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Office of University
Communications

June 4, 2020

Chad Holloman, '15, Helps Employees Transition to Telework Environment

While schools everywhere were transitioning to remote learning because of the coronavirus pandemic, Chad Holloman, an alumnus of Gardner-Webb University, accepted a new leadership role a few weeks into the conversion. An assistant principal in the Johnston County (N.C.) Public Schools, he was promoted to Director of Transportation Services and responsible for the day-to-day operations and maintenance of the 300+ bus fleet.

With the system's more than 37,000 students staying at home, Holloman needed to provide meaningful and relevant telework for the department's employees. "The employees have varying skill sets related to technology, and many serve in different capacities," Holloman related. "Personalizing this telework and making it easily accessible to all has been the most challenging aspect of distance education for our employees."



Holloman began his career in Johnston County in 2009. He earned his master's in school administration from GWU in 2015.

Q: Why did you decide to transition to the role of Director of Transportation Services?

Holloman: I have had my bus license since I was 18 years old. I have always valued our transportation staff and have experienced first-hand the dedication of our employees during my time as a student and educator. The transportation team is an amazing group to be a part of, especially with the day-to-day operation.

Q: What were some of the topics of the telework activities?

Holloman: The telework activities for our driver-only employees consisted of reviewing bus safety, bus driving skills, as well as conflict management, ethics, drug and alcohol training, managing student behavior, and working with colleagues and parents. Each day the employee is provided with a word document with the day's outlined activities. Once the activities are completed, a form is provided for reflection and documentation. Our payroll staff and Area Coordinators use the form responses to provide pay and monitor driver completion.

Q: What have been the bright spots for you during these challenging times?

Holloman: From using our fleet of buses to provide school nutrition meals to over 18 satellite stops to seeing communities and departments come together to meet the needs of employees and students, the bright spots have been rewarding. Additionally, our Transportation Area Coordinators have visited the homes of our employees who received recognition for the year to present plaques and recognize their accomplishments.



Q: How you are preparing to transport students in the fall?

Holloman: Currently, we are awaiting information from N.C. Department of Public Instruction, our local board of education, and guidance from health officials on transporting students in the fall. When guidance is provided, we will meet the challenges presented with a clear, well-thought-out, and methodical plan to meet the needs of our district. We will continue to engage all stakeholders in our decisions and rationale for what we do on a daily basis to get students to and from school.

Q: Why did you pursue a career in education?

Holloman: I decided to become an educator, because I wanted to give back to the community that provided so much for me growing up. I attended Johnston County Schools from kindergarten to 12th grade. I had phenomenal teachers, and I continue to stay in touch with them and even work with many now in my role. Throughout my educational career, I have been blessed with great mentors. The school administrators that I worked for early in my career made coming to work and working for the students and community fun. Their desire to be servant leaders allowed me to have an appreciation for the work. Because of this, I had a desire to move into a leadership role and hoped to follow in their footsteps.

Q: How did your classes at Gardner-Webb prepare you for a leadership position?

Holloman: The classes at Gardner-Webb were practical and allowed me to learn by doing. As a former Career and Technical Education teacher, I understand that the easiest way to learn is by hands-on, jumping into the work, with a strong mentor. Additionally, the classwork prepared me to be an effective, well-rounded leader with course material on budget, managerial responsibilities, supervising employees, working with community stakeholders, learning about teacher working conditions, and making data-driven decisions. The most important lesson I learned from my classes at GWU is to be a well-rounded leader who is active in the community.

Q: What words of encouragement do you have for fellow educators?

Holloman: Continue to work hard, take time for yourself and family, and don't forget the reason why you became an educator. In good times, the day-to-day can wear you down. In times like this, we have to come together to be the sounding board for our colleagues but the stability for our parents and students. Keep working hard to meet the needs of your communities.

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