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Communications

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Donations to Priority Fund Provide Opportunities for Gardner-Webb Junior to Shine on Stage



Brittany Polburn, a GWU junior, has been acting with NarroWay Productions in Rock Hill, S.C., from the time she was born. Her first role was as Baby Jesus.

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—When Brittany Polburn, a Gardner-Webb University junior, says she’s been in theater all her life, she is not exaggerating. Her mom and dad, Justin and Rachel Polburn, performed in almost every show by NarroWay Productions in Fort Mill, S.C. “I was quite literally born into NarroWay, since my parents were doing it even before I was born,” she reflected. “My first stage appearance was being carried around as Baby Jesus as early as 11 days old. From then on, I was involved in shows up until I started college.”

She began GWU as a music major, but switched to theatre arts when she realized how much acting meant to her. Polburn has already appeared in five shows at GWU and worked behind the scenes as assistant director, assistant stage manager, stage manager, props

master and in wardrobe. “I’ve loved every single production, and look forward to the ones to come,” Polburn related. “The rush of unlocking new potential in my acting, the fun of debating over a play’s meaning in class, the new skills I have picked up—like building set pieces and sewing—it has all made me really happy. I still have a long way to go, and I still have a lot to learn, but Gardner-Webb has given me all of the tools that I need to grow.”

Polburn’s learning opportunities in acting and the technical aspects of theater are made possible by gifts to Gardner-Webb University 2020, the current fundraising initiative that benefits the GWU Priority Fund. Donations to this fund support the performing arts and five other key areas that enhance the student experience at GWU.

Gardner-Webb was Polburn’s first choice for college, and she is grateful for the scholarships she’s received that enable her to come here. “Gardner-Webb stood out far ahead all the other universities I visited in how much it felt like home,” she shared. “There is just an atmosphere of comfort here, and the kind people who go here definitely encourage that. The professors really care about your health and success, and the place is just brimming with opportunities. Gardner-Webb feels like more than just a university to me. I have grown so much here, thanks to the amazing support system that my peers and mentors provide. I have learned so many new things, and made so many new friends.”



Brittany Polburn plays Molly Aster in Rick Elice’s *Peter and the Starcatcher*.

The Gardner-Webb 2020 Priority Fund supports a clear vision for Gardner-Webb’s future by providing for student scholarships; high impact learning opportunities; specialized equipment for labs and research; athletic scholarships; and Christian service work. Donations to the fund also enable Gardner-Webb to bring the performing arts to audiences around the region and maintain the picturesque 240-acre campus. Your gifts ignite the University’s path to a bright tomorrow. Learn more at <https://gardner-webb.edu/gwu-2020>.

[Learn more about the GWU Department of Theatre Arts.](#)

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.