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Office of University
Communications

May 12, 2018

Two Ceremonies Honor More than 550 GWU Graduates

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner–Webb University hosted Spring Commencement on Saturday, May 12 in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center. More than 550 graduates were honored during two separate ceremonies.

*Gardner-Webb University Spring 2018
Commencement in Paul Porter Arena*

Several university milestones were achieved during the exercises. The Hunt School of Nursing awarded its 4,000th overall degree. In addition, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and the Master of Science in Nursing – Family Nurse Practitioner programs each bestowed its 100th degree. The Department of Natural Sciences awarded its 500th degree in biology, and the School of Psychology and Counseling conferred its 1000th bachelor's degree.

Saturday Morning Traditional Undergraduate and Degree Completion Program Ceremony (10 a.m.)

[Click here to view the 10 a.m. Commencement Ceremony photo gallery.](#)

The Saturday morning ceremony featured nearly 340 graduates of Gardner-Webb's undergraduate programs. Gabrielle Cortese (Palm Bay, Fla.), who earned a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science, offered the invocation. Kaylan Kelsey (Warner Robins, Ga.), who celebrated earning a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, provided the Old Testament reading. Hannah Ray (High Point, N.C.), who received a Bachelor of Arts in English, provided the New Testament Reading.

*Shaquavia Chiles of Greenville, S.C.,
received the Most Outstanding Female
Graduate medal.*

Several morning graduates were honored for outstanding leadership, citizenship, and academic excellence. The Most Outstanding Male Graduate medal was presented to Christian Jessup, a music composition and communication studies double major from

Boiling Springs, N.C. Shaquavia Chiles (Greenville, S.C.), who earned a Bachelor of Arts in English as a Second Language, was awarded the Most Outstanding Female Graduate medal.


Cortese, Jessica Ferguson (Lawrence, Kan.), Aaron Hilton (Winston-Salem, N.C.), Mallory Moore (Maurertown, Va.), Keaton Poole (Spindale, N.C.), and Callie Smith (Vale, N.C.) each received the Senior Scholastic Award. These six students completed their academic careers with a perfect 4.0 GPA. The Degree Completion Program Scholastic Award was presented to Denise Watson, a business administration major from Mooresville, N.C.

The commencement message, “Hope Does Not Disappoint Us,” was offered by Dr. Tracy Jessup, vice president for Christian Life and Service and senior minister to the University. “Hope in the face of adversity does not come easily, even for the person who is confident of God’s faithfulness and deliverance,” Jessup shared. “There will be times in your life when you will wrestle not only with the forces of evil, but with your own fears and weaknesses as well. In these times, we all must remind ourselves to be silent and still in God’s presence as we put our hope in him.”

Saturday Afternoon Graduate Programs Ceremony (3 p.m.)

[Click here to view the 3 p.m. Commencement Ceremony photo gallery.](#)

The Saturday afternoon ceremony honored 215 students who successfully completed work in GWU’s graduate programs. Jamie Brandon (Concord, N.C.), who earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, offered the invocation. Alison Whitaker of Statesville, N.C., who completed her Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, provided the scripture reading.



GWU alumna Erica Wright hugs graduate Kyle Medlin of Charlotte, N.C.

GWU Professor of Psychology Dr. David Carscaddon provided the commencement address, “What We Have Heard and Know,” for the Saturday afternoon ceremony. He charged graduates to lives worthy of the Gardner-Webb motto, *Pro deo et Humanitate* (For God and Humanity).

“Being ‘for God’ means raising our thoughts and lifting our hearts to adore the Creator and sustainer of our lives,” Carscaddon reflected. “Being ‘for humanity’ means raising up neighbors in dignity for their sake. Gardner-Webb chose the right motto for its mission in higher education. Let us take what we have learned and make the motto real.”

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 ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.