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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications, "Gardner-Webb Alumna Promotes Unity Among Diverse Cultures" (2017). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 486.
<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/486>

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Office of University
Communications

December 14, 2017

Maha Gingrich '91 Connects International Community to Central Piedmont Community College

Dr. Maha Gingrich came to Gardner-Webb University in the 1990s to obtain her bachelor's degree in business administration. An excellent student with an associate's degree from Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C., she could have transferred anywhere. But GWU's admissions and career counselors treated her as an individual. It was also more convenient for her to attend classes at Gardner-Webb's Charlotte center, because she worked part-time at CPCC and taught classes on the dances of India, her native country.



Dr. Maha Gingrich, left, interviewed Lucia Griffith for her educational show for Central Piedmont Community College, "Charlotte, a City of International Success." Griffith is the owner of METRO Landmarks.

The management principles she learned at GWU equipped her for job promotions at CPCC, and she was deeply affected by the religion courses. "The Old Testament and New Testament classes opened my eyes to how we are more alike than different," Gingrich reflected. "They were telling me the story of Moses and the story is a 100 percent replica of Lord Krishna's story in Hinduism. We had this wonderful instructor who had such great interactive conversations that opened my enthusiasm to learn more about different religions to see where our commonalities are."

From those studies and her skills as a dancer, Gingrich formed the idea in 2002 to create an outreach program for CPCC called Dances of India. The show's highlight is her signature dance, Unity in Diversity. The presentation features 10 international dance styles performed simultaneously to an original composition. The program has been presented to sold-out audiences for 15 consecutive years and is expected to sell out in 2018.



Dr. Maha Gingrich, who was a professional dancer in India, created an outreach program for CPCC in 2002 called, "Dances of India."

Not only does she credit Gardner-Webb for inspiring her artistically, she says the University also helped her discover her analytical skills. "I am a strategic business thinker and I attribute that to my Gardner-Webb degree," Gingrich assessed. "All those courses—

quantitative analysis, ethics, critical thinking, business strategies and strategic planning—triggered my interest in business. The professors brought their industry knowledge to the classroom. It wasn't just book knowledge. The passion the professors have for their subjects ignites your passion for the subject.”

Gingrich earned a Master of Business Administration from Wingate (N.C.) University and a doctorate from UNC Greensboro. As the international community liaison and assistant vice president for Institutional Advancement at CPCC, one of her initiatives is to promote global education. To achieve this goal, she started the International Education Fund to develop study abroad opportunities and connect students with international leaders in the region.

Through her connections, she began hosting an educational show for CPCC, “Charlotte, a City of International Success.” In its 12th year, the program airs on WTVI-PBS Charlotte and CPCC TV. Her guests talk about their profession, give advice on how to be successful and discuss the education needed to work in the field. “It started as a vision to recognize the international companies, services and individuals who are making a great impact on our economic development and contributing to our Charlotte community and the region, 13-plus counties,” Gingrich noted.

While describing their businesses, the guests have also motivated people to go back to school. “One of the shows featured a gentleman who was just an operator and has become the CEO of the company,” Gingrich explained. “I get positive feedback from people who say it inspired them to get more education, and they have received a promotion. It's really nice to hear that I am making a difference.”