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### **Gardner-Webb Alumnus Recognized for Business Success and Community Service**

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# Gardner-Webb Alumnus Recognized for Business Success and Community Service

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Office of University  
Communications

July 10, 2018

## *Keon Williams Jr. '14 Named to Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce 30 Under 30*



Keon Williams Jr. was honored recently with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce 30 Under 30 award. Photo courtesy of Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Since graduating from Gardner-Webb University in 2014, Kyeonta “Keon” Williams Jr. of Charlotte, N.C., has endeavored to serve others on the job and in the community. Recently, he was recognized with an award that acknowledges his business success and volunteer efforts. He was named to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce 30 Under 30 Class of 2018. He was nominated for the honor by five of his colleagues from Wells-Fargo Securities.

“It was really cool to be recognized by my co-workers, not only as a professional but also for my work as a community volunteer,” offered Williams, who has an economics/finance degree.

As part of the 30 Under 30 recognition, recipients answered questions related to their businesses or their goals. The answers were videotaped and posted to the chamber’s [YouTube channel](#). Williams was asked to share his vision for the African-American community. He responded, “To reverse the falsehood of socio-economic immobility through a collaborative approach to business investment, capital markets and financial literacy.”

He said his professors at GWU showed him how to weave his faith and career goals. “The curriculum of the Godbold School of Business helped mold me into a responsible professional,” he elaborated. “Most importantly, my experience gave me a sense of moral discernment and ethical awareness that is needed for a career in an industry plagued by conflicts of interest.”

As a short-term sales analyst, Williams’ job involves trading municipal bonds. He believes it is important to base his decisions on his Christian principles. “I have a ‘we’ mentality of putting others before myself that is rooted in my Gardner-Webb experience,” he related. “I understand the importance of doing things the right way. Christianity is not separate from

business—both go hand-in-hand—and that is what I’ve been able to implement into my day-to-day.”

Williams hopes to share with others that they can become whatever they choose to be with God’s help and their own hard work. While his GWU education gave him a foundation, his supervisor at Wells Fargo, Bill Miller, provided on-the-job insight and encouragement. “He has been extremely helpful,” Williams asserted. “He has a heart for people.”

The former Runnin’ Bulldogs cornerback participates in various ministries in the Charlotte area, such as mentoring college football players through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, participating in volunteer initiatives sponsored by Wells-Fargo, and spending most Friday evenings at the Dream Center distributing food to people living on the streets. He is also active in his church, working with the youth and supporting his pastor, Brian Duley, by editing sermons, praying for him and providing him meals when needed. “I spend a lot of time with him,” Williams offered. “He is a great mentor and spiritual leader.”

Because of all the people who have supported him, Williams encourages young people through a non-profit organization he started in 2016 called Play Fresh. The program emphasizes football fundamentals and environmental sustainability and includes a focus on learning life skills, such as budgeting. “We are educating the youth to take care of their own backyard,” he explained. “That applies to social and financial aspects, too. We teach that it’s important to be responsible and sound.”

*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.*