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4-21-2020

### **Gardner-Webb Invites Rising Freshmen to Summer Leadership Experience**

Office of University Communications

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# Gardner-Webb Invites Rising Freshmen to Summer Leadership Experience

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Office of University  
Communications

April 21, 2020

*Three-Day Event Helps Students Determine Skills and Introduces Them to Campus*



Participants in the Summer Leadership Experience pose at Lake Hollifield.

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Before he took his first class at Gardner-Webb University, Garret Allen, '20, participated in the Summer Leadership Experience (SLE). The event was only three days, but the information Allen learned enriched his whole experience at GWU.

“This is a leadership-intensive program in a fun, engaging environment that exposes you to various aspects of leadership from personal leadership to leading a group,” Allen described. “The day is broken down into various activities and learning sessions. It is extremely insightful learning.”

This three-day event is coordinated by Micah T. Martin, director of the Center for Personal and Professional Development. The 2020 SLE, open to rising GWU freshmen, will take place July 14-16. During this event, participants live on campus, explore the surrounding communities, participate in a service project, and strengthen their leadership abilities while exploring their talents, passion, and purpose.

Like Allen, Jennifer Vanessa Escalera-Estudillo appreciated the leadership skills she learned by participating in the event before her freshman year. Escalera-Estudillo is majoring in nursing and Spanish and expects to graduate in 2023. “I plan to be a nurse who can translate for patients who may not speak English,” she said. “I chose this career plan, because I always wanted to help others in need, and I wanted a job that heightened my leadership skills.”



Allen said one of the program’s most beneficial activities was using Gallup’s Strengths Finder Assessment to clarify his personal talents and how to utilize them to provide the maximum benefit in any situation. “I can’t count how many times since then that I have used these results in personal situations, where I didn’t exactly know how to navigate them,” he assessed. “It is important to consider that no two people are the same and each person has his or her own strengths and value on teams. Knowing how and when to offer your own talents and encourage the talents of others is imperative to accomplishing tasks.”

Additionally, Allen and Escalera-Estudillo said they appreciated the chance to make friends with the other SLE participants. “I knew very few people at Gardner-Webb before attending,” Allen shared, “But through SLE and the activities that we attended, I grew a bond with everyone who participated. The experience and the friends I gained from SLE stick with me to this day, and I am so happy to have been a part.”

Escalera-Estudillo added, “I gained lifetime friends, which I can reach out to if I’m ever in need. I gained resources, if I ever need to further my knowledge about Gardner-Webb or my career.”

Because of the Coronavirus Pandemic, the dates for the Summer Leadership Experience may change, and participants will be notified. For more information, email [leadership@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:leadership@gardner-webb.edu).

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at [Gardner-Webb.edu](http://Gardner-Webb.edu).*