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Office of University Communications

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Allyson Butts of Concord, N.C., Will Study Exercise Science

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— In recent weeks, Gardner-Webb University has been in the national spotlight as the men's basketball team made its first NCAA appearance in school history. The name Gardner-Webb was a trending topic in social media and provided fans, alumni and spectators plenty to talk about.

Whether it's athletic or academic successes, there are always good things to talk about at Gardner-Webb, like the scholastic achievements of Allyson Butts of Concord, N.C. The 17-year-old homeschool student has received GWU's top comprehensive scholarship. The award covers tuition, room and board, and is valued at nearly $170,000 over four years. Butts plans to study exercise science with the goal of becoming a physical therapist.

Members of the GWU Office of Undergraduate Admissions recently made the announcement at Butts' home. Her parents, Ken and Tonya Butts, and siblings, Kaitlyn, Emily, Jordan, Courtney, and Lindsey, helped plan the surprise celebration.

"To me, winning the scholarship was confirmation that Gardner-Webb is the college where God wants me," Butts asserted. "It is an honor to be chosen to represent the University, and I hope to continue to display the excellence that characterizes Gardner-Webb in

academics, character, leadership, and service."

Butts' excellent academic and community service record set her apart from the nearly 200 students who interviewed for the scholarships. She takes online classes from Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C., and is a member and past secretary for the Zeta Epsilon National Honors Society. She has won awards in the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA), a national homeschool speech and debate league.

She's a member of University Hills Baptist Church in Charlotte, where she's in the youth choir, youth handbell choir, and mission service group. She has volunteered for six years at Wings of Eagles Ranch, a therapeutic horseback riding center in Concord. She ran cross country for two years with the Greater Cabarrus Athletic Association Stallions. Diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes in 2015, Butts created and operated her own fundraiser and raised $2,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Butts chose to attend Gardner-Webb because the University offered outstanding academic programs and opportunities for service. "When I visited the campus, I felt at home right away—everyone was so welcoming, from the admissions staff to the first professor I spoke with," she observed. "GWU was my top choice going into Ignite Excellence interviews, and when I heard about winning the scholarship, it was a quick decision."

The Ignite Excellence Scholarship Program awards one top comprehensive scholarship, four tuition-only four-year scholarships, and several $3,000-per-year renewable academic scholarships. Each candidate participates in an individual interview, a group interview, and a critical thinking/leadership analysis. All students involved in the scholarship interviews were offered at least a $2,000 scholarship if they decide to attend GWU.

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.