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12-18-2019

### **Alumna's Degrees in Criminal Justice and Human Services Help Inmates Overcome Past**

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# Alumna's Degrees in Criminal Justice and Human Services Help Inmates Overcome Past

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Office of University  
Communications

December 18, 2019

*Monique Richardson, '19, Works as Correctional Case Manager*



Motivated by her desire to help people and set a good example for her family, Monique Richardson enrolled at Gardner-Webb University despite fears about her age. “I was scared coming back to school in my 40s,” Monique disclosed. “I have preached to my children for years about fulfilling your goals, and being successful in school and life. I had to ask myself, ‘Did I fulfill my goals?’ I realized I had not. I needed to finish what I started. I also needed to maintain the same 3.5 or above I requested/required from them. I dropped out of college in 1996, because of family and health reasons and getting back into the groove of school while working a full-time job and taking care of my family was not easy. I learned very quickly that my professors would bend over backwards to answer questions and put my mind at ease. On days when I thought I could not do another assignment or understand, my professors provided that bit of encouragement that I needed to push forward.”

Before her graduation in August 2019, she was offered a couple of positions and chose to work at Alexander Correctional Institution (Taylorsville, N.C.) as a correctional case manager. “I provide inmates with assistance in finding jobs, getting GED’s and college educations, as well as supporting them in becoming a better part of society,” Monique related. “I get to make a positive difference for people who have made major mistakes in

life.”

Monique, a student in GOAL—The Degree Completion Program, shares more about her Gardner-Webb experience.

**Q: Why did you choose Gardner-Webb over other universities?**

**Monique:** I was trying to decide between Gardner-Webb and another university. I went to dinner with a good friend who got a bachelor’s degree from GWU and the other university. We weighed the pros and cons, and I told her I would pray about it before I made a decision. My friend gave rave reviews of the Gardner-Webb classes and professors. After a couple of days, I knew that I would be attending Gardner-Webb.

**Q: Why did you choose your field of study?**

**Monique:** I chose criminal justice and human services, because I have always had a desire to help people who could not necessarily help themselves. My personality drives me towards the criminal justice system and helping people who make mistakes. I think that most people have some good in them, and I have always wanted to be the one to help them see it.

**Q: How would you describe Gardner-Webb to someone who doesn’t know about the University?**

**Monique:** I would describe Gardner-Webb as a big loving family in a small package. Everyone knows that a package can be sent everywhere, and with distance learning, GWU does just that. They send love and learning to different cities to allow you to get the education you need, where you need.

**Q: What did you learn at Gardner-Webb that helps you on the job?**

**Monique:** I utilize the information I learned in my classes every day. I deal with a lot of different attitudes and learning about personalities in my human services classes has been a big plus. I also learned that it does not take much to encourage someone who is ready to quit. I can’t say enough about my professors and how they inspired me. They go above and beyond receiving a pay check. They care about who you are and have just as much of a desire to see you succeed as you do. I could not have chosen a better place to complete my education.

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