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Office of University
Communications

November 29, 2017

Haley Spurlin ('17) Works with High School Students Through AmeriCorps VISTA

By: Mallory Moore '18, Intern for Communications

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— Haley Spurlin ('17), a Gardner-Webb University alumna from Ennice, N.C., has taken the professional

Haley Spurlin ('17)

skills she developed as an undergraduate student all the way to Troy, Montana. Haley is five months into her National Service Year with AmeriCorps VISTA, working through Montana Campus Compact (MTCC) at Troy High School. Her job includes a variety of important responsibilities including counseling students on their post-secondary plans, strengthening community outreach efforts, and helping to create more internship opportunities for students.

The MTCC is an organization of colleges and universities in Montana that works with communities to create educational and professional-readiness opportunities and teach students about civic and social responsibility. To achieve these goals in her placement at Troy High School, Spurlin meets with students to discuss their future plans and researches how to make effective internship programs for students. “My favorite part of this position is getting to know the students and talking with them about their goals,” she shared. “I love hearing what students are passionate about and helping them develop plans to make their dreams a reality.”

As an English major with a pre-professional concentration, Spurlin developed a wide range of skills that have helped her to be successful in this new job. “In most of my literature classes, we read about other cultures and constantly talked about how important it is to be aware of other peoples’ experiences and perspectives,” she commented. “These conversations helped me significantly as I was faced with the challenge of moving across the country to a brand-new environment.” As a student, Spurlin also spent three years working in Gardner-Webb’s Center for Personal and Professional Development, which helped her to prepare for the daily tasks and long-term projects of working for MTCC. “I realized through this experience, and through talking with GWU’s Career Counselors, that I really enjoyed helping students take the steps to prepare themselves for life after college.”

Spurlin recalled some of her favorite parts about Gardner-Webb, especially the community of professors and friends that she got to know during her time here. “This community

became my family and my home for four years, and I will always be grateful for the time I got to spend building these relationships,” she remarked. “My advice to current seniors would be to keep pushing and to enjoy every minute you have with your friends. Even though it seems like you have already completed a sufficient amount of work for a bachelor’s degree, believe it or not, there are a few more things left to learn. It’s all worth it when (GWU President) Dr. (Frank) Bonner hands you that fancy piece of paper.” In the future, Spurlin hopes to earn a master’s degree in school counseling so that she can continue working with students and helping them to achieve their dreams.

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.