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## **Gardner-Webb Senior Learns Important Life Lessons While Preparing for Physical Therapy School**

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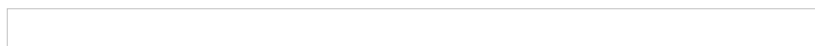
# Gardner-Webb Senior Learns Important Life Lessons While Preparing for Physical Therapy School

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Office of University  
Communications

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## *Emily Nordberg '19 Appreciates Support and Encouragement from Entire Campus Community*



Emily Nordberg's studies at Gardner-Webb University have given her the academic foundation required for graduate school, but equally important is the knowledge she's gained outside the classroom and as a member of the GWU swim team. "Through relationships with my teammates, my classmates, my professors, and my coaches, I have learned a great deal about myself and how to approach others," asserted Nordberg, who graduates in 2019. "I have been able to grow as an individual and as a teammate, and it is these lessons that will stay with me after I leave Gardner-Webb."

Those learning opportunities included health problems that kept her from swimming most of her sophomore year. "Through my health issues, I have learned the tremendous impact of others' support as well as gained a new perspective as to what is really important," Nordberg observed. "My professors, classmates, coaches, and especially teammates were able to support me, build me up, and pray for me. It has been an amazing experience to swim on a team that competes not for our own glory, but for the glory of God. When your first priority is Jesus Christ, everything else seems to fall into place more easily."

Nordberg, a native of Woodbridge, Va., came to Gardner-Webb with the goal of becoming a physical therapist. "My classes are challenging and have provided the necessary coursework to prepare me for physical therapy school," she affirmed. "I found excellent practical advice in Motor Behavior and Strength and Conditioning, taught by Dr. (Jonathan) Ahearn. Because he is a practicing physical therapist, he integrated many examples that he would use in his profession, which was especially interesting to me. Kinesiology and Exercise Physiology, taught by Dr. (David) Granniss, were extremely interesting and further developed my capabilities as a student. And finally, Research Methods, taught by Dr. (Jeff) Hartman, gave me a greater understanding of not only how to develop a study, but also how to find good resources and understand them."

The coursework culminated in her internship at Performance Physical Therapy in Lorton, Va. "This last experience, one of the most highly emphasized and valued in the major, was integral to my learning process as well as to applying for graduate school," she assessed. "I

was able to combine all of the knowledge I had learned and apply it to a clinical setting.”



Emily Nordberg, right, with her preceptor at her internship in Lorton, Va.

She has already been accepted into the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Wingate (N.C.) University and credits her success to the support of her exercise science professors and the insight of Hartman, who was also her academic adviser. “Throughout my undergraduate career he gave me advice that was helpful for me to achieve my goal of acceptance into a graduate program,” she related. “Even as early as my freshman year, he encouraged me to observe in a physical therapy clinic in order to gain more practical experience. In addition, he gave me a recommendation for my graduate school application that was an important part of my acceptance.”

*If you are interested in learning more about the programs offered by the Department of Exercise Science, [click here](#).*