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Office of University
Communications

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DJ Laster '19 Volunteers at Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland County



DJ Laster, No. 25, takes a shot during the Big South Championship Game on March 10, 2019. (Photo by Lisa Martinat)

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.-Gardner-Webb University men's basketball standout DJ Laster approaches academics and volunteering the same way he approaches the game—with tenacity and passion.

Laster, of Pensacola, Fla., scored a career-high 32 points in the 76-65 win over Radford in the Big South Conference Men's Basketball Championship Game on March 10. He finished the game a sizzling 14-of-17 from the floor and earned Most Valuable Player honors. His performance helped the team earn its first NCAA Tournament appearance since the program's move to NCAA Division I in 2000.

A senior business major, Laster said he is serious about school. "People come out of

(Gardner-Webb) and make a name for themselves,” he added. “I just want to be an impactful person.”

One way Laster makes a difference is by volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland County in Shelby, N.C. Laster enjoys helping the children with their homework.

“They look at us like celebrities, so we are like, you can be in the same position we are,” Laster offered. “It takes some hard work.”

Keeyan Pharr, teen director at the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland County, said Laster has been a regular at the club since he was a freshman at Gardner-Webb. In addition to helping with homework, he often plays a game with the students to see who can score the most baskets. Because of Laster’s outgoing personality, the kids tend to gravitate toward him. “One day in our program, Smart Moves, we were talking about good decision making,” Pharr reflected. “DJ told them that a lot of times we think it’s only our athletics that has to be good, but he said, our academics have to match.”

Pharr added that club members are “through the roof” excited about the team playing in the NCAA Tournament.

During regular season play, Laster, a 6-foot-6, 230-pound forward, led the Big South Conference in field goal percentage (53.7 percent) while averaging 12.9 points and 5.6 rebounds per game.

Laster scored 25 points in Gardner-Webb’s win at Georgia Tech and came alive to average 22.5 points over his final two regular seasons games. He was named Big South Player of the Week twice during the regular season.

[Learn more about DJ Laster.](#)

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.