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Communications

April 18, 2018

Dr. C. Lorance and Betty Ledford Henderson Receive 2018 Baptist Heritage Award



BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A Morganton, N.C., couple has been recognized for their exemplary giving and service to Gardner-Webb University. Dr. C. Lorance “Rance” and Betty Ledford Henderson received the N.C. Baptist Heritage Award on April 10 in a ceremony sponsored by the North Carolina Baptist State Convention and the N.C. Baptist Foundation.

“Betty and Rance Henderson of Morganton are two of Gardner-Webb University’s greatest friends and supporters, as well as two of my own dearest friends,” shared GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner. “The Hendersons fully embody the ideals of service and giving, as well as the purpose of Gardner-Webb University ‘to advance the kingdom of God through Christian higher education.’”

Throughout their professional careers, the Hendersons have contributed substantially to the field of deaf education. Teaching and directing programs across the country, Rance Henderson ultimately served as the superintendent and director for the N.C. Schools for the Deaf. Betty Henderson was actively involved in the School as teacher and principal of the Early Childhood program.

Rance Henderson received an honorary doctorate from Gardner-Webb in 1979 and has been a member of the Board of Trustees since 1980. He was instrumental in the creation of the Noel Center for Disability Resources, which provides access to higher education for qualified students with disabilities. He served on the Piedmont Council for Boy Scouts of America, N.C. Clean Water Fund, Board of Directors for the N.C. Partnership for Children and founded the Friends of Lake James State Park. In 2008, he was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Betty Henderson has volunteered with the Morganton Women’s Club, Burke County Association for the Education of Young Children and Daughters of the American Revolution. In addition, she—a member of Gardner-Webb Junior College’s class of ’53—and Rance Henderson established the Dr. Rance and Betty Henderson Endowed Scholarship Fund and the Henderson/Ledford Endowed Scholarship Fund.

The Hendersons are members of First Baptist Church of Morganton, where they have both served faithfully as deacons, Sunday School teachers and members of various committees. They have two children, David and Julie, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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.