiles in Cleveland County, first with J.P. Stevens and then Dover Textiles, where he worked for his father-in-law. He later became president of

his own company, DTI Yarn Sales Inc.

His wife Anne Dover, a UNC-Chapel Hill graduate, worked as a teacher, served on the board of directors of the Co-Founder Club of the UNC Medical Foundation and also served Gardner-Webb as director of the Christian Service Organization. "She was with me in everything I did," Bailey recalled. "Education was her life, too. I think about her and life just starts over again."

His wife's family started the Dover Foundation Inc.—which has been instrumental in providing thousands of dollars in college scholarships to high school students and support for countless other educational endeavors in Cleveland County—and Bailey served the organization as a board member, director and president.

Committed to improving the lives of children and the education of youth and adults, Bailey also founded the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland County, chaired the Cleveland County Schools Board of Education and the Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees, and he served on the

board of trustees at his alma mater N.C. State. He received the Raleigh Dingman Most Outstanding School Board Member award in 1995.

"You start putting all of that together and it's pretty amazing," reflected Scoot Dixon, a former longtime Gardner-Webb senior staff member and Bailey's friend. "Hoyt Bailey has always had a very significant commitment to improving the quality of education in our region. That's always been very clear in his mind in all of his roles. His belief was that if we can improve the quality of education we can improve the quality of life for the people of our region, and that's been the case over and over again. So many of his philanthropic efforts are aimed at improving the quality of education and opportunities for young people. He is a special person, and we'd be hard-pressed to find anyone who's made as many commitments to so many organizations with the primary purpose of education."

Bailey credited other community leaders for establishing a devotion to educational excellence, praising people such as Malcolm Brown for his work to create programs and Eddie Holbrook for his work to develop facilities and programs to benefit people through education.

"We have community leaders who came along far before me and saw a need for education," Bailey explained. "We're very fortunate to have what we have in our community. What is better than education? I'm proud to be a part of it."



19TH ANNUAL RUBY C. HUNT YMCA

the TURKEY TROT & KIDS FUN RUN

Thanksgiving Day

8:30 am - 5K

9:30 am - Kids Fun Run

5K RUN/WALK & KIDS FUN RUN

Contact info:

www.clevecoymca.org or 704-434-0441

Business Professor Remembered for Helping Students with Professional Experience

Written by Matthew Tessnear



Dr. Charles Tichenor

Prior to coming to Gardner-Webb, Tichenor built a résumé of global experiences with service in the military, in the business world and in other institutions of higher education. He completed his bachelor's degree in Naval Science and Tactics and mathematics at Duke University (Durham, N.C.) in 1945. In the following year, he served as a U.S. Navy officer in combat areas in the Pacific Theater and China. After his military service, he worked for Kraft Inc. for 20 years, including time as vice president of marketing.

During his career, Tichenor graduated from the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Advanced Management Program (Cambridge, Mass.) and the Doctor of Business Administration program at Berne University (Switzerland). Among his many achievements, Tichenor was also a member of the board of directors of multiple U.S. and foreign corporations, and he earned two gold medals and one silver medal in U.S. tennis and racquetball championship competition.

After several years as senior operating vice president in the management of several subsidiary corporations, Tichenor became chairman, president and chief executive officer of Champale Inc. Sparkling Beverages in the 1970s and 1980s. He directed highly successful sales efforts and several U.S. plants and branches, with international offices in London, Toronto, Chicago, San Juan in Puerto Rico, and Port of Spain in Trinidad.

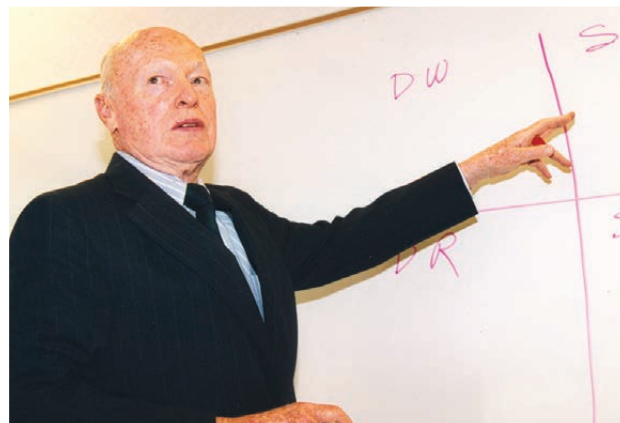
Tichenor then worked at several higher education institutions in the 1980s and 1990s.

Following the 2012-13 academic year, Tichenor was honored upon his retirement from Gardner-Webb. His wife, Helen, serves as GWU's director of international programs.

Dr. Charles Tichenor brought a world of experience to Gardner-Webb University, and as a professor of business and distinguished corporation chief executive in the Godbold School of Business he offered a world of opportunities to his students. Tichenor, a U.S. Navy veteran and former international business executive, passed away May 19, 2015. He was 89.

Tichenor came to Gardner-Webb in 1997, and several years later he founded the business school's Graduates in Executive Management (GEM) program, which offers exceptional students courses taught by elite business professionals and a study-abroad experience.

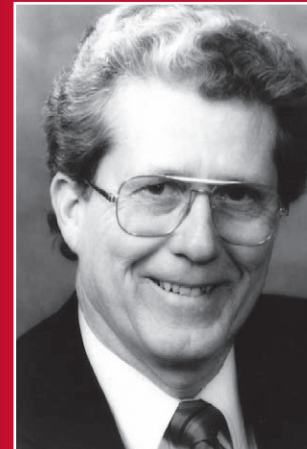
"Charles was a gem of a professor and a gem of a person," offered Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, former dean of the GWU Godbold School of Business. "He loved our students, he loved the business school, and he was loved by all of his students. He was someone who brought the business experience to the classroom, and he helped us tremendously by regularly connecting our students with CEOs and jobs. In my opinion, he was one of the all-time best professors in the business school."



GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner and Dr. Charles Tichenor

Former Vice President John Brock Remembered for Kindness, Drive to Succeed

Written by Matthew Tessnear



John Brock

In more than a decade of service to Gardner-Webb, John Brock's work made lasting impacts on an array of people and programs.

From his efforts to increase enrollment for the School of Divinity and the Master of Business Administration program, to his mentorship of a college theater program and his creation of film and television courses, he is remembered for advancing the mission and the reach of the institution as it transitioned from college to university status. Brock passed away in June 2014 at the age of 81.

Brock came to Gardner-Webb in 1986 as a history teacher and went on to serve in a variety of roles across campus. His positions included visiting professor of communications and fine arts, director of theater, special assistant to the president, director of marketing, executive director of the Broyhill Academy for the Study of Independent Concepts, and vice president for marketing.

Brock played a major part in increasing Gardner-Webb's enrollment, with a growth rate of about 10 percent each year during his tenure. When he retired as Gardner-Webb's vice president in 1997, the second retirement of his career, the University had eclipsed the 3,000-student mark.

"John was a human dynamo. He didn't accept barriers or admonitions from the faint-of-heart who tried to convince him something couldn't be done," reflected Dr. Gil Blackburn, a longtime GWU vice president and dean who served alongside Brock and remembers him as a friend and

colleague. "He succeeded in a wonderful array of human endeavors by a combination of imagination, will, intelligence and bulldog tenacity."

Before focusing his career on academics, Brock worked as a filmmaker, musician, writer, newspaper editor and publisher, and entrepreneur in businesses that included oil and air conditioning. A graduate of Mars Hill College, Wake Forest University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he completed master's degree work, he was also a U.S. Army veteran who served in the Korean War era.

After his retirement from Gardner-Webb, he and his wife, Barbara, moved to Georgetown, S.C., where he was a well-known columnist for several South Carolina newspapers and the author of the book, "Southern Breezes Whistle Dixie." He also served as a consultant to several colleges and universities.

Throughout his life, Brock was active in many church and civic groups, including more than 30 years as a Sunday school teacher and time as a deacon in North Carolina and time as a church leader in South Carolina.

"John was hard-driving, and because he was so determined to succeed, few people knew how kind and compassionate he was," Blackburn shared. "I was privileged to be the recipient of John's kindness on many occasions. He would drop what he was doing to help a friend in distress. He was a dear friend and a unique and memorable leader, and I miss him terribly."



Art Walk

Retired GWU Emeriti Experience Mutual Interests in Art, Nature

Written by Matt Renfer



While retirement marks the end of a career path, for Drs. Les and Joyce Brown, it has meant the close of one chapter and the beginning of another—a storied walk together in art and nature.

Dr. Les Brown is a Gardner-Webb Professor Emeritus who taught biology for 40 years, while Dr. Joyce Brown is a Professor Emerita in English who taught for 39 years. For them, transitioning to retirement in 2005 was a naturally foreign process at first.

“Our lives had been focused on Gardner-Webb for so long that we couldn’t imagine a different life,” Joyce said. “But Boiling Springs is a good place for retirees and we began to enjoy the community and the opportunities it offered for us to find a place. Both painting and writing helped us to realize the importance of accepting and enjoying life’s challenges in dealing with change.”



Drs. Joyce and Les Brown at Les’ retirement party



Dr. Joyce Brown

the amusing aspects of everyday life for us oldsters.”

Later in their retirement, they moved to Joyce’s hometown of Troutman, N.C. In seeking community and activities in Troutman, they started a writing group and a book group at the Troutman Library while continuing to take art classes at Mitchell Community College in Statesville, N.C. Les co-taught a three-week field course on the ecology and geology of the desert southwest with his friend and colleague, Dr. Tom Jones, a current Gardner-Webb professor.

Les became president of the long-established Appalachian Writer’s Association, a position he held for three years. “We established a relationship between the society and Gardner-Webb University’s Southern Appalachian Cultural Festival and held our meetings on the campus in conjunction with the Gardner-Webb event,” Les said. “For two years, Joyce and I conducted the Appalachian Book of the Year contest sponsored by



the Appalachian Writer’s Association, a long and respected contest recognizing the best volume of fiction, nonfiction and poetry each year.”

In August 2015, Joyce released a collection of poetry, entitled “Bequest,” published by Finishing Line Press (for more, see Bookmarks on page 56). Her poems recall the childhood stories of ancestry, particularly featuring poetry about the women of her heritage. She has also had several poems accepted for publication in various literary journals.

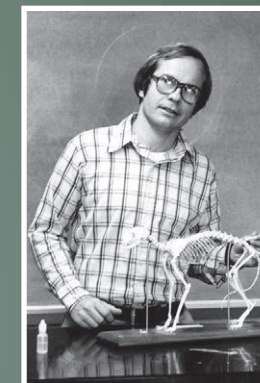
Throughout their retirement, exploring nature has been part of their shared experience and joy. “We’ve spent time at our trailer on our land at Linville Mountain with its pristine little creek called Stillhouse Branch, where I became an expert with the chainsaw in clearing trails,” Les said. “We bought two kayaks that we enjoy in the quieter waters of Lake Norman.”

The two continue to hike with Gardner-Webb friends as they did for years before retirement. When they’re not traveling to the mountains, the Carolina coast and to Florida for the winter—their favorite places for nature viewing and photography—Les is gardening tomatoes from raised beds at home.

Along their post-career journey together, they haven’t forgotten the impact Gardner-Webb has had on their lives. “It’s wonderful to see former students leading fulfilling professional and personal lives as demonstrated in their Facebook photos,” Joyce said.

“We do not miss the paper grading and committee meetings, but we do miss our interaction with students,” Les said. “I believe our enthusiasm for life comes from our students’ youthful exuberance.”

“I wish for as many good surprises in the future as we’ve had thus far in this retirement journey,” Joyce said.



Dr. Les Brown

FLASHBACK

THE WEBB
GARDNER-WEBB COLLEGE
BOILING SPRINGS, N. C., SEPTEMBER 1969
No. 1

NEW ERA BEGINS AS FIRST JUNIOR CLASS ARRIVES
Over 1,300 Students Register For Classes

Gardner-Webb College will make available a Baccalaureate Program with eight divisions and 16 departments in its initial efforts toward senior status. There will also be an Associate Degree Program which includes the Department of Nursing and some few associate degrees in the area of secretarial science and data processing.

Gardner-Webb will award the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees in the spring of 1971 to students who successfully complete 128 semester hours of work with a 2.0 or better quality point average.

Students, to receive the degree, must complete their final 30 hours of work at GW and should fulfill all the college's basic (core curriculum) requirements and the requirements of their major field.

The following arrangement is the basic academic program now offered at the college:

BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM
(A minimum of 128 semester hours is required for graduation).

- Division of General Business
- Department of Data Processing
- Department of Education and Psychology
- Department of Education
- Department of Psychology
- Division of Fine Arts
- Department of Art
- Department of Music
- Department of Theatre Arts and Speech
- Division of Health Education and Physical Education
- Department of Languages and Literature
- Division of Languages and Literature
- Department of Ancient Languages and Literature
- Department of English Language and Literature
- Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literature
- Division of Mathematics and Natural Science
- Department of Mathematics and Geology
- Department of Mathematics and Physics
- Division of Religious Studies
- Department of Religion
- Department of Religious Education
- Division of Social Science
- Department of Associated Social Sciences
- Department of History

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS
SEPTEMBER

- 1—8:00 A. M. Classes Begin.
- 2—Chapel, Gym, required, 7 P.M.
- 4—Assembly or organization 9:30-10:30 (T); 7 P.M.
- 9:30-10:30 (T); 7 P.M.
- 11—YDC 9:30-10:30 (T).
- 13—Chowan—Away—Football
- 16—9:30 D. A. S. Sande
- 7:30 College Women's
- 18—8:00 P. M.—The Cl

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SHOW YOUR BULLDOG PRIDE BY WEARING RED AND BLACK ON FRIDAYS.

THEN...

TAKE A PHOTO, SHARE IT WITH US USING #GWUALUMNIPRIDE.



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Matt Skeen

Strength & Conditioning Coach
Hendrick Motor Sports



Karen Brower Rhodes

Director of Public Relations
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