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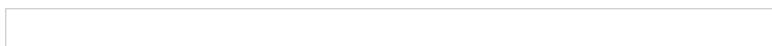
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Office of University
Communications

August 4, 2018

Students from Traditional Undergraduate, Degree Completion, and Graduate Programs Honored



BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner–Webb University hosted Summer Commencement on Saturday, Aug. 4 in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center at 10 a.m. More than 200 traditional undergraduate, degree completion, and graduate program students were honored for their achievements during the ceremony.

Many graduates participated in the ceremony through prayer and scripture readings. Jason Andrew Burgess (Sunset Valley, Texas), who earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, offered the invocation. Erin Elizabeth Cook (Shelby, N.C.), who earned a Doctor of Education, shared passages from the Old Testaments, and Patricia Martell Averre (Wake Forest, N.C.) provided the New Testament reading.

Awards were also given to those who achieved scholastic excellence. Tina Renee Humphries Earls (Shelby, N.C.), who earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice/Human Services, received the GOAL – The Degree Completion Program Academic Award. Mason Logan Buchanan (Hartwell, Ga.) earned a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science and was given the Senior Scholastic Achievement Award. Natalie Edwards Bishop (Shelby, N.C.) and Kate Alice Dunaway (Mooresville, N.C.) were recipients of the Darlene Gravett Citizen Scholar Award. Bishop and Dunaway each earned a Doctor of Education.

Dr. Jim McConnell, assistant professor of New Testament interpretation, provided the commencement message, which was titled, “Can’t We All Just Get Along?” He encouraged students to find their passion. “I want to urge you to go from here and pursue something you love, something about which you can be passionate, something for which you are gifted and trained to do,” he shared. “Some of you will go on to pursue further studies; others will go into the workforce. Whatever you do, find something you truly enjoy doing and believe in.”

In addition, McConnell urged graduates to work toward unity instead of divisiveness. “In the 36 years of my professional life, I have come to understand that problems are solved collaboratively,” he reflected. “Rarely, if ever, does a single individual working in isolation

come up with a workable answer to a significant issue.”

He continued, “So I am calling on you to get along, to work with others in tackling the various issues that are on the table. Find something you are passionate about, engage the issues of today, and seek to make this world a better place for all people.”

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian conviction meets intellectual freedom. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.