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GARDNER-WEBB

Volume 54, 2019

THE MAGAZINE



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GARDNER-WEBB • THE MAGAZINE

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The Gardner-Webb Magazine is the official magazine of Gardner-Webb University, and it is published by the Division of University Communications and Marketing.

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Preparing Leaders for Generations to Come

Dear Friends of Gardner-Webb University,

I am pleased to share with you this latest issue of Gardner Webb: The Magazine, our signature publication for alumni and friends of the University. In the pages that follow, I hope that you will enjoy catching up on the successes of our students, the expertise of our faculty, and the dedication of our staff. I am confident you will be impressed, and I invite you to follow us throughout 2020 as we continue our mission to serve our community, our state, and our broader region.

My GWU journey began July 1, 2019. As Gardner-Webb's 13th President, I have the privilege and the responsibility of leading our institution forward into a bright and promising future. I take that responsibility very seriously, and I am energized each day by all that we are and all that we can become.

This is a special place with an important mission. I like who we are as a university. The more I learn about our people and programs, the more I meet with our students, our alumni, and our friends in the region, the more I like who we are. I am proud of the value we bring to our students and to our partners near and far. I like that we are starting this new chapter in Gardner-Webb's story by being creative, entrepreneurial, and outward looking. It is an exciting time, to say the least!

We are busy with our most pressing priorities. Ensuring Gardner-Webb is a destination of first choice for students of all backgrounds is one top priority. The marketplace for college-ready high school graduates has never been more crowded or more competitive. In response, we are making clear to high school seniors across this state—smart, talented, ambitious students

not just from Cleveland County, but from Mecklenburg, Guilford, Wake and indeed everywhere from Currituck to Cherokee—that they should make Gardner-Webb University their first destination. No matter where they come from, students who join us will ultimately graduate ready to be part of the state's next generation of leaders.

We will stay true to our longstanding mission to serve and enrich the western region of North Carolina while also connecting our community nationally and globally. We do not believe Gardner-Webb should ever again be called a “hidden gem” or the state's “best kept secret.” We are working to be more visible in the immediate community, and we are projecting our advertising nationally in support of signature degree programs such as the 10-month MBA and the RN-to-BSN. We are rapidly increasing our capacity to spread the good news of the University through social media, and at latest count we have close to 27,000 followers.

We will be committed to being North Carolina's recognized leader in Christian higher education. This is our heritage, this is our identity, and this is our future. *Pro Deo et Humanitate.*

This Gardner-Webb magazine showcases some of the excellence that resides in our university. It also affords us the opportunity to thank the many alumni, friends, and donors who provide invaluable support to Gardner-Webb. On behalf of our faculty, staff, and students, please know how grateful we are for your support! Thank you for everything each of you does to support the people and programs of Gardner-Webb University!

William M. Downs

President, Gardner-Webb University



“We will stay true to our longstanding mission to serve and enrich the western region of North Carolina while also connecting our community nationally and globally.”



A New Era of Leadership



What an exciting time this is for our University. On behalf of the board of trustees of Gardner-Webb, it is my pleasure to write today about fantastic happenings of which we can all be proud. We welcome our new President, Dr. William (Bill) Downs. As the unanimous choice by our Presidential Search Committee, Dr. Downs

brings us tremendous leadership, experience and energy. I know that our Gardner-Webb community is eager to help Dr. Downs as he leads us to new heights and achievements.

On behalf of the board, I want to thank Dr. Ben Leslie for his leadership during the transition. As everyone probably knows, Dr. Leslie has long been an irreplaceable leader, serving as Provost and Executive Vice President. During the transition, Dr. Leslie took the mantle serving as Interim President, helping to guide the way for Dr. Downs' arrival. I know that I join everyone in our Gardner-Webb community in thanking Dr. Leslie for his leadership and guidance during the transition.

The board of trustees is fortunate to have a diverse group of men and women who provide active leadership. I can tell you without

hesitation that the board is energized and eager to help every member of the faculty, staff and student body in our university community. This leadership and desire to build a strong university was evident when the hard choice to freeze tuition for all of our current students was made. This was a first in our school's history. Although costs continue to rise, our financial department headed by Mike Hardin made sure that the board's vision regarding tuition would be achieved. Mike and his team worked tirelessly to find ways to balance the budget even with the tuition freeze.

I am humbled and honored to serve as chair of the board of trustees. As the first woman to lead the board in its history, I can assure you that the board is committed to ensuring that our great university provides outstanding education to its students and prepares them for their chosen professions. Embracing our faith and strengthened by our effective leadership, we are poised for a strong future. Together, we can change lives for the better. This is truly an exciting time in Gardner-Webb's history.

In gratitude,

Jennifer Marion Mills

Chair, Gardner-Webb Board of Trustees

NEWS & NOTES



OnlineColleges.com Ranks GWU Fourth in the State

Gardner-Webb University was recognized for exceptional web-based learning opportunities by OnlineColleges.com, based in Foster City, Calif. The educational resource named GWU to its 2018 list of Top 10 Online Colleges in North Carolina.

Gardner-Webb ranked fourth in the state, ahead of several larger institutions, including Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“We are certainly gratified by the recognition,” affirmed Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU provost and executive vice president. “We are committed to value at Gardner-Webb and making our programs as affordable as possible. But we are also committed to providing a creative, engaging and high-quality learning experience to our students in the online environment. Online education is nothing new at Gardner-Webb. We were pioneers in the field 20 years ago and have the experience and the resources to deliver a product that students find attractive.”

OnlineColleges.com ranks colleges based on information from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Among the factors considered were the number of programs offered, average in-state tuition for undergraduates, total electronic library collections (digital books, databases, and media), graduation rate and retention rate.



Supporters of Gardner-Webb University Break Records on #DoubleDawgDay

Officials at Gardner-Webb University thanked supporters for their part in the record-breaking success of #DoubleDawgDay, the University’s annual day of giving to support student scholarships. More than 210 donors gave \$227,484—exceeding last year’s total and more than doubling the year’s goal.

Helping to increase the total was a \$100,000 gift to establish the Allred-Decker Endowed Scholarship Fund. This new scholarship fund will provide GWU students with invaluable internship opportunities.

GWU President, Dr. William Downs, expressed his gratitude for the generous gifts. “As the newest Runnin’ Bulldog, I am grateful and thrilled to see such strong support for students on #DoubleDawgDay,” he noted. “Your investment in our students is vital to their success, and

it helps solidify GWU as a recognized leader in Christian higher education.”

Sara McCall, GWU’s director of Annual Giving, also contributed the event’s success to donors who made a second challenge for individuals to give to a specific scholarship. “Donors to those funds saw their gift matched twice,” McCall explained. “These challenges are what make #DDD so much fun to be a part of—a little friendly competition and a chance to make a real difference in a student’s life.”

One-hundred percent of the gifts on #DoubleDawgDay go to support scholarships awarded to students. McCall reinforced, “With more than 97 percent of students receiving some form of scholarship or financial aid, it’s easy to see why this annual day of giving is so important.”

"We were impressed with his genuine joyfulness. He greeted us by imploring, 'Pray for me!' and we assured him that we do and would continue to do so."

REV. DR. STEVEN R. HARMON



Associate Professor Visits with Pope During Baptist-Catholic Meetings



An associate professor from the Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity attended a series of Baptist-Catholic meetings held in Rome, Italy. The Rev. Dr. Steven R. Harmon was among representatives of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) who met with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Included in the week of ecumenical dialogue was a meeting with Pope Francis during the general papal audience. "When we met Pope Francis, we were impressed with his genuine joyfulness," Harmon reflected. "He greeted us by imploring, 'Pray for me!' and we assured him that we do and would continue to do so. He

also said to us, 'We must find a way to get together, or they will eat us raw!' We interpreted this to mean something like, 'If we don't find a way to live in unity, the enemies of the gospel will eat us alive!'"

Harmon, who teaches historical theology at Gardner-Webb, served as the secretary for the Baptist delegation co-chair, the Rev. Dr. Frank Rees, associate professor and chair of the Academic Board at the University of Divinity in Australia. Since 1984, the BWA and the Catholic Church have participated in several joint meetings. Harmon served as a member of the Baptist delegation from 2006 to 2010.



Alpha Chi Members Earn Top Prizes at National Convention

The elite academic team from Alpha Chi received several awards at the honor society's national convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

Bethany Leap, of Sarasota, Fla., a global studies major, won a Region III graduate fellowship and position of first alternate for the National Benedict Graduate Fellowship for her essay "Ticking Time Bombs: The Effects of Indiscriminate Violence on Civil War Outcomes." Her mentor was Dr. Casey Delehanty.

Olivia Simmons, of Advance, N.C., a biology major with a biomedical sciences concentration, won a national Nolle Scholarship for her essay "Disney Movies and Children's Perceptions of Death." Her mentor was Dr. June Hobbs, Alpha Chi sponsor and GWU professor of English and director of Undergraduate Research.

Madeline Bame, of Gastonia, N.C., a music education major, won a presentation prize for the Best Paper in The Educational Research/Scholarship category for "An Examination of the Relationships Between Music

Education and Graduation Rates in Title I Schools in North Carolina." Dr. Morgan Soja was her mentor.

James Withrow, who competed as a GWU alumnus, won the Best Graduate School/Alumni Presentation Prize for "Cryptic 'Royal' Subfamilies in Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) Colonies." Withrow, who graduated from Gardner-Webb in 2012 with degrees in music and biology, is a Ph.D candidate at North Carolina State University (Raleigh, N.C.)

Taylor Hildebrand, of Connelly Springs, N.C., a middle grades mathematics education major, won a seat on the national council, the governing body of national Alpha Chi, as a student representative from Region III. This is a significant honor, because Hildebrand will help shape policy and programs for the next two years.

In addition, Hildebrand was a member of a team that presented a sophisticated collaborative research project on the polarizing effects of gender in the workplace. Other team members were:

- Morgan VanderSchaaf, of Jenison,

Mich., a nursing major.

- Callista Eckert, of Newnan, Ga., an English and pre-med major.
- Kristen Wong, of Richmond Hill, Ontario, a biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences.
- Hope Miller, of Harrisburg, N.C., a nursing major.
- Celsea Reeder, of Salisbury, N.C., a biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences and double minor in chemistry and Spanish.

Individual presentations were also given by Sydney Hardin, of Shelby, N.C., a music education major; Damian Hutchins, of Cherryville, N.C., a biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences; Eckert and VanderSchaaf.

Before the convention ended, Alpha Chi members visited Paul L. Dunbar Academy in Cleveland to read to children in the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. National Alpha Chi's service project was a partnership with RIF to promote children's literacy. Through these efforts, Alpha Chi raised over \$2,000 and donated 120 books.



GWU Program for Teacher Assistants Addresses State's Need for Educators

To address North Carolina's need for elementary teachers, Gardner-Webb launched a new program during the fall semester 2019. Under the guidance of Dr. Prince Bull, dean of the School of Education, GWU introduced "TA to Teacher" for qualified teacher assistants. This program is offered fully online, and includes a scholarship and other unique features for adult learners.

Teacher assistants who are currently employed in a public school are eligible if they have a bachelor's degree, associate's degree or some college credits. Candidates need a 3.0 GPA to be admitted to the teacher education program and should maintain a 3.0 throughout their course of study.

The program's unique feature is its support system for students. In addition to the course instructor, each candidate will have a school district mentor, an assessor and an advisor. The school district mentor will be a licensed, experienced teacher, who has been evaluated at the proficient level and is National Board Certified. The assessors will be GWU School of Education doctoral candidates, who are principals, assistant principals and other leaders.





GOAL Human Services Degree Realigned to Meet Needs of Profession

Gardner-Webb University's GOAL—The Degree Completion Program realigned the Bachelor of Science in Human Services to better equip students who want to serve their communities. Offered fully online, the program's core curriculum prepares students to take the Human Services Board Certified Practitioner Exam if they choose, and it includes concentration options in non-profit leadership, family dynamics, clinical/pre-counseling, substance abuse and generalist.

Dr. Erin Cook, program coordinator and assistant professor in Human Services, refined the curriculum after consulting with alumni, current students, national boards and employers to determine the skills that students need to address the problems of today's clients.

"Many of our students want to make a

difference and serve their community," Cook explained. "Seven new classes have been built as a piece of this realignment." Classes include focus on fundraising for non-profits, organizational mission, board of director development, and leadership within organizational structures.

This online program is designed to be engaging and interactive. Courses are asynchronous, which allows students to complete assignments within a structured and focused time frame. Instructors offer extra virtual discussion sessions at different times to accommodate work schedules. Additionally, projects in each course require students to interact with professionals in their own communities.

For more information, email Cook at ecook2@gardner-webb.edu or visit gardner-webb.edu/human-services-degree.

This online program is designed to be engaging and interactive. Courses are asynchronous, which allows students to complete assignments within a structured and focused time frame.



GWU's New Doctor of Nursing Practice Programs Earn Regional Accreditation Approval

The Hunt School of Nursing (HSON) at Gardner-Webb University received accreditation approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) for its new Doctor of Nursing Practice programs for Family Nurse Practitioners (DNP-FNP) and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (DNP-PMHNP). The first cohort of students began in Fall Semester 2019.

The DNP-FNP transitions the Master of Science in Nursing–Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN-FNP) to a doctoral entry level program.

“The MSN-FNP program has been successful in preparing primary care providers for our region, and currently has over 120 practicing nurse practitioners across the southeast region of the U.S.,” noted Dr. Anna S. Hamrick, GWU assistant professor of nursing and chair, doctoral nursing programs. “Graduate faculty designed an innovative curriculum for the DNP-FNP and DNP-PMHNP that prepares excellent, direct patient care clinicians, as well as nurse leaders of the future. Students take a variety of courses developing a strong scientific foundation for assessment, diagnosis and treatment of diverse patient populations. In addition, the curriculum prepares the graduate with an overview of the social determinants of health, population health, financial implications of practice, and the need for advocacy.”





Over 900 Graduates Honored During Four Commencement Ceremonies

During the 2018-2019 academic year at Gardner-Webb University, over 900 graduates were honored for earning associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from a variety of university programs.

In the August ceremony, Dr. Jim McConnell, assistant professor of New Testament interpretation, provided the commencement message, which was titled, "Can't We All Just Get Along?" He urged graduates to work toward unity instead of divisiveness.

The December ceremony featured GWU's retiring president, Dr. Frank Bonner, as the speaker.

In his address, Bonner reflected on his time at Gardner-Webb, quoted portions of his 2006 inaugural speech and described how he was experiencing similar feelings as the graduates on their monumental day.

At the May ceremonies, two students who passed away before receiving their diplomas were remembered. A special presentation was made to the family of Jalin Terrill Lawson at the morning ceremony



for traditional undergraduate and GOAL-The Degree Completion Program students. A junior at GWU at the time of his tragic accident in 2017, Lawson would have walked with the class of 2019 to receive his diploma. During the afternoon ceremony for graduate students, a doctoral degree was

awarded posthumously to Latoya Bridgers Gantt. The 38-year-old was nearing the completion of her coursework when she tragically passed away in the fall of 2018.

Dr. Gerald Keown, retired associate dean of the School of Divinity and professor of Old Testament Interpretation, delivered the commencement message for both ceremonies. His address was titled, "*Pro Deo et Humanitate: Life With Purpose and Meaning*," and focused on practicing the University's motto (*For God and Humanity*) in everyday life.

"Wherever your vocational path may take you, become an advocate for justice on behalf of those who desperately need justice," Keown challenged. "Be welcoming of strangers, knowing that sometimes the stranger may be you. Never let anyone tell you that one person can't make a difference. Your voice and actions in the service of persons may encourage others to do what they know is the right thing, but are a bit fearful of looking different."

Faculty and Staff Honored in Annual Program

Gardner-Webb honored outstanding faculty and staff members during the University's annual "Apples and Accolades" program.

The 2019 Excellence in Teaching Award was presented to Dr. Bruce Moser, assistant professor of music. A former winner of the faculty's Rising Star Award, Moser is known for his exceptional skill in the classroom and his service to the University through multiple committees and as a champion of undergraduate research.

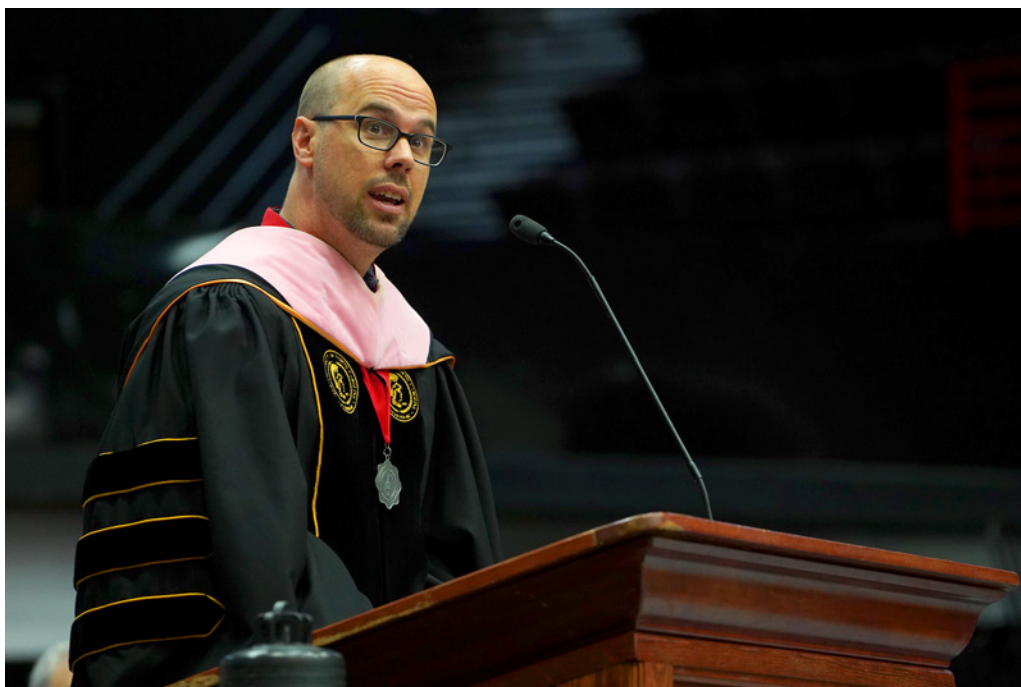
Moser teaches piano, piano pedagogy and literature, music history and music theory. He received his bachelor's degree from Stetson University, his master's from New England Conservatory of Music and his doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Staff Member of the Year Award recipients include Donna Filer, database administrator, and Keith Thomas, multimedia support technician. Filer was honored for her dedication to customer service and ability to communicate well. Thomas was recognized as a troubleshooter and problem solver, who has a can-do attitude and remains calm under pressure.

Five GWU faculty and staff members were recognized upon their retirement from the University, and select individuals received emeriti status. Emeriti rank at Gardner-Webb is reserved for those who have retired from full-time teaching at the University with at least 15 years of service as a member of the faculty. The position is recommended by faculty through an academic department, the Administrative Advisory Committee and the University administration. The board of trustees then appoints the retired faculty member to emeriti status.



Dr. Sue Camp received emerita status as a professor of business administration.



Dr. Bruce Moser, who received the 2019 Excellence in Teaching Award, spoke at the opening convocation for the 2019 Fall Semester.

The 2019 retirees and Emeriti status recipients included:

- **Glenn Bottoms**, 1983-2018, professor emeritus of economics and management
- **Nancy Bottoms**, 1993-2019, professor emerita of English and art
- **Sue Camp**, 1976-2018, professor emerita of business administration
- **Donna Ellington**, 1988-2019, professor emerita of history
- **Gerald Keown**, 1996-2019, professor emeritus of biblical studies
- **Sara McNeely**, 2010-2019, instructor of health, sport and physical education



Rusty Stroupe



Chandler Redmond



Justin Kunz

GWU Baseball Celebrates Success and Announces Changes

Gardner-Webb head baseball coach Rusty Stroupe, the program's all-time wins leader at 481 victories, retired at the end of the 2019 season. Jim Chester, who spent the previous two seasons as the head coach at Barton College (Wilson, N.C.), is the new head coach of the Runnin' Bulldogs. He brings a total of 16 years of collegiate coaching experience to GWU.

Stroupe ended his 17th season at GWU with 25 wins during his final season as head coach. Two players, senior infielder Chandler Redmond and senior catcher Justin Kunz, earned postseason honors as well as offers from Major League Baseball (MLB) teams.

Redmond was named the 2019 Big South Conference Baseball Player of the Year, the first Runnin' Bulldog to earn the award, and was chosen for First-Team All-Conference and All-Academic Team honors. Kunz was also named First-Team All-Conference.

The two were drafted on the third day

of the 2019 MLB First-Year Player Draft. Redmond was selected by the St. Louis Cardinals. A native of Middletown, Md., he finished the 2019 regular season as the Big South's top power hitter, leading the league in home runs (18), RBI (58) and slugging percentage (.672).

Kunz, picked by the Los Angeles Angels, led GWU in batting average, belting a team-high 14 doubles as well as 11 home runs. The Wake Forest, N.C., native led the Big South in runs scored at 57 and was named as one of 14 semifinalists for the 2019 Buster Posey Award, given to the nation's top catcher.

Overall, Stroupe spent 29 seasons on the diamond, also coaching at Lander, Brevard and North Greenville. He was honored in 2012 by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes with the prestigious Jerry Kindall Character in Coaching Award. In 2019, Stroupe was named Big South Coach of the Year, his first time to receive the award while at Gardner-Webb.

Stroupe led two different Gardner-

Webb teams to their respective conference championship games, with runner-up finishes in the Atlantic Sun Conference (2008) and the Big South Conference (2011). Stroupe's teams hold 17 single-season records offensively, including the top-three home run totals in school history. During his time at Gardner-Webb, Stroupe has seen 15 of his players go on to play professionally.

New head coach Jim Chester was named 2019 Conference Carolinas Coach of the Year after leading Barton to the biggest turnaround nationally in NCAA Division II. He led the Barton Bulldogs to a 31-20 overall record in 2019, earning a second-place finish in the Conference Carolinas standings. Barton had five players earn All-Conference honors.

Prior to his time at Barton, Chester spent three seasons as the head coach at Division II Lock Haven (Pa.) University, taking a program that was 13-28 overall prior to his arrival to a 32-18 overall record in 2017.



Maximilian Scholl and Coach Mike Griffith

GWU Tennis Earns Big South Championship and Conference Honors

After leading the men's tennis team to its first-ever Big South regular season championship in 2019 with a 4-2 win over Longwood, Mike Griffith garnered Coach of the Year accolades and players Maximilian Scholl and Millen Hurrión received First-Team All-Big South Conference honors for singles and doubles, respectively.

Griffith, who was originally hired in 2002, has led the Runnin' Bulldogs to double-digit wins in each of the past six seasons. He's also had numerous athletes named Intercollegiate Tennis Association Academic All-Americans.

Born in Greenwood, S.C., Griffith grew up in Gastonia, N.C., and earned his Associate of Arts degree from Anderson

in 1986 and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Winthrop in 1988, where he was a two-time All-Conference honoree. While at Anderson, Griffith led the men's tennis squad to a victory in the 1986 Junior College National Championship.

The 'Dogs finished the 2019 season 12-7 overall and went 12-2 in the final 14 matches, including a nearly unblemished 7-1 in Big South Conference. "I'm proud of our team," Griffith said. "The championship was something we've been building and working towards since 2002. Everybody who has played at Gardner-Webb should take pride in what we have accomplished."

Scholl (Stuttgart, Germany), added to his already impressive collegiate tennis resume by becoming a four-time First-Team All-Big South honoree. He finished his senior season 18-1 overall and

Mike Griffith garnered Coach of the Year accolades and players Maximilian Scholl and Millen Hurrión received First-Team All-Big South Conference Singles and Doubles honors.

had a 17-match win streak. He entered the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) singles rankings at No. 124.

Scholl went undefeated in league play with only one decision taking a full three sets. He also represented the Runnin' Bulldogs on the Big South All-Academic team and graduated in December 2018 with a degree in international business.

"Everybody knows Max's character is first class," said Griffith. "He went 31-2 in No.1 singles and doubles. ... he helped place us among the leaders in the Big South."

Hurrión (Weymouth, England) followed up his Freshman of the Year campaign in 2018, which also saw him earn First-Team All-Big South Singles and Doubles accolades, with a spot on the First-Team All-Big South Singles roster for the second consecutive season. He finished 14-3 overall and 6-2 in the Big South at No. 2 singles.

In doubles action, Scholl and Hurrión were named First-Team All-Big South for the second straight year. The duo was ranked as high as 26th in the ITA poll and went 14-1 overall with a perfect 6-0 record in league matches.



Millen Hurrión

The Privilege to Serve

GWU Names Dr. William M. Downs as 13th President



Gardner-Webb University's new president, Dr. William M. Downs, describes GWU as a "hidden gem." Working with faculty, staff and alumni, his goal is to polish all facets of Gardner-Webb's brilliance for everyone to see.

"I don't want anybody in North Carolina to ever ask again, 'Where's Gardner-Webb?'" Downs offered. "They should know—and they will know—who we are. They should know where we are, and they should be very clear about the impact we are making."

He hopes to extend that name recognition far beyond the state. "That's a challenge, but it provides us an opportunity to get creative, entrepreneurial and aggressive about pushing our brand out," he asserted. "We had a wonderful moment with March Madness and the success of our men's basketball team—when all of a sudden the country heard about Gardner-Webb and Boiling Springs. We want to build on that momentum. We want them to know that there is not just excellent athletics here, but that we have incredible academic programs and incredible world class scholars here as well."

Downs officially began his term on July 1, selected unanimously by the Gardner-Webb Board of Trustees after a highly competitive one-year national search. In his first meeting with faculty and staff, Downs described his excitement about his new role.

"I am honored to be here; I am humbled, and I am excited. To be president of Gardner-Webb University is, in my view, the privilege of a lifetime and certainly of my career," shared Downs, the 13th president of Gardner-Webb University.

"Together, we have the opportunity to provide a world-class education in a caring, compassionate Christian environment. That's our mission at its core and that is precisely what we will do."

Downs' career spans over two decades of service in higher education. Before GWU, he was dean of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts & Sciences at East Carolina University (ECU) in Greenville, N.C. He had been at ECU since 2014 and was also the W. Keats Sparrow Distinguished Chair in the Liberal Arts and a professor of political science.

According to David Royster III, a GWU Board of Trustees member and chairman of the Presidential Search Committee, Downs impressed the committee with his significant leadership experience. "He has served as a faculty member, department chair, program director and dean," Royster noted. "The Gardner-Webb Board of Trustees has faith that this university will thrive and continue to provide transformative opportunities for students under his guidance."

At ECU, Downs introduced several initiatives to improve undergraduate research and international study opportunities.

"I am an avowed internationalist, both in my own scholarship and in my approach to higher education," Downs remarked. "I firmly believe that our students must have global competence if they are going to be competitive in a global economy and thrive in a global society."

From 1997 to 2014, Downs served various roles at Georgia State University (Atlanta), including dean, department chair, director and professor. He is an accomplished lecturer, research scholar and the author of *Political Extremism in Democracies: Combating Intolerance*. He has been a research fellow at Harvard University's Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, a graduate research associate at the Carter Center's African Governance Program and a Fulbright Research Fellow in Belgium.

A Raleigh native, Downs earned his Bachelor of Arts in political science (with a minor in journalism) from North Carolina State University (Raleigh) in 1988, and his Master of Arts ('90) and Doctoral ('94) degrees in political science from Emory University (Atlanta). Downs is married to Kimberly Harwood Downs and has two children, Rachel and Bradley.

He and his family are long-time followers of the Christian faith. "I fully embrace Gardner-Webb's commitment to providing rigorous academic programs in a compassionate Christian environment," noted Downs, "and I look forward to celebrating the University's Baptist heritage."



Meeting the First Family

Introducing President Dr. William M. Downs
and First Lady Mrs. Kim H. Downs

Since arriving at Gardner-Webb, Dr. William M. Downs and his wife, Kim Harwood Downs, have spent their time connecting with the people of the University, the community and alumni. We asked them to share their reasons for coming to GWU, their hopes for the future, and to tell us a little more about themselves.

Q: You've lived in Belgium, Denmark, Boston, Mass., Atlanta, Ga., and Greenville, N.C. Why did you choose to come to Gardner-Webb and Boiling Springs?

William Downs: There are three clear things that compelled me to leave a very good situation at East Carolina University (ECU): Gardner-Webb's mission, its people and its location. This is just an incredible place that combines rigorous academic programs with a focus on spiritual growth. Here, we are able to educate the whole individual and make sure our graduates are ready to begin their careers and to make meaningful lives. The folks you meet in Boiling Springs and Cleveland County are some of the nicest people in the world. They are friendly, caring, focused and compassionate with a strong sense of community like a family. The overwhelming sense of welcome has been here from the start with the search committee through today. The location is also significant to us, as we both have parents or grandparents who have lived and worked in either Caldwell County, Stanly County or Cleveland County.

Kim Downs: I was not born here, but my older sisters lived here. My father, D.G. Harwood, was the assistant county agent of Cleveland County; he and my mother loved it here and often spoke of it. As they both recently passed away, I feel like being here now is coming full circle and that they would be pleased and proud.



Q: What are your hopes and visions for Gardner-Webb?

William Downs: We intend to cherish, champion and defend the foundation and values that established this place so many years ago. I want to make sure everybody knows this is a strong Christian university, and to extend our name and brand so we are a first destination choice not just in our own backyard but across the region and beyond. I'd like us to really get ahead of the curve in terms of new academic programs by surveying what society needs, then moving quickly toward those opportunities. Examples include the healthcare field, such as our PA (Physician Assistant) program. Also, we have thousands of alumni in incredible places and it is important to reconnect with them. I am personally excited about meeting those folks.

Kim Downs: As I've gotten to know the faculty, staff and students, I've really seen what a truly special place Gardner-Webb is. Although being first lady is all new to me, as I've previously been a pharmacist focused on that job and family, I am excited to be involved in campus activities, student life and the community here. Bill and I have been sincerely welcomed, prayed for and encouraged, and students are as well. This kind of community is a huge plus in society today, so I am eager to help get the word out about what a distinct university we have here.

Q: Coming from a public university, what unique insight do you bring to Gardner-Webb?

William Downs: My previous experience includes running a college of a significantly larger size and similar challenges to what we need to address here at GWU today. Through this, I have already seen solutions to navigate through fiscal stress, which gives me confidence to help with this in times of challenges at Gardner-Webb. Our goal is to maximize student success and enjoy the

opportunity to get to know our students as individuals as we learn their names and hear their stories.

Q: You're big sports fans. What role does athletics play in the life of the university?

William Downs: I'm a sports fanatic. We are so interested in the fact that we have 22 Division I teams in Boiling Springs, and we are going to celebrate and support all of them. We are Bulldogs all the time now. University athletics can do so much for the student-athletes themselves, the campus atmosphere, the community and the alumni. It's a lot of fun, too. We all got a flavor last March for what athletic success can mean for a community and for our alumni base, and I hope we can continue promoting that.

Q: You've been married 30 years. When did you first meet?

William Downs: In elementary school, we ran against each other for fifth-grade class president, and she won. That's another reason I decided to study politics — to figure out the injustice of that election outcome. She had a gimmick, and it worked.

Kim Downs: There was no injustice about that. My sister told me that what I needed to do was have everybody scoot to the left of their chair and scoot to the right of their chair and then say, 'See, I've just cleaned all these chairs in the auditorium.' The teachers were rolling. They laughed and that was the end. We were good friends in high school. We would hang out together and go to Bible studies together. I have a twin brother. He and Bill were good friends, and Bill was always around. We didn't start dating until I was at Carolina and Bill was at State.

Q: What is a favorite scripture verse and why?

William Downs: I carry around I Corinthians 16:13, 'Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.' I anticipate moments in this job when we are going to need to have a little courage. We will get tested, and we will have to stay strong. A copy of that verse stays right there in my portfolio, and I can open that up and be reminded at any time: courage, strength and faith.

Kim Downs: When we were leaving ECU, one of my friends suggested that I go back and read the book of Esther. There is a verse, 4:14, that says, 'You never know, maybe you are here for a time such as this.' I am eager to see how God is going to use me in this position. Since we moved back to North Carolina five years ago, we lost three of our four parents. I feel strongly that God brought us back to North Carolina for that time. Now, I'm excited about what's in store for me here.



President Downs, Rachel (daughter), Kim and Bradley (son)



William Downs' Favorites



Tom Clancy,
David McCullough,
Jeffery Archer



Films based in
history, like: Patton,
The Darkest Hour,
Saving Private Ryan



Beatles,
The Rolling Stones,
The Who



Photography, sports,
traveling, hiking,
spending time
with family



Kim Downs' Favorites



Dorothea Benton Frank,
Lee Smith,
Anne Rivers Siddons

Anything sweet,
no drama, "I need to
be able to sleep after I
watch a movie"



Country



Gardening, cooking,
sports, traveling, hiking,
spending time
with family

AUTHORS

MOVIES

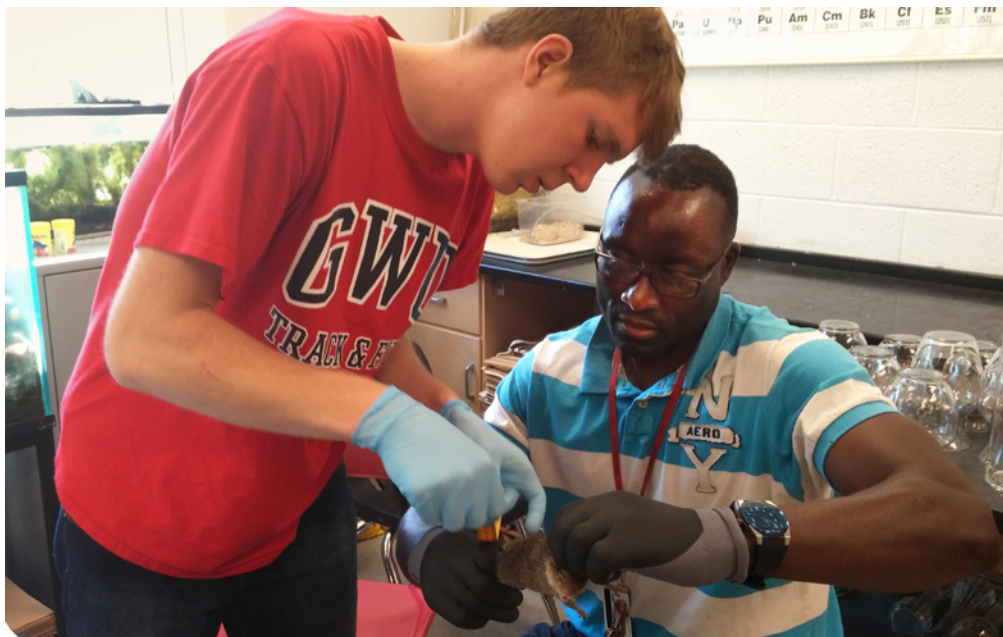
MUSIC

HOBBIES



"My background is based in mentorship. I am where I am, because there were people lifting me. I feel that I should also try to pass that on to my students."

DR. JOSEPH OYUGI



Dr. Joseph Oyugi (right) and student researcher Christopher Lile (left) working on undergraduate project

The Mentor

Dr. Joseph Oyugi Helps Students Pursue Their Passions

After Dr. Joseph Oyugi earned his Master of Science in ecology from Moi University in Kenya, he immersed himself in research. For seven years, the Gardner-Webb University professor of biology didn't interact much with people as he focused on his work in the field and the lab, then wrote and published his findings.

He was employed by the National Museums of Kenya, and his supervisor helped him develop his research skills. In 2000, Oyugi decided to pursue his doctorate at the University of Illinois in Chicago. One condition of his scholarship was working as a graduate assistant, which shaped the rest of his career.

"I had no idea I would become a teacher," Oyugi shared. "Because I was guiding students in the lab and teaching them what to do, I realized when you show somebody something, they get excited about it and actually they get to succeed more. I realized that interaction with the student is more important than just coming to a lab or going to

teach them a lecture. You need to be hands-on—more interactive."

Oyugi taught eight years at Wilbur Wright College in Chicago before joining the Gardner-Webb faculty in 2013. "I wanted to move to a less-busy area," he related. "My kids were becoming teenagers, and I wanted a quiet, calm environment. I came here for an interview and I really enjoyed the people in the department. I got offered three positions, but Gardner-Webb was my top place."

Through lectures, multi-media, videos and other tools, Oyugi engages his students in the classroom and inspires them to complete their own research studies. "I identify a student who is interested in a particular subject, and I try to mentor them to do something they have never done before," Oyugi explained.

With Oyugi's guidance, students have participated in the Gardner-Webb Undergraduate Research Scholars Program, obtained international internships and received acceptance into prestigious graduate schools. A study by one of his students, 2017

alumnus Christopher Lile, was published in a national academic journal for undergraduate research. (Read more about Lile on Page 47).

"My goal is to give students knowledge and ideas so when they leave, they can do whatever they want," Oyugi affirmed. "Mentoring is not holding your hand and showing you how to do everything, but it is teaching you to do it yourself. I'm guiding you, not doing it for you."

Oyugi's enthusiasm for ecology prompted Michael Byron, a 2014 GWU alumnus and basketball player, to pursue a master's degree and career in wildlife conservation. In graduate school, Byron researched cheetahs at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute.

"The classes and the faculty at Gardner-Webb helped to inspire and lead me down the path I'm on today," Byron stated. "I loved seeing the similarities and differences between different species, and seeing how these differences allowed each species to be the most suited for its environment. Dr. Oyugi was very passionate about the content, and I was intrigued by the interactions between organisms and their environment."

Oyugi encourages students to choose research topics that interest them. Some have studied mushrooms, insects, small mammals, salamanders and lizards. For areas outside of his expertise, he asks his colleagues to provide assistance. "I appreciate this institution, where you can interact with colleagues and collaboratively mentor and bring up a student," Oyugi asserted. "Mentorship is group work, everybody helping the student succeed."

Oyugi, was on sabbatical in the fall of 2019 where he spent time at Moi University in Kenya helping conduct research on birds and their environment. While there, he looked into opportunities for his students. "I'm hoping to identify a project for Gardner-Webb students to do in Kenya in the future," he said.

Amy Uriostegui

Perseverance and Persistence

Offering Opportunities for Those Who Struggle



"I feel like when people stop believing in themselves, that's when they make bad decisions."

AMY URIOSTEGUI

Born in Henderson County, N.C., to Mexican immigrants, Amy Uriostegui decided early in her life that no one was going to define her. The Gardner-Webb University student didn't give in to people who dismissed her as slow-witted or those who said she would never be able to go to college.

"I feel like when people stop believing in themselves, that's when they make bad decisions," Uriostegui explained. "I had a traumatic event in my life, and it could have impacted me really badly, but I knew I wanted something different."

As a little girl, Uriostegui was labeled with learning disabilities. The turning point came when she had to repeat a grade. "Something clicked in my head," Uriostegui reflected. "I looked at myself and said, 'What are you doing?' A relative had called

me dumb. I felt like when I repeated that grade, I was giving him a little bit of control. I said, 'He is not going to tell me what I am. I am going to do it.' From that moment on, I made As and Bs (on my report cards)."

Uriostegui's mother didn't finish school, so when her parents separated, her mom couldn't help her four children with their homework. A few dedicated teachers refused to give up on Uriostegui, and neighbors took her to church and introduced her to the Christian faith as a young child.

By the time Uriostegui reached the fifth grade, school personnel trusted her enough to ask her to translate for migrant families during parent meetings. "I understand the struggle of the child—



and the struggle of the mom,” Uriostegui affirmed. “I’ve seen my mom cry, because she is not able to help her children. I don’t want somebody to be in my mom’s shoes. I give my number to people and they call me for help.”

Not only does she help the parents, but Uriostegui tutors migrant children, assisting with homework and reading with them. Her volunteer service also includes raising money for a hunger walk, working for the Salvation Army and babysitting for foster parents. When she graduated from high school, she received an award for logging more than 800 hours of volunteer service.

She was awarded a scholarship from Gardner-Webb, which made it possible for her to attend. She liked the University because of its size and Christian foundation. “Gardner-Webb is a place where you can be who you are and get a one-on-one connection with faculty and not feel like you are a number in the system,” Uriostegui asserted. “It’s somewhere you can fit in.”

Her major is international business and her minor is computer science. All of the professors in the Godbold School of Business have impacted her in some way and helped her understand difficult concepts.

Uriostegui goes home to Hendersonville, N.C., on the weekends to volunteer and work. In addition, she is a member of the GWU Enactus Club, a social entrepreneurship club that participates in Operation Christmas Child, which provides shoebox gifts to children around the world. For her Integrations of Business and Faith course, Uriostegui carried out a service-learning project that included volunteering at a women’s shelter. She tutored and read to the children, and arranged for the Key Club of Hendersonville to have clothing donations delivered to the shelter. At the end of the spring 2019 semester, Uriostegui won the Caudill Service-Learning Award for the shelter project and all of her volunteer service.

Her Gardner-Webb classes and the volunteer opportunities have prepared her to reach her goal of starting an international non-profit foundation. “I want to provide a place where homeless mothers and their children can live,” she said. “I have learned from each volunteer opportunity I have had. I learn from the people I volunteer with and the people I help. They show me how to be patient and to never give up.”

Not only does she help the parents, but Uriostegui tutors migrant children, assisting with homework and reading with them. Her volunteer service also includes raising money for a hunger walk, working for the Salvation Army and babysitting for foster parents.

BULLDOGNATION







Mad About Dancin’

Men’s Basketball Provides Opportunity for National Spotlight on GWU

When the buzzer ended the Big South Conference Championship Game on March 10, 2019, a celebration began as the Runnin’ Bulldogs Men’s Basketball Team realized, “We’re going dancin’.” The victory advanced Gardner-Webb to the NCAA Men’s Tournament for the first time in program history.

The team’s win continued a rich basketball tradition at GWU—the Runnin’ Bulldogs previously made national tournament appearances at the NJCAA, NAIA and NCAA Division II levels.

Over the next 12 days, the players, coaches, students and community seized onto the “March Madness” experience.





MARCH 10, 2019 **The Big South Win**

D.J. Laster scored a career-high 32 points in Gardner-Webb's 76-65 win over defending Big South Conference champion Radford. The Runnin' Bulldogs beat two straight higher-seeded teams in the semifinals and finals.

Even though Laster, tournament MVP, scored 32 points, it was a team effort on both sides of the ball as Gardner-Webb shot 52 percent from the field (70 percent in the second half) while holding Radford to 41 percent and outrebounding Radford 35-31.

"I just knew I needed to play really hard, go hard and leave my legacy out there on the court," said Laster. "So I brought that approach from the jump ball. I felt it during starting lineups, that this was my last time to show what I've got. So I just went hard from the jump ball to the end."

Although students were on spring break, the team didn't have a quiet homecoming. Later that evening, hundreds of fans greeted the Runnin' Bulldog bus when it pulled into the parking lot at Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center. Cheers and applause erupted from the crowd as the players stepped out.



MARCH 15, 2019 **Celebration Continues**

Following the Runnin' Bulldogs' victory, the historic achievement was a trending topic nationwide on Twitter and other social media platforms. According to Assistant Athletic Director for Media Relations Marc Rabb, Craft received interview requests from CBS, ESPN, "The Jim Rome Show," and many other national outlets.

"There were so many reasons to be excited," Gardner-Webb Vice President for Athletics Chuck Burch noted. "Not only did it give the University national attention, but it gave our students and our alumni an incredible sense of pride to be a Runnin' Bulldog. My phone was ringing constantly with former players and other alumni saying they were coming to watch us no matter where we played (in the Big Dance). The support was incredible. Boiling Springs businesses displayed championship banners and signs with messages of congratulations and support."

The mayor of Boiling Springs, Bill Ellis, reveled in the win because he is a GWU alumnus and athletic hall-of-famer. Ellis played basketball under legendary GWU coach Eddie Holbrook from 1971-75. Boiling Springs businesses flew championship banners and





displayed signs with messages of congratulations and support.

His freshman year the team made it to the final four in the NAIA, and in his senior year they earned a spot in the nationals. Ellis maintains his support of GWU as a lifetime member of the Bulldog Club and also serves on the Board of Trustees.

“My dream for Gardner-Webb was always to go to the Big Dance,” Ellis reflected. “We have come real close before with other coaches, but Tim Craft got them all together. There was unity there, and they talked about it before the season started. I’ve been to practices and watched Tim coach behind the scenes. They pray together. He is building young people’s lives. He’s sincere all the way around.”

Dean of Students Sarah Currie noted that the excitement was contagious. “There was just a collective sense of joy,” Currie said. “You saw it on everybody’s face, you heard in their voices and you read it in their (social media) posts. The team’s win was a win for us all.”

One place to find that sense of joy was at The Bulldog Quik-Snak, a longtime local favorite restaurant. The words Gardner-Webb and NCAA Tournament could be heard on the lips of many red and black-clad patrons.

Roger Passmore is a longtime fan of the Runnin’ Bulldogs program. “I remember coming to watch Artis Gilmore and all those guys from the late ’60s and (early) ’70s,” related Passmore. “They were a big deal back then. It was good to see Gardner-Webb get back to that same kind of attention.”

MARCH 22, 2019 The Dance

The Gardner-Webb men’s basketball team took on top-seed Virginia, the eventual national champion, in the first round of the NCAA Tournament on March 22, 2019, in Columbia, S.C. As the players stepped onto the court, they were met with a roar of approval from Gardner-Webb fans who had made the two-hour drive from Boiling Springs and surrounding areas.

When the Runnin’ Bulldogs built as much as a 30-16 lead with just over six minutes left in the first half, that roar was deafening and sent shockwaves across the college basketball world.

“It felt like an ACC road game,” Virginia’s Kyle Guy said. “The crowd was definitely against us, and we had to overcome that.”

For coach Tim Craft and his players, the support

of their fans was palpable. “Honestly I was in shock at how loud it was,” Craft said. “In all my years of basketball, I’ve never seen or heard anything like that.”

Craft wasn’t the only one.

“I’ve been at Gardner-Webb for five years and never heard it that loud,” forward Brandon Miller said. “It really motivated us to play our best. It was a crazy experience, something I will never forget.”

Unfortunately for the more than 1,500 Gardner-Webb fans estimated to be in attendance and those watching around the world rooting for the upset, the Runnin’ Bulldogs could not hold that lead and eventually fell 71-56.

Even with the loss, Craft’s message to his team was to enjoy what they accomplished. “I never want any team member to be satisfied with a loss, but I want them to be proud of what they did,” Craft said. “Virginia has beaten teams in the ACC by 20. We played right with them.”

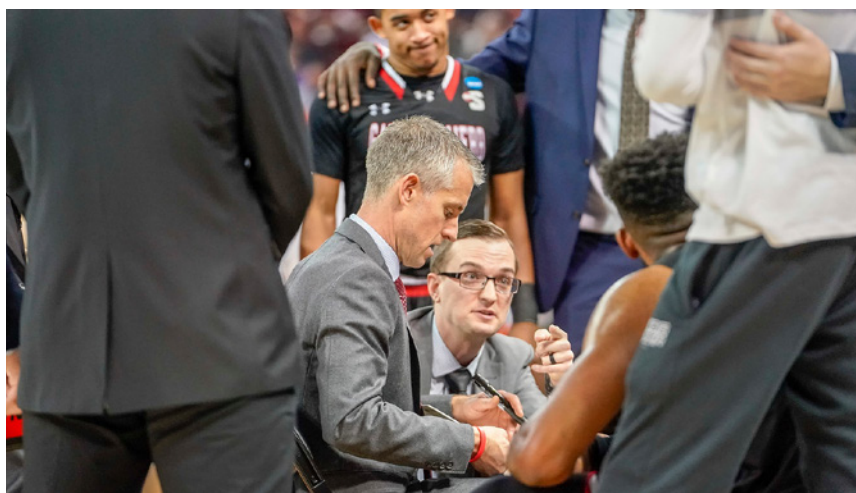
Craft explained that the success of this March Madness appearance was a celebration of community, “‘Together’ was chosen by our players as the one word that would be most important to our team’s success. The idea was that we needed every individual to commit to playing for the team and for their teammates and not for themselves.” Craft added that the success and end-result of the spotlight pouring over Gardner-Webb was nothing short of commitment and sacrifice ... “by our players, our coaching staff (and staff families), our administration, our athletic department staff, our faculty members, our student body, our alumni and our community – all working TOGETHER for many years to lead to this historical moment for Gardner-Webb.”

APRIL 7, 2019

National Media Attention

Despite the loss, Gardner-Webb gained national and international media attention that lasted throughout the NCAA Tournament. According to the University’s marketing division, from March 10-April 10, the total number of media mentions of GWU was 10,145. The total earned media reach was over 6 billion. Website pageviews were up 57.77%, and virtual tours of GWU increased by more than 600%.

The University and the men’s basketball team returned to the national spotlight in a CBS television special that aired on Final Four Weekend.





From March 20-23, 2019, CBS commissioned a film crew to capture the excitement, energy and mayhem of Gardner-Webb's first men's NCAA Tournament appearance in school history. They documented March Madness on the GWU campus through the eyes of two students, Jada Robbs, of Shelby, N.C., and Will Marvel, of Buford, Ga.

Robbs' and Marvel's stories were included in "CBS Four Sides of the Story, March Madness Begins," a segment that examined the NCAA Tournament's first week through four viewpoints (or four sides). From the student's engagement (Gardner-Webb), to the NCAA officials, to a veteran broadcaster, to the graduate assistants of No. 7 seed Nevada, all angles were covered.

Marvel spoke about the opportunities the University has given him and its impact on his life. "I hoped people would see how special Gardner-Webb is, and ultimately, get a glimpse into how strong the future is for this university," he said.

Robbs described what being a student at Gardner-Webb feels like. "Our school is something to take pride in," she affirmed. "We have great people and a great community and the majority of those relationships are connected by the love of Christ."

The CBS team immersed themselves into the GWU (and Cleveland County) lifestyle for several days. Coverage included sunrises over Lake Hollifield, classroom visits where Dr. Anthony Negbenebor dialogued about the economics of Gardner-Webb's March Madness breakthrough, students watching tournament games in a residence hall, and a ride along with the student fans on the tournament game bus. The crew also took in Cleveland County barbecue, the regional delicacy, livermush and even experienced Boiling Springs' staples – the Snack Shop and Bulldog Quik-Snak.

Tucker Gragg, video director for the CBS crew, was impressed by the relationship between the community and University. "It became very clear to our crew immediately that the community was at the heart of everything," he shared. "The community rallied behind the team when they left for the game, cheered them on during the game and supported them when they returned. Each student that we met took pride in being a part of the community and an ambassador for the school. My favorite part about being on campus was the way each student/faculty member greeted each other. There were no strangers on this campus and that really helped solidify the sense of community."

This story includes excerpts from articles written by Jacob Conley, a 2008 GWU alumnus and sports correspondent for the Shelby (N.C.) Star.



What Dreams May Come ...

From the Dawg Pound to March Madness (with a view from press row)

WRITTEN BY JACOB CONLEY '08

“Dreams don’t often come true, do they? But it is delightful when they do.”

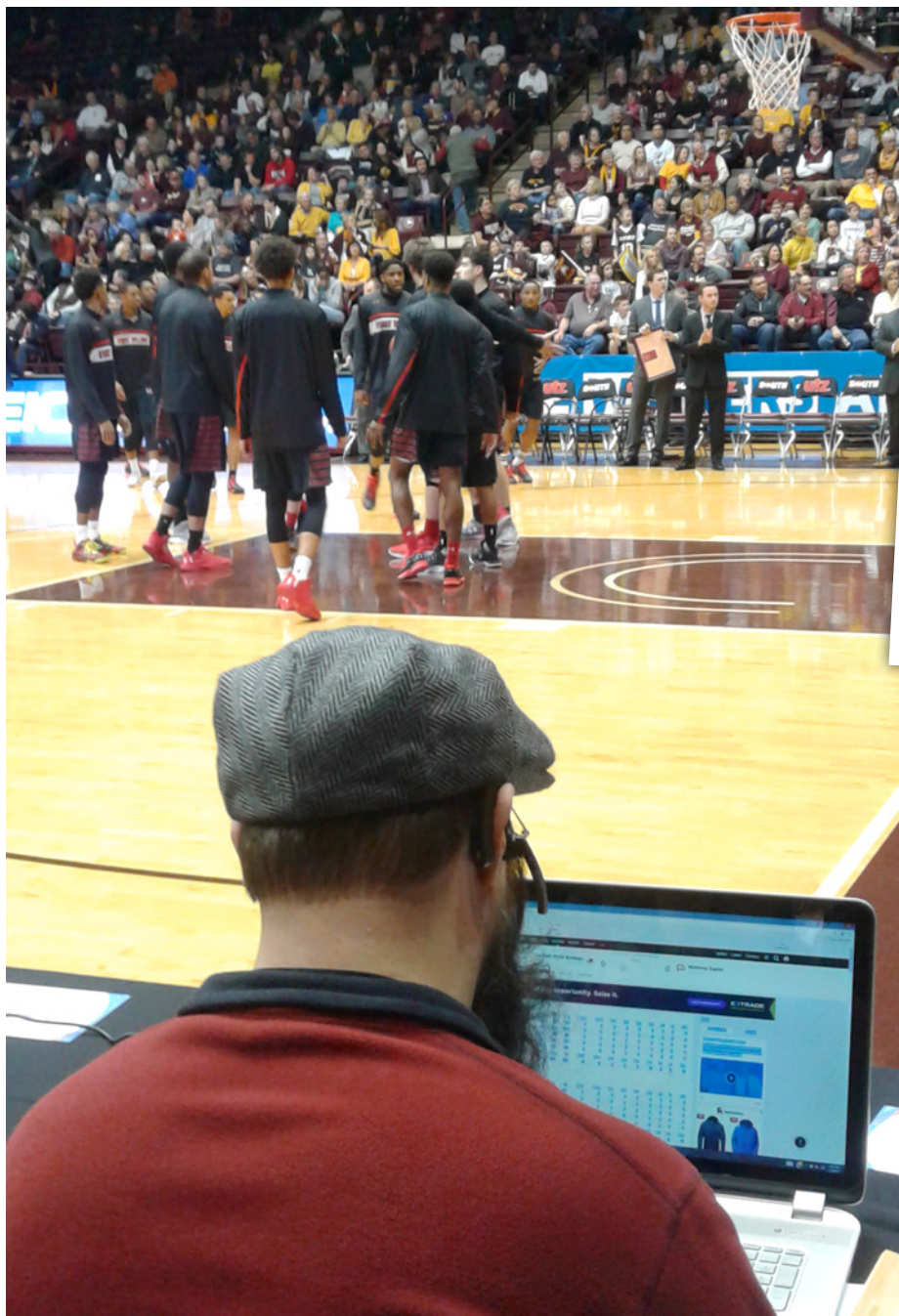
This quote by Anne Shirley, heroine of the novel “Anne of Green Gables,” perfectly describes Gardner-Webb’s appearance in the 2019 men’s basketball NCAA Tournament. It was certainly a dream come true for me.

The seeds of that dream were first planted in 2002 when I was a freshman at GWU. That November, I watched my first game from the student section inside Paul Porter Arena as a member of the Dawg Pound. Along with the squeak of sneakers

and the roar of the crowd, I could not help but daydream about hearing the ‘snip, snip’ as Gardner-Webb cut down the nets, signifying a conference championship and a trip to the “Big Dance.”

Those dreams lived outside of the arena as well, becoming most vivid as I was watching the NCAA Tournament on TV with my good friend Justin Alston. Between eating pizza, Little Debbie’s snacks and drinking Cheerwine, Justin and I promised each other that when Gardner-Webb made it to the Big Dance, we would be there in person to watch it together.





Years passed and that dream had yet to become a reality. After graduating in 2008, I transitioned from the Dawg Pound to press row as a freelance sports reporter for The Daily Courier in Rutherford County and later The Shelby Star. Watching a game from press row is different than doing so from the stands. You have to remain impartial. No cheering is allowed. Instead of wondering if there is any cold pizza left in your dorm refrigerator for a midnight snack, your mind is busy formulating questions for coaches and players during the postgame

interview. Even with all those differences, the dream of a NCAA Tournament was still there, stronger than ever, just waiting for the right time to bloom.

On March 10, 2019, 17 years after watching my first Gardner-Webb basketball game, the dream of Gardner-Webb making the NCAA tournament finally came true. Sitting on press row in Radford, Va., as Jose Perez dribbled out the final seconds of the Runnin' Bulldogs' win over the Highlanders in the Big South Championship game, I began to cry. I'm not sure what those



At left, Jacob Conley covers a GWU game as a freelance sports reporter for The Daily Courier in Rutherford County, N.C., and The Shelby (N.C.) Star. Above, Justin Alston, left, and Jacob when they were roommates at Gardner-Webb in 2002. Justin passed away in 2004 from an arteriovenous malformation.

sitting next to me thought and in that moment, I did not care. My 'Dogs and I were going dancin'. Sadly, Justin passed away in 2004 from an arteriovenous malformation (AVM), but I knew he was dancin' with me in spirit. Punching that ticket meant keeping a promise to an old friend.

GWU had to wait 12 more days, however, to officially hit the dance floor and during that time, I found out why one of the names for the NCAA Tournament is "March Madness." Between pumping out articles, checking flights to all of the possible tournament sites and hitting refresh on my browser to see who GWU was projected to play, I did not get much sleep.

Selection Sunday finally arrived and it seemed as if the entire population of Boiling Springs packed themselves into the Tucker Student Center. When CBS announced that GWU would face top-seeded Virginia in Columbia, S.C., I came to realize that GWU was one of just 68 Division I teams (out of 351) in the entire country to make the tournament.



COLUMBIA: GWU vs. Virginia

The next 72 hours were filled with more madness as I scrambled to make motel reservations, secure press passes and get those last-minute interviews before the big game on Friday. My mom, Margie Conley, and I left for Columbia very early Thursday morning so we could attend the Runnin' Bulldogs practice and media session. I was one of over 500 media members that day at Colonial Life Arena, home of the South Carolina Gamecocks. Amidst the organized chaos in the media workroom, where reporters are clamoring for the best places to set up their computers, I took a minute to soak up the atmosphere. Covering the NCAA Tournament is the Holy Grail for many sportswriters and I wanted to drink it all in. From the click-clack of computer keys to the rustle of game notes, I wanted to remember everything about those next two days forever.

When Gardner-Webb hit the court just before noon for practice, I had a front row seat. After practice, Coach Craft and four players answered questions from the media. Most questions centered around their first time at the NCAA Tournament and what it felt like to be playing a heavily favored Virginia team. The players acknowledged that the NCAA Tournament

was special, but they were also confident they could and would win the game. Jose Perez gave the best answer when he said, "Virginia has a good team and we respect them, but we have a good team, too. They tie their shoes the same way we do."

On Friday, the big day had finally arrived. Even though GWU didn't tip-off until 3:10 p.m., I arrived at the venue at 9:30 a.m. I wanted plenty of time to get a prime work station in the media room and a good seat on press row, not to mention a premium parking spot. As the game inched closer and closer, the arena began to fill with fans. Among them were over 1,500 red and black-clad Bulldog faithful who had made the two-hour drive from Boiling Springs. Moments before tip-off, facts about both schools were put on the Jumbo-Tron. GWU had the second smallest undergraduate enrollment of any team in the tournament at just over 2,000 students. Virginia has over 16,000. The game would truly be a David vs. Goliath matchup.

In true Biblical fashion, David threw the first stone. GWU raced to a 30-16 lead midway through the first half. Gardner-Webb became a trending topic on Twitter and other social media platforms. The Bulldog fans were growing more boisterous with each basket. On press row, I had a

hard time keeping up with all the action. It was happening so fast. The Cavaliers made a run and cut into their deficit, but GWU still led 36-30 at halftime.

Unfortunately, GWU could not hold that lead, falling to the Cavaliers 71-56. After the game, players were understandably disappointed during their postgame interviews, but still gave glory to God for a remarkable season. I was also disappointed we lost the game, but most of all, I was proud. I was proud that my alma mater gave mighty Virginia the scare of a lifetime. I was proud of how the players and coaching staff represented Gardner-Webb to the nation, both on and off the court. Mostly, I was proud that we gave glory to God in victory and defeat.

The national spotlight continued to shine on GWU throughout March, as Virginia rode their second half momentum against the Runnin' Bulldogs all the way to a National Championship. During that Championship game, which was broadcast to over 23 million viewers just in the United States alone, GWU was mentioned four times.

Three members of the team, DJ Laster, David Efanayi and Brandon Miller graduated during the off-season, but with a team of like-minded talents under the strong leadership of Tim Craft and the GWU coaching staff in 2020, the Runnin' Bulldog may repeat as Big South Conference champions and return to the Big Dance. If that's the case, I will have to disagree with Anne Shirley. Dreams do come true, and it happens more often than you think.



Jacob Conley





CHAMPIONSHIPS BEGIN WITH SCHOLARSHIPS

Your support helps fund scholarships for
22 NCAA Division I sports at Gardner-Webb

Gardner-webb.edu/bulldog-club



Four Gardner-Webb Student-Athletes Receive Big South's Highest Academic Honor

Four student-athletes from Gardner-Webb University received the Big South Conference's prestigious George A. Christenberry Award for Academic Excellence. The award is given to male and female student-athletes who attain the highest GPA during their undergraduate collegiate careers. The 2018-19 academic year marks the fifth consecutive year that at least one Runnin' Bulldog has earned the Christenberry Award for Academic Excellence.



Women's soccer player Callista Eckert (4.00 in English).

Eckert (Newnan, Ga.) helped the Runnin' Bulldogs to a runner-up finish in the 2018 Women's Soccer Championship. Eckert concluded her career with 56 appearances (32 starts) and more than 3,500 minutes played. She earned a 4.0 GPA in English and was a member of the Gardner-Webb chapter of the Alpha Chi Honor Society and has been named to the Big South Conference Presidential Honor Roll on multiple occasions, while also being a Gardner-Webb Dean's List member.



Women's swimmer Emily Nordberg (4.00 in exercise science).

Nordberg (Woodbridge, Va.) earned CCSA Academic All-Conference honors all four years, was the recipient of Gardner-Webb's Dee Hunt Award for academic achievement in 2018 and 2019, and received the GWU Scholastic Achievement Award all four years. Nordberg swam the backstroke, butterfly and freestyle for the Runnin' Bulldogs, and achieved personal bests of 24.89 seconds in the 50-yard freestyle, 58.23 seconds in the 100-yard butterfly, and 58.96 seconds in the 100-yard backstroke. She finished her GWU career with a 4.0 GPA in exercise science.



Volleyball player Amanda Sahm (4.00 in exercise science).

Sahm (Marion, Iowa) earned a 4.0 GPA in exercise science and was voted the Big South Volleyball Scholar-Athlete of the Year for the 2018 season. Overall, she led GWU in 2018-19 with 700 assists and 23 service aces, in addition to ranking second on the squad with 255 digs. Sahm concluded her collegiate career with 2,140 assists and 979 digs, and is one of two student-athletes to be awarded the Big South's annual Graduate Fellowship.



Women's track/cross country runner Amy Turlington (4.00 in music education).

Turlington (Spindale, N.C.) was a mid-distance runner for the Track & Field squad while a member of the Cross Country team. She competed in three Big South Cross Country Championships, with her best finish being 59th as a senior in a time of 21:26.4. On the track, she set personal-best times in the 800-meter run at 2:19.97 and the 5,000-meter run at 21:40.05 at the Big South Outdoor Track & Field Championships. She achieved a 4.0 GPA in music education.

The Flood of Hope

While at GWU, Jack Eason '91 Launched His Life's Calling



Jack Eason began his ministry three decades ago when he was a student at Gardner-Webb.



Jack Eason, a 1991 alumnus from Greenville, S.C., recently celebrated 30 years in the ministry he founded when he was a student at Gardner-Webb University. Originally called Crossover Ministries, the international organization has changed over the years and is now known as Crossover Cups Mission.

The name “Crossover,” was based on John 5:24: “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has *crossed over* from death to life.”

While Eason was at Gardner-Webb, he traveled to share this message with churches and youth groups. Then, he started leading worship for youth conferences, put together a band, wrote dozens of songs, and recorded albums.

One of his songs, “Everyday” was recorded by the Christian music group, Newsong, on its album, “Rescue.” Crossover assumed production of a local radio show, “The Sound of Light,” which experienced national syndication from 1996-2010. The ministry

launched a similar TV show that ran from 2000-2006.

About the time the radio show ended, Eason’s ministry began to evolve again through a partnership with Mike Williams and the Cups of Cold Water Project. Williams began his ministry in the Dominican Republic (DR) in 2008. The ministry’s name is based on Matthew 10:42: “And if anyone gives even a *cup of cold water* to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Now, Crossover Cup’s main focus is leading the mission in the DR. The ministry works with five villages to provide Bible and English classes and teach sewing and baking. Eason and Williams enlist teams of volunteers to travel to the DR to help with camps for children, home visitations and food distribution.

“The DR is No. 4 in the world for human trafficking,” Eason offered. “We fight it by educating children, teaching life skills, and sharing the hope of Jesus. We want to give them all the resources

they need to build a life they dream of and prevent them from having to choose sexual exploitation from the lack of other choices.”

Eason signed a publishing agreement for a new book that will be distributed nationally in 2020 through Baker Books. The book, tentatively titled “We Are Better Together,” will explore how churches can accomplish more by working collaboratively.

Reflecting on his education from Gardner-Webb, Eason noted the influence of his religion professors. He majored in Christian education and minored in psychology. “The classes I took were such a great preparation,” Eason shared ... “all of their teaching helped me form a philosophy for doing ministry.”

He applied what he learned while serving as a youth pastor for a nearby church. “Dr. Alice Cullinan’s classes were especially practical,” he affirmed, “maybe because of the subject matter or maybe because of her presentation, but they were subjects I could immediately put to work or that answered questions students and leaders in my church were asking.”

His psychology classes were also beneficial, and Dr. David Carscaddon, professor of psychology, became a good friend. “He really connected with a lot of us in his class,” Eason observed. “His genuine interest in what we were doing outside of class made me realize the staff of the school cared about us.”

In addition to support from faculty, Eason said the surrounding community also offered encouragement. “A local pastor allowed me to plug into his church, and he would meet with a few of us each week and talk about ministry things,” Eason informed. “The whole environment of Gardner-Webb was very influential in shaping my ministry and helping me hear God’s call and direction.”

More information is available on Eason and his work at crossoverministriesinternational.com.

To Serve ... Is to Live

Keanna Caldwell '16 Embraces a Community of Giving



Keanna Caldwell works with a student in Asheville, N.C., where she served as a school engagement coordinator with Americorps.



Keanna Caldwell, a 2016 alumna of Gardner-Webb University, was raised by a single mother who taught her the value of serving others and the importance of community. “I don’t know where I would have been if not for the people who supported me all my life,” shared Caldwell, a native of Hendersonville, N.C. “I grew up in a family who was very service-oriented. Both of my grandmothers were active in civil rights, so I always knew service was going to be a big component of whatever I did.”

When she started her college search, she only looked at Christian schools. Her mother suggested Gardner-Webb, and Caldwell discovered GWU had

everything on her list. “Gardner-Webb was checking off all the boxes for me,” she said. “It was small and had the sense of community and Christian character I wanted.”

Once on campus, she started to find her place in the GWU community. She became involved in different organizations and helped to start a Campus Civitan club, serving as vice president. The focus of Campus Civitan is helping those with developmental disabilities and engaging in service projects. She also participated in GWU’s human-trafficking awareness club, Release the Captives, and was a member of FOCUS (Fellowship of Christians United in Service), a campus ministry

involving teams of GWU students who visit local churches to provide programs for youth groups.

Through her involvement in these clubs and participation in her classes, she developed lasting friendships. “If you are looking for somewhere you can grow spiritually and have meaningful and impactful bonds, Gardner-Webb is the place to find it,” she observed. “You will get the nurturing you need. You will find a mentor and develop close relationships with people.”

Caldwell majored in psychology and minored in American Sign Language (ASL). Since graduating, she has worked two terms with Americorps. Her first term was with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). “It was the most life-changing experience I have ever had,” she asserted. “I did a range of things, but the most impactful was disaster recovery in Texas after Hurricane Harvey. It was some of the most brutal work I ever did, but it was definitely fulfilling.”

In her second term, she worked as a school engagement coordinator in Asheville, N.C. She served as a mentor and a tutor, helped in classrooms, and was the volunteer coordinator and facilitator for an afterschool program. She enjoyed getting to know the children and giving them the support they needed to succeed in school.

Because of her work with Americorps, she plans to pursue a master’s degree at the Institute for Global Learning in Portland, Oregon. The degree will prepare her to manage a non-profit organization. Her ultimate goal is to work with children who have intellectual disabilities. “I’ve always wanted to work with children, because I’ve never liked seeing kids suffer, especially since I was from a difficult background,” Caldwell affirmed. “Whatever I can do to prevent other kids from suffering, that’s what I want to do.”



Dancing with Wolves

*(And Lemurs, Foxes
and Monkeys)*

GWU Alumnus Christopher Lile '17 Travels
Near and Far to Defend Animals



Christopher Lile returned to Gardner-Webb to speak to students about his work with animals.

From bottle-feeding a grey fox pup, to advocating for red wolves, and researching lemurs or studying red-tailed monkeys, Christopher Lile is passionate about protecting wildlife. Over the last several years, the 2017 alumnus of Gardner-Webb University has followed his interests to Madagascar, Africa; Issa Valley, Tanzania; Battle Ground, Ind.; Durham, N.C., Columbia, S.C., and his hometown of Waynesville, N.C.

“Although behavioral research is my main focus and my ultimate goal is to be accepted into a Ph.D. program in primatology, I am of the belief that research should never become an isolated bubble,” Lile stated. “Therefore, I have also devoted my time to advocating for endangered species whenever possible.”

His research opportunities include three stints at Wolf Park in Battle Ground. The Park is a nonprofit organization dedicated to behavioral research, education and conservation of wolves. Lile’s most recent role there was as a primary caregiver for two grey fox kits (pups). For a month, he and one other person were with the foxes 24/7, teaching them that the humans at Wolf Park are friends.

“The fox kits will help educate visitors about wild grey foxes, as well as be involved in ongoing and future behavioral and cognitive research,” Lile related. “The pups need to learn at an early age that wheelchairs, golf carts, crowds, and loud children will not harm them, and are a part of a typical day at Wolf Park. They would naturally be afraid of these things if not for the training and desensitization protocols that are in place.”

Lile has also spent three months in Madagascar, studying lemurs as a volunteer for the Omaha Zoo’s Department of Conservation Genetics. In Issa Valley, he worked with researchers to collect data on chimpanzees, yellow baboons and red-tailed monkeys. In the Duke Lemur Center in Durham, he collected data on lemurs and grey foxes.

A biology and psychology double major, his research experiences at Gardner-Webb opened the door for these opportunities. With a grant from the GWU Undergraduate Research Scholar program, Lile worked with his mentor, Dr. Joseph Oyugi, professor of biology, to complete a survey of small mammals at the Broad River Greenway and the surrounding area in Boiling Springs, N.C.

The paper from the project won awards and was published in “Alethia,” the Alpha Chi Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship. “The Gardner-Webb Research Scholars Program gave me the opportunity to gain basic field research experience, which made me a more competitive applicant when applying to field research positions,” Lile reflected. “I would highly recommend the scholars program to anyone interested in a career involving research.”

The GWU faculty, particularly Oyugi and Dr. Tom Jones, professor of biology, helped Lile prepare for the future and secure research opportunities. “These professors were both especially helpful in advising me during the application process of many internships I had during my undergraduate career as well as for opportunities I’ve had since graduation,” Lile shared.

Oyugi also introduced Lile to the plight of the red wolf by inviting Christian Hunt from Defenders of Wildlife to speak at Gardner-Webb. Recent changes in U.S. Fish and Wildlife policies have caused the red wolf numbers to plummet. “This species, which once ranged from Pennsylvania to Texas, now has less than 30 individuals remaining in the wild – only in eastern North Carolina,” Lile affirmed.

To increase awareness about the red wolf situation, Lile coordinated a special fundraising event at his home church in Waynesville. “My love of music, passion for wildlife, and desire for the church to become involved in conservation inspired the idea of starting Concerts for Conservation,” offered Lile, who is also a pianist. “Because red wolves, a species unique to North Carolina, face severe threats to their existence, they were the perfect focal species for the event.”

The event raised more than \$5,800 for Defenders of Wildlife. Lile continues to work for the organization to share the red wolf story throughout western North Carolina.

Restoring Broken Vessels

Dave Byers '99 Uses GW Communications and Art Experiences to Impact Germany



Dave Byers uses pottery as a way to connect to people in Germany and tell them about God.

“Once I took my first ceramics class, I knew whatever I did for the rest of my life, this would be a part of it,”

DAVE BYERS

On a highly traveled street in Cologne, Germany, one storefront draws attention. Through the window, people watch as Gardner-Webb University alumnus Dave Byers ('99) works at his potter's wheel.

Byers creates pottery and recycles it when necessary. “I have opportunities to share hope through the process of making clay pots, as well as what happens to them when they break or fail to meet expectations,” he related. “Most people will want to just throw it away, because it is junk, but the process of recycling clay—of softening and reshaping hardened clay pieces—makes it easier to describe to people why I believe in a God who created me while I’m creating something.”

He also draws people into his shop with the use of a chalkboard emblazoned with clever quips. “Germans have an innate curiosity,” Byers shared. “That curiosity leads more people to come in and talk.

I focus on building relationships with people and through that, I share Kingdom ideas and God’s word.”

Byers and his family have lived in Germany for over a decade. In partnership with Greater Europe Mission, they work with a church and youth ministry. His pottery studio has flourished, and his wife has focused her talents to minister to victims of human trafficking through the International Justice Mission and the A21 Campaign.

Byers’ journey to Cologne was the result of a series of opportunities, including his decision to attend Gardner-Webb and major in communication studies with a photography concentration and minor in art. The caring and dedicated faculty and staff at Gardner-Webb worked with him to help him succeed even through challenges.

His professors taught him the skills he needed, but more importantly, they gave him confidence. “Professors like Ms. (Susan) Bell and Dr. Bob Carey, and others on campus seemed to be glad I was here,” Byers observed. “They made me feel welcomed and they saw a gift in me.”

He also discovered his talent and passion for making pottery at Gardner-Webb. “Once I took my first ceramics class, I knew whatever I did for the rest of my life, this would be a part of it,” Byers described. “Everything I learned through the communication courses has helped me, from public speaking to designing print materials and ceramics. I make a living creating art, preaching, communicating and telling stories.”

Additionally, Byers is thankful for the friends he made at Gardner-Webb who encouraged him to make better choices. “They were the ones who pulled me out of where I was headed in the wrong direction for my life,” he revealed. “We are still close and they are supporters of our ministry.”

For more information about Byers’ ministry, visit cafebyers.com.



Revolutionary Vision

Carolyn and Robert Tucker Donate \$4 million to Establish Prestigious Scholarship Program

A couple known for their generosity to Gardner-Webb University made another historic contribution that furthers the school's mission to prepare graduates to make significant contributions for God and humanity. Carolyn and Robert Tucker gave a \$4 million scholarship endowment to establish the "Tucker Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength Scholarship."

Retired GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner worked with the Tucker family for several years in the formation of this gift. The scholarship name is based on Mark 12:29-31, a scripture in which Jesus gives the two most important commandments. The first

one is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." The second is to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

The scholarship will be awarded to a deserving student who exemplifies the attributes highlighted in the verses from Mark. The candidate will stand apart from other applicants by depth of character, faith and service-driven life. The student will be required to demonstrate how he or she can thrive in the challenges of GWU's academic environment and graduate prepared to live out the University's

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

MARK 12:29-31



motto, making a difference for God and humanity.

“This full scholarship, which will designate the recipients as Tucker Scholars, will be transformational for these students,” Bonner explained. “The cost of a student’s four-year education at GWU will be covered, including tuition, room and board.”

In 2010, the Tuckers announced the largest donation in school history, a \$5 million gift, which helped to make a new student center a reality. At the dedication ceremony, Robert Tucker gave another half million donation in honor of former Vice President of Student Development Dr. Dee Hunt. The Tucker Student Center has quickly become the heart of campus life.

The Tuckers are the owners of Shoe Show, Inc. Founded in 1960 in Kannapolis, N.C., Shoe Show’s success has been based on a simple formula of providing quality products, service and value. The Tuckers’ daughter, Lisa, is a 1989 graduate and former volleyball player for Gardner-Webb. She has remained committed to the University for three decades and currently serves as a trustee. She serves the family business as president.

“Gardner-Webb is a unique and wonderful place,” said Tucker. “The faculty and staff have dedicated their lives to teaching and being role models and mentors. Their love for their profession is evident in the way they care about the students. They always place them at the center of the University. I experienced

that myself and I know how valuable that is.”

When fully in place, the fund will provide for four Tucker Scholars, one in each class, every year in perpetuity. The first Tucker Scholar will be awarded fall semester 2020.

“This vision is far more than exciting—it’s revolutionary,” affirmed Woody Fish, vice president for external affairs and advancement. “Only a few of the most elite institutions have scholarship programs of this magnitude. For the nation’s very top students our name will be competitive with the most prestigious schools the country has to offer.”

For more information about the Tucker Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength Scholarship, visit gardner-webb.edu/tucker-scholars



Meeting Priority Needs with the 2020 Fund

Fund to Impact Growth and Provide Opportunities for Students



Gardner-Webb University has a century-old history of providing a world-class education in a faith-based environment. To begin the University's next chapter, GWU President Dr. William M. Downs launched a yearlong fundraising initiative with the help of a generous lead gift from The Broyhill Family Foundation. Donations to *Gardner-Webb 2020* will benefit the University's Priority Fund.

"From manufacturing to politics and public service, the name 'Broyhill' is well

known throughout North Carolina and around the world," Downs stated. "The Broyhills and their family foundation have a long history—four decades worth—of support for Gardner-Webb. They have given generously to the University, with specific gifts to name the Broyhill School of Management, the Broyhill Cloud and the Broyhill Adventure Course. The Broyhill Foundation now continues their dedicated support with this new gift."

For many years, the Broyhill Cloud has been an integral part of the technology



for the School of Management. With the foundation's new gift, the Broyhill Cloud expands to a campus-wide technology initiative that supports all students, faculty and staff. It will power a new virtual server, providing web-based solutions that are critical to work on campus and in distance learning programs.

"The gift fits perfectly in the 2020 Priority Fund, which will ignite Gardner-Webb's growth and provide opportunities for students," Downs explained. "I extend a deep and heartfelt thank you to the Broyhill Family Foundation for their continued generosity and support for Gardner-Webb University."

Woody Fish, vice president for

external affairs/advancement, invites alumni, friends, community and corporate partners to join the Broyhill family and donate to the fund to provide scholarships to help reduce the debt burdens on many students. "Contributions will also support high-impact learning opportunities, such as internships, mission trips and study abroad opportunities," Fish shared. "Donations will assist GWU's championship-caliber athletic teams. In addition to the national spotlight on the men's basketball team, several of the 22 Division I teams on campus have earned regional honors, and student-athletes consistently receive awards for academic achievements."

Resources will also be used to maintain state-of-the-art classrooms and labs; keep the 240-acre campus looking picturesque and spectacular; bring the performing arts to audiences around the region; and enable Gardner-Webb to be North Carolina's recognized leader in Christian higher education.

"We are here to be exemplars of our Christian faith, leading our students along a spiritual journey that complements the traditional academic path taken by others," Downs observed. "We are also here to make a lasting difference in the quality of life for our community and for our region."

To give to the Gardner-Webb 2020 Fund visit gardner-webb.edu/gwu-2020.



Bees, Broccoli and Books

Student Researchers Gain Valuable Experience While Exploring Their Interests

Since the Undergraduate Research Scholars program began in 2012, students have used their research experience to earn scholarships to prestigious graduate schools and acquire internships in various fields. In 2018, Gardner-Webb University presented research grants to 13 scholars, who studied a variety of topics from insect pollinators to civil wars.

As part of their research projects, scholars spend five weeks of

a summer term on campus working on their topics for 40 hours a week. At the same time, students are mentored by a dedicated faculty member, who provides information and guidance to ensure a successful research experience for the scholar. Each researcher also presents at a professional conference or setting.

Here's a look at the scholars from the 2018-2019 academic year and their various interests.



Ally Ward '19

Analyzes Gendered Language in Sport Hunting Community

Ally Ward grew up in Norwood, N.C., near the Uwharrie National Forest, which offers residents several places to hunt and fish. She took up bow hunting in middle school as a way to bond with her dad.

An English major, Ward is also passionate about reading and linguistics. Her undergraduate research project

combined her interests. Ward's mentor was Dr. June Hobbs, professor of English, GWU director of undergraduate research and chair of the Fay Webb Gardner Master Mentorship Program. "I decided to study sport hunting as a discourse community and determine how the jargon is gendered," she related. "I explored scholarly sources that gave lots of background information on sport hunting, including feminist theory, mythology, and social and cultural factors, etc., that all influence the language used in sport hunting."

Her findings confirmed that discourse in the sport hunting community is indeed gendered. "Many magazines referred to sportswomen as a 'Diana,' which refers to mythology," Ward noted. "Diana is also associated with Artemis and is known as the huntress of the chase. Men also view hunting as an initiation process and a rite of passage that symbolically shows a male's transition from a boy to a man."



Bethany Leap '19

Expands Her Interest in Political Science Research

As a global studies major at Gardner-Webb, Bethany Leap, of Sarasota, Fla., enjoyed the various courses she was required to take, because she could explore all disciplines: domestic and international politics, history, economics, and statistics.

For her research project, she chose to study the effects of long-term indiscriminate violence by rebel forces on the outcomes of civil wars. She used data analysis to sort through information from the Peace Research Institute at Oslo (PRIO). Her mentor, Dr. Casey Delehanty, assistant professor of global studies, provided guidance while also allowing her the freedom to work out the problems she encountered.

She presented the research, “Ticking Time Bombs: The Effects of Indiscriminate Violence on Civil War Outcomes” at the Alpha Chi Honor Society’s National Convention and won a Region III graduate fellowship and was first alternate for the national Benedict Graduate Fellowship. She also presented her findings at the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) National Conference in Chicago, Ill.

Before graduating, Leap was awarded a full scholarship and research funding to continue her studies in justice, law and criminology in the doctoral program at American University in Washington, D.C.



Damian Hutchins '19

Completes Research to Learn More About Condition He's Had From Birth

Born with a weak immune system and no pituitary gland, Damian Chance Hutchins spent much of his early life in the hospital. The experience gave Hutchins an appreciation for caring practitioners and a desire to help others.

Hutchins, of Cherryville, N.C., majored in biology with a concentration in biomedical sciences, and his goal is to become a physician assistant and clinical researcher. Working with his faculty mentor, Dr. Meredith Rowe, assistant professor of biology, Hutchins obtained answers to questions he’s been asking for a long time.

“I chose to do research on how growth hormones affect cognitive function in humans,” Hutchins shared. “I have taken growth hormone injections since I was born. I always asked my mother why I had to get poked with a needle day after day. I was curious if there was a reason, other than the simple fact that society is less inclined to accept an infant-sized adult in the workplace.”

He reviewed recent findings, and Rowe advised him on how to process the information. He was astounded by what he discovered. “Growth hormones are theorized to play a large role in human cognition,” he stated. “Growth hormone treatment was shown to increase both long-term and short-term memory in growth hormone-deficient patients.”



Hannah Roberts '19

Develops First Section of Science Fiction Novel

After studying the themes of colonialism, environmentalism and ethnocentrism in science fiction, English major, Hannah Roberts wrote the first arc of her own science fiction novel. “An

arc is an episodic section of a certain theme, plot or character experience,” Roberts explained. “Science fiction is a wonderful genre for including diversity and exploring controversial topics. I had never written sci-fi, so I wanted to try something new.”

The faculty mentor who worked with her was Dr. Chris Davis, professor of English.

A native of Summerfield, N.C., Roberts said the experience will help her as she seeks a job on a writing team for either a story-based podcast or video game. “This was the best and most important thing I have ever done at Gardner-Webb,” Roberts shared. “It isn’t easy, and you have to be willing to work hard, but it is so, so worth it. It was super helpful to be able to work on a project that I will be able to use to showcase my abilities, creativity, and commitment.”



Jacob Jackson '19

Creates a New Vegetable Waste Disposal Process with Earthworms

For his summer research project, Jacob C. Jackson, chose a socially responsible project for the immediate impact it would have on campus waste management. The biology major from Tryon, N.C., decided to expand the work done by a previous undergraduate scholar.

Jackson and his mentor, Dr. David Judge, professor of biology, created a

new vegetable waste disposal process for GWU with vermicomposting. “Vermicomposting uses earthworms to eat organic waste, which breaks it into smaller portions, thus making it more readily available for microorganisms to decompose the material,” Jackson described. “The process requires an ‘epigeic’ species, such as ‘eisenia fetida,’ commonly called red wigglers. Epigeic earthworms reside in the surface of the soil and can also make their habitat in the duff layer, or the region formed by fallen leaves and other plant debris.”

He began by recording how much waste one bed of earthworms (vermibed) could convert into viable fertilizer/soil within a week. “Once I approximated that 19 liters (5 gallons) of vegetable waste can be converted by a single bed, Dr. David Judge and I worked to construct two additional beds,” he related. “This would enable us to intake most of the campus cafeteria’s per-consumer vegetable waste.”



Kate Vriesema '19

Begins Writing Fiction Novel to Accurately Portray Mental Illness

Kate Vriesema uses her writing to speak volumes about the topics that interest her. By sharing her ideas on paper, she gives a voice to others who need to be heard, like individuals struggling with mental illness.

The English major from Whitinsville, Mass., began her project by reading numerous young adult (YA) fiction books

and taking notes on what the authors did well and how they could improve. She also read about the psychology of certain mental disorders, like depression and post traumatic stress disorder. “In a similar vein, I looked deeply into the benefits and drawbacks of group therapy, which is an important aspect of my novel,” Vriesema shared.

She appreciated being able to devote her time to writing, because she hopes to become a published author. In addition, conducting the research prepared her to work on her English thesis. “By the end of Summer Scholars, I wrote 120 pages of my novel, which far exceeded my goal,” Vriesema noted. “I was able to prove to myself that writing is definitely something I could do.”



Luke Gazak '18

Studies Mushroom and Fungus Species Along Broad River

As a hunter and fisherman, Luke Gazak '18 respects the environment. The Holly Springs, N.C., native’s love for observing plants and animals led him to pursue a biology degree at Gardner-Webb. His goal is to teach in a university setting, sharing his knowledge with students and conducting research that encourages environmental responsibility.

“Originally, I wanted to do a population assessment of the black bullhead catfish at the Broad River,” he related. “As we began scouting out some portions of the river, we somewhat jokingly said

how cool it would be to survey all of the mushrooms and fungus considering we must have passed a million different species. After days of torrential downpours and the water levels at the river being higher than I have ever seen, we knew it was time to find a new topic that wouldn’t drown us. We both recalled the mushroom survey idea, which turned out to be a fantastic fit for a project.”

Working with his faculty mentor, Dr. Joseph Oyugi, professor of biology, Gazak set up his study by marking off two survey areas on opposite sides of the Broad River. “The color, size, grouping, and overall characteristics were astounding between species, and it never ceased to amaze me from start to finish,” he observed.



Madeline Bame '21

Studies the Impact of Music on Graduation Rates in Title I Schools

Because music has played a key role in her own life, Madeline Bame, a Gardner-Webb student from Gastonia, N.C., wanted to find out if music impacts graduation rates in Title I Schools in North Carolina.

Bame discovered some profound stories from educators whose students’ successes could be directly linked to their participation in music programs. However, collecting the data proved to be a challenge. Some of the information could be accessed through public records, but she also attempted to interview

administrators and educators in Title I schools across the state. Her faculty mentor, Dr. Morgan Soja, assistant professor of music, offered guidance when she hit hurdles.

“I chose this topic because I believe that music education is essential for public education,” shared Bame, a music education major. “Currently, many music educators feel that their field is devalued, and many music classrooms are experiencing cuts. I have witnessed inspiration and academic motivation resulting from music education, and I want to produce concrete evidence that supports the concept that music education is important for the success of students.”



Madison Weavil '19

Uses Photography Skills to Highlight Group's Work in Prisons

Madison Weavil is passionate about photography and prison ministry. The project she proposed was to develop her photojournalism skills while increasing awareness of the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the children of prisoners.

A native of Concord, N.C., Weavil discovered her heart for prison ministry after becoming involved with Prison Fellowship Ministries through the GWU Office of Christian Life and Service. She chose to follow and document the work of Forgiven Ministries in Taylorsville, N.C., as they went into prisons to host camps

for inmates and their children.

Her mentor, Dr. Bob Carey, professor and chair of the Department of Communication and New Media, helped her gain approval for the unique venture. Before taking the photos, Weavil spent a week in the library researching photojournalism techniques and reading about how a child is affected when a parent is incarcerated. “Children are the silent—and most of the time forgotten—victims of incarceration,” Weavil observed. “The purpose of this project was to bring light to the need for education on the subject.”



McKenzi Sexton '18

Discovers More Than 2,000 Insect Pollinators Near Campus

Bee stings, beetles, sunburn and rainy weather—McKenzi Sexton, of Hickory, N.C., encountered them all in her research of insect pollinators. Her experience, though, was an introduction to her prospective career. A biology major, Sexton wants to work in the field of conservation genetics, where genetic methods are used to prevent extinction of endangered species.

“The goal of my project was to determine the local insect assemblage responsible for pollinating plants in three different habitat types in the Boiling Springs (N.C.) area,” Sexton described. “Determining the diversity and abundance of a community of pollinators is important to develop

conservation strategies.”

Her mentor, Dr. Joseph Oyugi, professor of biology, helped her set up nets and gave her advice on field techniques. She went to 15 different study sites to record and photograph the pollinators. “Personally, I was surprised by the seemingly unconventional insect pollinators I found,” Sexton elaborated. “I did not expect certain plants to be frequented mostly by beetles, for example. I found and learned about the tumbling flower beetles, which launch themselves away and ‘tumble’ when presented with danger.”



Sarah L. Traylor '18

Studies Life of Missionary and Author Elisabeth Elliott

Sarah Lauren Traylor, a biblical studies major, admired the late Elisabeth Elliott and drew inspiration from her books for several years. While researching Elliott's complementarian view of marriage, she was surprised that there was very little biographical information available on Elliott.

Traylor studied Elliott's life, and early in the process narrowed her topic to Elliott's views on Christian women in careers. “Although I did not necessarily agree or disagree with Elliott's claims, I began to understand that there was so much to study even within this one area before I could draw any conclusions,” Traylor observed. “Although the results of my research were not as black and white

as I had expected, facing that challenge helped me to grow immensely as a thinker, writer, aspiring historian and as a Christian.”

Her mentor, Dr. Anna Sieges Beal, assistant professor of religious studies, helped her talk through ideas and challenged her to bring the information together in a thoughtful and meaningful way. “Dr. Sieges Beal connected me with practical resources that will continue to be useful as I proceed in my research,” Traylor affirmed.



Savannah Hollifield '19

Conducts Testing for the American College of Sports Medicine

The research conducted by Savannah Hollifield immediately impacted the fitness world. Her findings were added to the data used by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) to establish a normative base for its cycle ergometer

protocol and push-up test.

The exercise science major from Forest City, N.C., was mentored by Dr. Jeff Hartman. She worked 40 hours a week for five weeks testing individuals and recording the results.

Because she had to recruit volunteers and administer the exercise tests, the experience prepared her professionally. “This research gave me the perfect opportunity to strengthen my ability to interact with people in a clinical environment,” Hollifield reflected. “The project allowed me to begin interacting with people in a professional, yet personable setting.”

After graduation, Hollifield’s goal is acceptance into physician assistant (PA) school. “I became interested in healthcare during my early high school years, because I underwent a surgery on my wrist and required a lot of occupational therapy,” she shared.

Yuri Kurerov '19

Worked in Chemistry Lab to Characterize Anti-Cancer Compound

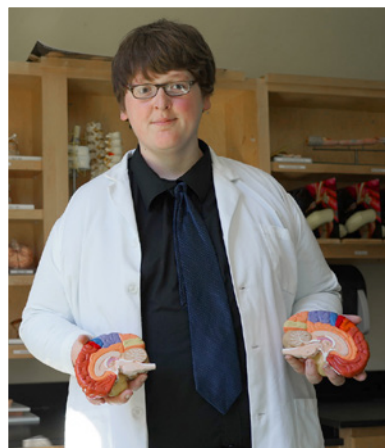
Sulforaphane, a chemical compound found in broccoli, is known to have antioxidant and anti-cancer properties. Yuri Kurerov, of St. Petersburg, Russia, developed a method to separate and characterize the substance from broccoli seeds.

Kurerov used the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Spectrometer to



polarize molecules in the chemical structure in order to see their activity on a two-dimensional plane. Conducting the experiment prepared him for graduate school, but his larger goal was to discover something helpful for humanity. “This research was to find the cheaper method for extraction of sulforaphane,” he offered. “The cost of the pure form is extremely high.”

His mentors were professors of chemistry, Dr. Stefka Eddins and Dr. Ben Brooks. “At the beginning, we had two sources of sulforaphane—broccoli seeds and sulforaphane dietary supplement pills,” Kurerov related. “The first extraction was conducted with the supplement. Later during the experiment, we realized that there was no sulforaphane in the pills, but its precursor, called glucoraphanin. Luckily, we had broccoli seeds as a backup plan, so they were used during the rest of the experiment.”



CLASSACTS

1950s

ROBERT BLACKBURN '52



has published his first book with co-authors, Dr. Barbara R. Blackburn, his daughter, and Dr. Ronald Williamson. "Advocacy From A to Z" unpacks the difficult task of understanding the movers and shakers—including teachers, parents, the union, legislatures, and policy makers—that impact schools, affect students, and shape policy. This book provides school-based examples and specific strategies needed to be a successful advocate for education. Honored as a professor emeritus of health education at GWU, Blackburn has been a lifelong educator. After teaching in public schools and earning his doctorate, he became a professor at Louisiana College and Gardner-Webb. Before his retirement, he was active in the area of health education, particularly in the movement for smoke-free schools in North Carolina and drug abuse prevention. He received the National Association of Local Boards of Health's (NALBOH) Everett I. Hageman Award for his outstanding leadership on a local board of health, as well as commitment to and enthusiasm for local public health. The book is available online via Amazon.com and other major bookstores.

1960s

JERRY WALKER '61

was named to the GWU Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2018. A tremendous all-around contributor on Gardner-Webb's campus during the junior college era, Walker earned six letters in only two years in Boiling Springs. The three-sport standout was part of Gardner-Webb football, basketball and track teams from



1959-1961, playing tight end and receiver (football), forward and center (basketball) and running the 100, 220, 440 and 4x440 relay (track). Walker earned All-Conference honors at end on the gridiron in 1960 and was an honorable mention All-America choice at the same position. Walker capped his career at Gardner-Webb in style, running the anchor leg on a 4x440 relay team that went undefeated in 1961. Walker's impact on campus wasn't limited to athletics, as the Dean's List student served as president of the student government and monogram club in addition to numerous superlatives. Walker returned to Gardner-Webb as director of alumni relations in the 1970s and has served in a prominent role on the alumni board in recent years. He was selected to the Gallery of Distinguished Alumni in 2008.

1970s

JOSEPH SOUTHARDS '71



was presented the National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) Outstanding Eagle Scout Award at the Piedmont Council's Eagle Scout Banquet. A resident

of Cherryville, N.C., Southards received a Bachelor of Science in mathematics from Gardner-Webb. He is registered with the Heartland District of the Piedmont Council and serves on district committee and is Eagle Review chairman. He has been a member of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) for 37 years and an Eagle Scout for 54 years. The NESA Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, established during the BSA's 100th Anniversary in 2010, was created to recognize notable Eagle Scouts, who had either performed distinguished service at the local, state, or regional level or who were known nationally.

1980s

DEBBIE PRESNELL '84



was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni. Presnell is a published author, national speaker and Bible study teacher. She worked in education for more than 20 years, beginning her career as an elementary school teacher. After obtaining a graduate degree, she taught in higher education and coordinated early childhood and teacher education programs. In addition to the books she's written for teens and women, her articles have been published in the Divine Moments series available at grace-publishing.com. She is also a frequent speaker at teacher conferences and universities, where she shines the light on "The inspirational classroom: A guide for teachers in all school environments."

DAVID B. KEIM '87

was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni and was honored as Alumnus of the Year for 2018. Keim is assistant general counsel for Global



Corporate Affairs with the SAS Institute Inc., an innovative analytics software company based in North Carolina. For his work in the field, Keim was named Corporate Counsel Legal Elite 2017 by Business North Carolina magazine. Through the years, he has served on various boards that impact his community and beyond, including the Wake County Board of Advisors, North Carolina Food Bank; Board of Visitors, Department of Otolaryngology, University of North Carolina Medical School; Board of Directors for Dayspring International; and was ordained in 2004 to the Diaconate of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

1990s

JOSEPH HOUGH '91



was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni. Hough is a lieutenant colonel serving as the deputy brigade commander for the 130th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Charlotte, N.C. He is also the assistant superintendent for Buncombe County (N.C.) Schools. He has received numerous awards over the years in both his civilian and military careers. In 2005, he received the Don Chalker Award for Excellence in Educational Leadership from Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C. In 2010, he was awarded the Bronze Star and De Flury Medal for his military leadership in Afghanistan.

BRANDY CLEMMER '98

received a Wingate International Grant for Students (WINGS) faculty opportunity to visit the Wine to Water project in Madi, Nepal, to learn about leadership. In Nepal, she helped dig a hole for a tank that would provide water to people in a village north of Chitwan National Park. Clemmer is the director of Wingate University's School of Sport Sciences Leadership Academy,

a program designed to give students opportunities to hone their leadership skills while helping out in the community. She earned a Doctorate of Education degree in curriculum and instruction (2012), a Master of Arts degree in Physical Education (2000) and a Bachelor of Science degree in athletic training (1998) from Gardner-Webb University. Previously, Clemmer served Wingate University as the head athletic trainer for football and adjunct professor of sports sciences for five years (2002-07). Most recently, Clemmer was the athletic director and a physical education teacher at Rocky River High School in Mint Hill, N.C. At Wingate, Clemmer is an assistant professor of sport sciences in the area of athletic training.

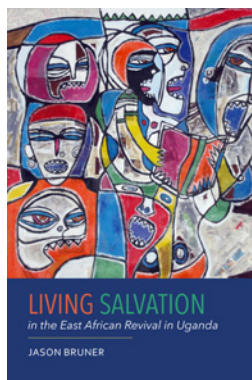
JAMES JULIAN '98



has been called to serve as senior pastor of New Life Church in Bonita Springs, Fla. He previously served at Spring Creek Road Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., where he had been since 2005. He received a Bachelor of Arts in communication studies from Gardner-Webb.

2000s

JASON BRUNER '05



reexamines the first 20 years of the East African revival movement (roughly, 1935-1955) in his new book, "Living Salvation in the East African Revival in Uganda." Starting in the mid-1930s, East African revivalists (or, Balokole: "the saved ones") proclaimed a message of salvation, hoping to revive the mission churches of colonial East Africa. Frustrated by what they believed to be the tepid spiritual state of missionary

Christianity, they preached that in order to be saved, converts had to confess publicly the specific sins they had committed, putting them "in the light." This book uses missionary and Colonial Office archives, contemporary newspapers, archival collections in Uganda, anthropologists' field notes, oral histories, and interviews by the author. Bruner is assistant professor of Global Christianity at Arizona State University in Tempe, Ariz. He received a Bachelor of Arts in religious studies and Spanish at Gardner-Webb. The book is available online via Amazon.com and other major bookstores.

DARRYL NELSON '05

has assumed the position of minister of high school students at CrossLife Church in Oviedo, Fla. He previously served at a church in Anchorage, Alaska. He received a degree in religious education with a concentration in youth education studies from Gardner-Webb.

KAREN BROWER RHODES '05



has been named vice chair of the board of directors of Safe Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition (SHRCC) in Spartanburg, S.C. The organization provides services to victims of domestic violence in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties, and victims of sexual assault in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties. Rhodes was also honored by Sherman College of Chiropractic in Spartanburg with the Chiropractic Advocate of the Year Award. This recognition is presented to a non-chiropractor who has contributed significantly to the advancement of the college. Rhodes is director of public relations at Sherman, where she has worked since 2000. She is responsible for all public relations, marketing and communications initiatives to advance the college. In addition, Rhodes recently took home second, third and honorable mention prizes in the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) Communications

Contest for five of her marketing and communications projects at Sherman College. Second place national winners included the college's monthly e-newsletter and a speech written for the American Black Chiropractic Association annual conference. Sherman College's alumni magazine took home third place in the nation for page design. Receiving honorable mentions were a personality profile article celebrating the life of a former student and a print ad for the college's Chiropractic Health Center. Rhodes received her Bachelor of Arts in 1998 and Master of Business Administration in 2005 from Gardner-Webb.



TAYLOR SIMPSON JACKSON '06

was named to the GWU Athletics Hall of Fame Class. One of the most decorated swimmers in program history, Jackson was as impactful in the classroom as she was in the pool. From 2002-2006, Simpson Jackson won 12 individual Northeast Conference (NEC) and Southern States Conference titles, set three Gardner-Webb records and posted an NCAA "B" qualifying time in the 400 IM. Her contributions helped GWU post three consecutive conference championships in the NEC (2004-2006) and rise to as high as No. 15 in the national mid-major rankings. In the classroom, Simpson Jackson was just as impressive, earning CoSIDA/ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First Team honors in both 2005 and 2006. She was a two-time NEC Scholar-Athlete of the

Year (2005, 2006) and earned the Gardner-Webb University President's Senior Athletic Program Achievement Award in 2006. She also earned the GWU Senior Scholastic Award with a 4.0 GPA and remains one of the pioneers of Gardner-Webb's success in the sport of swimming.

ASHLEY LOWERY '07



was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni. Lowery owns Rutherford County Family and Children's Dentistry in Spindale, N.C. She serves her patients and community with gratitude. Lowery completed the North Carolina Dental Society Leadership Academy in 2014 and is involved with organized dentistry on the local and state levels serving as a district 1 officer, a past member of the North Carolina Dental Society Governance Taskforce, a member of the legislative committee, a delegate, and a member of the PAC committee. She serves her local community as secretary of the Rutherford Outdoor Coalition Board, past president of the Rutherford Women's League, president of the Rutherford Town Revitalization Board, and member of the Chamber of Commerce Board. Lowery also serves on the Gardner-Webb Alumni Board and is a member of the Bulldog Club.

LARRY J. KINARD '08



was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni. Kinard was a standout baseball player at Gardner-Webb. He is Communities In Schools (CIS) site coordinator II/education career coach at Independence High School in Charlotte, N.C., where he also serves as the hitting instructor for the baseball team. Through his role at CIS, Kinard coordinates several initiatives to encourage, inspire and support students and their families. He also serves as program director for the non-profit T.I.M.E. (Taking Initiative Moving Efficiently) Foundation. The organization's

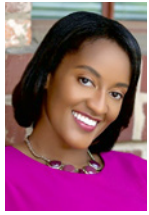
mission is to empower communities in the "Five States of Readiness"—mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and financial—through an investment of social capital, mentoring, and programming.



THOMAS SANDERS '08

was named to the GWU Athletics Hall of Fame. A dynamic forward, Sanders provided plenty of highlights during two seasons with the Runnin' Bulldogs basketball squad, earning 2008 Atlantic Sun Conference Player of the Year honors following his senior campaign. Sanders was an Associated Press honorable mention All-America selection that season and remains Gardner-Webb's lone Division I All-American in the sport of men's basketball. Sanders ranked third nationally in Division I in 2008 with 20 double-doubles and finished with averages of 18.0 points and 10.8 rebounds per game. In addition to his exploits on the court, Sanders was solid in the classroom, earning ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District III honors in 2008. Those were far from his only bright spots as a senior, as he led Gardner-Webb to a nationally televised upset at No. 20 Kentucky that garnered significant acclaim for the school. Sanders netted an impressive 910 career points and 555 rebounds, proving to be one of the most effective rebounders from the wing in program history. Following graduation, Sanders embarked on a successful professional basketball career overseas.

TAMARAH J. WATSON '08



was inducted into the GWU Gallery of Distinguished Alumni. Watson is a nurse practitioner with the Duke Health Care System in the Duke Cancer Center in Durham, N.C. A national board-certified FNP for over eight years, she has worked in a variety of healthcare settings, including direct patient care, management positions, and as an educator. She has a sincere passion for patient care, patient education, and the professional and personal development of future nursing professionals. She desires to continue to contribute to the advancement of the profession of nursing as a whole, and states, "I recognize that nurses in all capacities have a vital role to improve the delivery of compassionate care, improve healthcare outcomes, and improve a patient's quality of life."

2010s

MIRIAM THOR '12



has published two novellas—"Her First Noel," and "Wish Granted." "Her First Noel" is available in e-book format on Amazon. It is the story of Reagan Pierce, the youngest attorney at a prestigious law firm. A few weeks before Christmas, she learns that her best friend from high school has passed away. Stricken with grief, Reagan attends the funeral and reconnects with her friend's twin brother, Daniel. "Wish Granted" is available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. This Young Adult Fantasy is about Lindie, a young dryad, whose race is hated and feared by the humans in the land of Myrrolan.

Thor graduated with a degree in American Sign Language (ASL) and also works as an ASL interpreter for Moore County Schools in Carthage, N.C.

MITCHELL WHITE '18

was awarded the Joshua Thomas Award for the student displaying the best oral and written communications throughout the Chaplain Basic Officer Leader Course at the US Army Chaplain Center and School on Fort Jackson, S.C. He was also named to the Commandant's List, an honor reserved for the top 20% of students. A first lieutenant, White is a chaplain candidate in the U.S. Army Reserves. He received a Master of Divinity with a concentration in biblical studies from Gardner-Webb.

**The 2019 Distinguished Alumni and Hall of Fame class is scheduled to be listed in the next issue of the Gardner-Webb Magazine.*



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IN MEMORIAM

1950s

EDWARD DONALD “DON” DIXON ‘51

passed away May 14, 2019. He was a retired school principal having served 39 years with Gaston County Schools. He served in the United States Army Airborne 82nd Division during the Korean War. He taught 11 years at Robinson Elementary where he also coached softball, baseball, basketball, and volleyball. He was then a principal for 28 years serving at High Shoals Elementary, Arlington Elementary, and Webb Street School.

BILLIE FALLS WASHBURN ‘52

passed away April 17, 2019, in Boiling Springs, N.C. She was a member of Boiling Springs Baptist Church, where she was treasurer for a number of years, taught Sunday School, Training Union and other committees. She enjoyed gardening and being with family. She graduated from Gardner-Webb in 1952. Billie and her husband, Gene, were long-time supporters of Gardner-Webb academics, athletics and campus life through scholarships, property donations and medical outreach.

1970s

BARRY ALMOND ‘78

passed away Oct. 18, 2018, in Albemarle, N.C. He was a 1974 graduate of North Stanly High School and graduated from Gardner-Webb, where he also served as a student athletic trainer with the football team. He worked alongside his father in the mechanic business, Almond’s Garage, until his father passed. He then operated BL Almond Garage for almost 30 years. He later worked at Fiberon. He was a co-owner operator of Mountain Brook Golf Course.

1980s

SARA ANN HOBBS ‘85

passed away Aug. 28, 2019, in Silver City, N.M. She received a Bachelor of Science degree from Judson College in Marion Ala., and her master’s degree in Christian Education from the Carver School of Missions and Social Work (now Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. In 1985, she was awarded an honorary Doctor

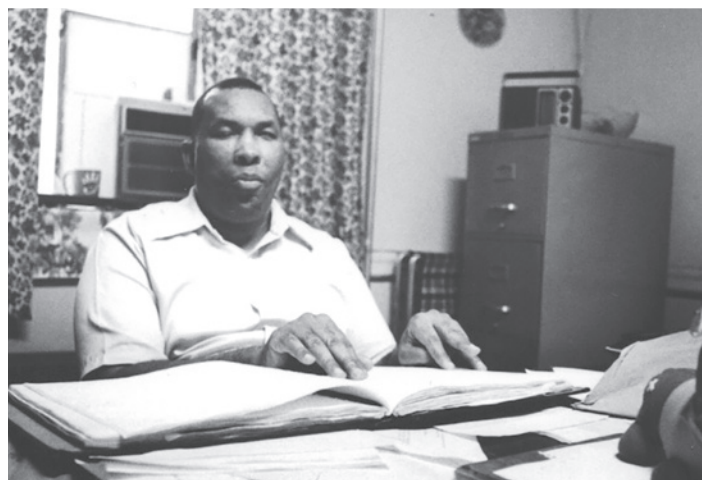
of Divinity degree from Gardner-Webb, for her effective leadership for North Carolina Baptists for 27 years. She held several positions with the Baptist State Convention of N.C.: Young Women’s director, Girl’s Auxiliary director and then executive director of Woman’s Missionary Union. In 1977, she became the director of estate planning for the North Carolina Baptist Foundation. In 1979, she was hired as the first and only woman director of the Division of Missions.

2000s

ERIN AMANDA LUNSFORD ‘03

passed away Aug. 9, 2018. A native of Forsyth County, N.C., she graduated from Davie High School (Mocksville, N.C.) in 1995 and received a Bachelor of Arts in public relations and marketing from Gardner-Webb. She worked for 15 years at Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center (Winston-Salem, N.C.), where she loved the babies and her coworkers.

Former Professor Dr. R. Logan Carson, Leaves us at 86



Former Gardner-Webb University professor of religion, Dr. R. Logan Carson, 86, passed away Nov. 3, 2018, in Wake Forest, N.C. From 1973 to 1994, he taught Old Testament studies and was the University’s first African-American professor. In 1994, he became the first full-time African-American professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) in Wake Forest, where he taught until 2009. During his time at SEBTS, Carson also served as pastor of Green-Bethel Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, N.C.

Dr. Robert Lamb, professor and dean emeritus of GWU School of Divinity, remembered Carson’s boisterous personality and sense of humor. Blind from birth, Carson wasn’t hindered by his handicap. “He insisted on being the secretary in our department meetings,” Lamb offered. “He would get out his stylus and thick

paper and you could hear him clicking away. He could keep marvelous braille records as fast as the meeting went.”

Dr. Alice Cullinan, professor emerita of religion, who taught at Gardner-Webb from 1974 to 2004, said Carson’s students loved his enthusiasm for the scripture. “He would get so excited when he taught, sometimes he would just spin around in circles,” she described. “Students would often ask me if he could really see, since nothing in the classroom escaped his notice, even when they tried to sneak into class late or to read a newspaper. He was concerned that students do their best while being their best.”

Carson was born in McDowell County in July 1932 and suffered from blindness at birth due to malformed retinas. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Bible and social science from Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C., in 1957. In 1960, he received his Bachelor of Divinity from Hartford Seminary Foundation in Connecticut. In 1980, Carson received his Doctor of Philosophy from Drew University in Madison, N.J. He maintained a 4.0 grade point average during his doctoral studies, while also being rewarded with multiple fellowships. At SEBTS, Carson was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award in 2003 and was honored with the title of emeritus professor of Christian theology.



Gardner-Webb Professor Emeritus of English, Thirlen Osborne, Passes Away at 97



“A quintessential gentleman professor” is how Dr. Joyce C. Brown describes her friend and colleague, Thirlen Osborne, who passed away Nov. 17, 2018, in Shelby, N.C., at the age of 97. He taught English at Gardner-Webb University from 1957 to 1987 and was awarded the status of professor emeritus of English at his retirement.

Brown, GWU professor emerita of English, remembers being nervous the first time she met Osborne. “He was chair of the department and while he was formal, he was gracious, always witty and courteous, as well as absolute,” she reflected. “My first lessons in college teaching were conducted by Mr. Osborne. Thirlen taught propriety and courtesy through example. He loved the Victorian greats—Hardy, Tennyson, Browning—and shared his love of classicism with his students.”

Osborne grew up in Winchester, Ky. His father was a retail dairyman, and Osborne helped him deliver milk from house to house. He was active in school musical programs and was a member of the Kentucky All-State High School chorus, receiving high honors in the tenor solo division.

He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro. He earned his Master of Arts degree from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. He studied on the doctoral level at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, focusing on the Renaissance and the 19th century periods of English literature.

Osborne said his first inspiration to teach was his favorite English professor at Kentucky Wesleyan, Miss Pauline Peeples. According to Osborne, “She was very tough, very traditional, but she was an excellent teacher and motivator.” His teaching career began at Winchester High School from which he had graduated. Later, he taught high school English in Texas, Indiana, and Kentucky.



Dr. H. Gene Washburn '52 Remembered for Contributions to University and Community

A physician known as a quiet, humble servant in the Boiling Springs and Gardner-Webb community passed away Dec. 9, 2018. Dr. H. Gene Washburn, a 1952 GWU alumnus and former board of trustee chair, is remembered for his devotion to his family and faith, his dedication as a family practice physician, and his support for his alma mater.

His family connection to Gardner-Webb dated back to the very birth of the institution. His grandfather, W.W. Washburn, was the first person to sign the Boiling Springs High School (predecessor of Gardner-Webb) certificate of incorporation, and served on the board of trustees from 1904-1933.

After earning his associate's degree from Gardner-Webb, Washburn obtained his bachelor's from Wake Forest, and his Doctor of Medicine from Wake's Bowman Gray School of Medicine. He then proudly served as a captain and medical doctor in the United States Army, where he was stationed mostly in Germany.

In 1962, Washburn came back home to join the medical practice of his older brother, Dr. W. Wyan Washburn. Not only

did he work as a family physician for nearly 40 years, Dr. Gene also volunteered to serve as team doctor for GWU athletic teams, was a consulting physician for Cleveland County high schools and went on medical mission trips to Honduras and Zambia, Africa.

Dr. Gene served multiple terms on the GWU Board of Trustees and was elected chair several times. During his leadership, which spanned over two decades, the University experienced significant growth. In 1996, N.C. Gov. Jim Hunt attended a ceremony to name Washburn Hall in honor of Dr. Gene and his wife, Billie, and their significant contributions to Gardner-Webb. Before being donated to Gardner-Webb, the building was for many years the site of Dr. Gene's medical practice. In 2002, Dr. Gene received Gardner-Webb's highest recognition of merit, the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Dr. Gene was a member of Boiling Springs Baptist Church, where he had served as a deacon, church moderator and leader of several church committees. In the community, he received awards for his dedication to youth sports and service to athletics.

Former Three-Term Trustee Adelaide Austell Craver Remembered



A native of Shelby, N.C., known for her dedication to family, business and the community, is being remembered by the Gardner-Webb family for her contributions to the University. Adelaide Austell Craver, who served three terms on the GWU Board of Trustees from 2000 to 2013, passed away Jan. 4, 2019.

“When I think of Adelaide Craver, the first word that comes to mind is ‘gracious,’” observed

former GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner. “She was the epitome of the gracious lady, as well as cultured, kind and warm. It was always delightful and even uplifting to speak with her. She was a giant of civic leadership and one who loved her community and proved it through service.”

Ralph “Scoot” Dixon, former GWU administrator, who served the University for 25 years in a variety of posts, worked with Craver in university relations and university advancement capacities. “Adelaide Craver recognized GWU as a major part of

the heart and soul of her home county,” Dixon reflected. “She was always striving to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the area. While serving numerous terms on the board of trustees, she understood the value GWU brought to the academic, cultural and economic development of Cleveland County. In her caring, gracious way, Adelaide served our University and its students in an admirable manner.”

Craver graduated from Shelby High School and Duke University in Durham, N.C. She earned her law degree from the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Law in Chapel Hill and was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar. In 1981, she and her husband, Dick, moved to Shelby, and she took a job as a cashier at The First National Bank of Shelby.

Craver progressed to become the bank’s president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board. After First National was sold in 2013, she continued to be employed by Shelby Loan and Mortgage Corporation and was serving as its president at the time of her death.

She also served in leadership positions of many civic, cultural, religious, educational and business organizations in Shelby, Charlotte and North Carolina. In addition, she was appointed a regional director of the American Bankers Association headquartered in Washington, D.C.



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For more information visit gardner-webb.edu/gwu-2020