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January 10, 2019

Adelaide Austell Craver, Who Served Three Terms on the Board, Passes Away

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A native of Shelby, N.C., known for her dedication to family, business and the community, is being remembered by the Gardner-Webb family for her contributions to the University. Adelaide Austell Craver, who served three terms on the GWU Board of Trustees from 2000 to 2013, passed away Jan. 4, 2019.

“When I think of Adelaide Craver, the first word that comes to mind is ‘gracious,’” observed GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner. “She was the epitome of the gracious lady, as well as cultured, kind, and warm. It was always delightful and even uplifting to speak with her. She was a giant of civic leadership

and one who loved her community and proved it through service. She was a fine supporter of Gardner-Webb University, and it is a privilege for me on behalf of the University to express the University’s profound gratitude.”



During the years Craver served as a trustee, Gardner-Webb experienced growth in several areas. Some highlights include the addition of the Doctor of Nursing Practice and Family Nurse Practitioner programs; construction of the Tucker Student Center and other buildings; full membership in the Big South Conference; and completion of Higher Ground, the University’s largest-ever capital campaign, with more than \$46 million in contributions.

Ralph “Scoot” Dixon, former GWU administrator, who served the University for 25 years in a variety of posts, worked with Craver in University Relations and University Advancement capacities. “Adelaide Craver recognized GWU as a major part of the heart and soul of her home county,” Dixon reflected. “She was always striving to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the area. While serving numerous terms on the board of trustees, she understood the value GWU brought to the academic, cultural and economic development of Cleveland County. In her caring, gracious way, Adelaide served our University and its students in an admirable manner.”

Craver graduated from Shelby High School and Duke University in Durham, N.C. She earned her law degree from the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Law in Chapel Hill and was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar. In 1981, she and her husband, Dick, moved to Shelby, and she took a job as a cashier at The First National Bank of Shelby.

Craver progressed to become the bank's president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board. After First National was sold in 2013, she continued to be employed by Shelby Loan and Mortgage Corporation and was serving as its president at the time of her death.

She also served in leadership positions of many civic, cultural, religious, educational and business organizations in Shelby, Charlotte and North Carolina. In addition, she was appointed a regional director of the American Bankers Association headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Because of her service, Craver received the UNC School of Law "Outstanding Alumna" award, the UNC "Order of the Valkyries" (its highest women's honor society), the state of North Carolina "Order of the Long Leaf Pine," the North Carolina Bankers Association Women's Division "Legend in Banking" award, and the Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce "Athena Award" as an outstanding woman in business.

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a place where Christian compassion meets critical thinking. A private, Christian, liberal arts university, Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective servant-leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.