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### **GWU Science Faculty Helped Evan M. Drake, '12, Gain Life Skills for Graduate School**

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# GWU Science Faculty Helped Evan M. Drake, '12, Gain Life Skills for Graduate School

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Office of University  
Communications

March 17, 2020

## Chemistry Alumna Works as Ambulatory Care Pharmacist in Western North Carolina

As a chemistry major at Gardner-Webb University, Evan Moffitt Drake, '12, knew she wanted to be a pharmacist. In graduate school, she discovered the profession had more options than working in a hospital or retail pharmacy. Drake, a resident of Hendersonville, N.C., chose to become an ambulatory care pharmacist and is employed with St. Luke's Hospital in Columbus, N.C.



During the Coronavirus pandemic, she is guiding her patients through these uncertain times. "I work one-on-one with patients at an outpatient office," Drake explained, which aligns with her reasons for choosing pharmacy. "I was interested in medicine and people, but more than that, I wanted to be part of a profession where I can help people have a better quality of life."

As cases of COVID-19 have increased, the office has made changes to protect patients. She typically sees five to eight people a day, either individually or with a physician. "Mainly, the current situation has affected how many people we see each day and how we see or communicate with them," Drake noted. "Telephone and video visits are being utilized. We utilize telemedicine as much as possible right now to keep as many of our patients at home as we can."

Drake said it's encouraging to witness the ways people are taking care of each other and offering support. "There are countless stories of communities banding together to help many who are in need," she affirmed. "We have several community members making masks, bringing food, and showing incredible support and encouragement to many of our healthcare workers."

Recently, she shared with Gardner-Webb students about her job and gave them an idea of what to expect in pharmacy or any other graduate school program. She also assured them that their GWU professors would prepare them for the next step. “Graduate school is hard work. It requires determination, organization and good communication skills,” Drake informed. “The Department of Natural Sciences at GWU challenged me to learn and perform as a graduate-level student, all the while mentoring me on how to study effectively, manage my time, and still care for my well-being. Thanks to them, I already knew the reality of having to study at night or on the weekends, how to utilize resources, and how to engage with my new faculty to enhance my learning opportunities.”

Drake was accepted to the Wingate (N.C.) University School of Pharmacy and obtained her Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2016. She completed a Post-Graduate Year 1 community pharmacy residency with the University of North Carolina (UNC) and Walgreens. She did her Post-Graduate Year 2 Residency with the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) in Asheville, N.C., and the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy in Chapel Hill, N.C.

To provide excellent care for patients, Drake told the students that a pharmacist must be resourceful and a versatile communicator.

“You have to be able to bring the terms down to the level of the patient,” she related. “Most people think that because I am pharmacist, I know everything there is to know about drugs. I don’t know everything, but I can find anything for you. Be resourceful, know where to get the information, and find things for your patients and yourself.”

She also reminded the students that it is essential to balance work—whether in school or on the job—with enjoying life. “Discipline is important – set up accountability partners,” Drake encouraged. “Take time to relax. Ask for help. Talk to your professors. They are very understanding about these things. Talk to your coaches and see what you can work out. My experience here at Gardner-Webb is people worked with us. Form those good relationships now, so that you will feel comfortable talking to other people later.”

