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Charity Bennett, '20, Follows in Footsteps of Grandparents Who Were Medical Missionaries

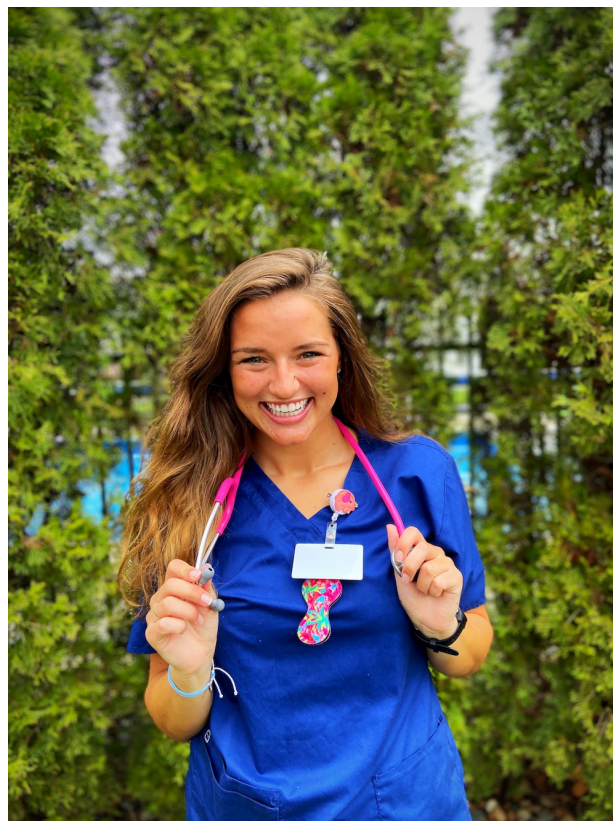
Charity Bennett, a senior in the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Gardner-Webb University, can't remember a time when she didn't want to be a nurse. "Growing up, I always heard stories about my grandparents who were medical missionaries in South Africa," she shared. "Hearing how my Grandma brought both physical and spiritual hope to patients through nursing inspired me to follow in her footsteps."

The World Health Assembly designated 2020 as the "Year of the Nurse" long before the Coronavirus pandemic began. The celebration recognizes the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the founder of nursing. Further, the American Nurses Association, which traditionally observes National Nurses Week May 6-12, has expanded the recognition to the entire month of May.

In recognition of National Nurses Month, Bennett shares more about her experience in the Hunt School of Nursing and her plans after graduation.

Q: How have your nursing professors and GWU classes prepared you to enter the field of nursing?

Bennett: Gardner-Webb has prepared me for nursing by challenging me to be a better student, person, and Christian. The nursing professors are always so encouraging and do their best to make sure we succeed—both in the classroom and out. Whether it's praying



with me after I've had a long day, or spending time outside of the classroom to review hard concepts, the nursing professors have supported me through every step of my journey.

Q: How have your classes changed since social distancing began?

Bennett: All of my classes are now completely online, where we meet in virtual classrooms instead of face-to-face. While I am so glad that the overall instruction I am receiving is the same, I have genuinely missed being in the same room as my peers and instructors. However, in the midst of all of the change, I have been so grateful for how encouraging, helpful, and understanding my professors have been throughout this period.

Q: What have you learned about health care and in general from experiencing the pandemic?

Bennett: The pandemic has shown me the strength and selflessness of healthcare workers. It has given me so many inspiring stories of nurses that I want to emulate as I want to move forward into my career. Living through this pandemic has also inspired me to be grateful for what I have and to embrace the time I spend with loved ones. I have also learned through this that everyone can play a vital role in supporting each other and keeping each other safe.

Q: What's next after graduation?

Bennett: I will be taking the NCLEX to obtain my RN. I have accepted a job with Novant Health in Charlotte, N.C., in the ER with their New Grad Residency program.

Q: In thinking about 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and the 200th anniversary of nursing, what are your thoughts about the profession you are preparing to enter?

Bennett: I am so humbled for the opportunity to be a nurse in a time with so much need. I think nursing is such a special profession because you get to reach into people's lives and walk with them through some of their most vulnerable moments. I have been blessed to know and work with some wonderful nurses throughout my lifetime, and I cannot wait to impact others as much as they have impacted me. I chose nursing, because I am passionate about people. I love how nurses are the ones at the patients' bedside, helping them through some of the hardest, most vulnerable moments of life.

[Learn more about the Hunt School of Nursing.](#)