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November 2, 2017



Kristin Allison '15 Hopes to Work in Underserved Area and Participate in Dental Mission Trips

Kristin Allison '15, a native of Old Fort, N.C., applied to Gardner-Webb University on a whim. She was invited to interview for a scholarship and was impressed with the campus and the people. "As soon as I stepped foot on campus, I fell in love," she recalled. "It truly felt like home, and the staff, students, and interviewers were incredibly kind and welcoming. A few weeks later, I received word that I had been offered a full scholarship to attend Gardner-Webb."

photo of Kristin Allison

Kristin Allison works in the clinic at UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry.

Allison earned a degree in chemistry with a biology minor at GWU. She is a third-year student in the UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry. When she graduates with her Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), she hopes to work in an underserved area in Western North Carolina. She also plans to participate in ongoing national and international mission trips, as well as free or reduced dental clinics. "I always loved math and science, and I knew that I wanted to pursue a degree that would allow me to work in the science or healthcare field," she remarked. "I have a passion for serving others, and I loved the hands-on aspect of being in the lab. My high school chemistry teacher and the Department of Natural Sciences at Gardner-Webb were key influences in my decision to major in chemistry."

Her GWU classes emphasized critical thinking and application, which prepared her for the rigors of dental

Kristin Allison in the lab

school. Because most classes had less than 10 students, she was able to work closely with the other students and professor. Working with research-grade equipment and modern instruments, Allison and Dr. David Judge quantified the amount of ginger in various ginger beverages. They were trying to determine if the spicy, gingery taste was due to real ginger or unspecified additives. She also worked with Brooke Rampy under the direction of Dr. Venita Totten, to test various water filtration straws to assess their effectiveness at removing heavy metals from contaminated water supplies.

"The people at Gardner-Webb were remarkable," Allison stated. "I was surrounded by knowledgeable faculty members who cared not only about my performance in their classes but also about my personal well-being. It was such a blessing to have godly men and women pour into my life and remind me of the truth when my feet were slipping and I didn't know which way to turn. Totten and Br. Ben Brooks went above and beyond their roles as faculty members. They edited my thesis, offered crucial career advice, vetted my resume and organized a practice interview for dental school. Their support was invaluable, and I could not have asked for better mentors and professors."

Outside of class, she was president of both the Gamma Sigma Epsilon Chemistry Honor Society and the Sigma Zeta Math and Science Honor Society and secretary of Alpha Chi National Honor Society. She also served as a chemistry teaching assistant and a tutor for the Writing Center. "I met some of my best friends during those four years," Allison shared. "If I had to go back and do it all over again, I would not change a second of my time at GWU! It was by far one of the best experiences of my life."