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Office of University Communications

Mallory Moore

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Gardner-Webb's "Release the Captives" Club Hosts Second 5K to Rescue Enslaved Children

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Office of University
Communications

September 6, 2017

GWU community invited to participate in anti-slavery efforts through the "Rescue Race"

By Mallory Moore ('18), GWU Intern for Communications

Rescue Race starting line

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University's human-trafficking awareness club, Release the Captives, will hold its second annual 5K "Rescue Race" at 9 a.m. on Sept. 16 on Gardner-Webb's main campus. The proceeds of this race will help rescue enslaved children in Ghana through the Challenging Heights organization.

Registration is \$15 for GWU students and \$20 for community members and can be completed online at www.rescueracegwu.com, or on the morning of the race beginning at 8:15 a.m. The race will begin in the parking lot behind the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center (LYCC).

Last year, Release the Captives held its first 5K and raised over \$2,000 to donate to Challenging Heights. According to the club's current president, Sarah Grace Moxley ('18), the goal this year is to have 150 participants and raise \$3,000, enough to free three children from slavery. Once these children are rescued, Challenging Heights will provide protection and support at their rehabilitation center, which offers education and training, medical care, emotional support, and a safe path to reintegration.

Moxley spoke very highly of Challenging Heights, stating that it is "an incredible organization that has made a significant

Rescue Race runners

impact in fighting modern slavery in Ghana." Moxley went on to describe the organization's various types of work, including "prevention, community education and engagement, rescue missions, rehabilitation, partnerships with lawmakers, governmental agencies, and other organizations, and advocacy for human rights." Founded by James Kofi Annan, who was enslaved as a child, the organization has developed a plan to end child trafficking within Ghana's fishing industry in five years.

Release the Captives was founded by former GWU students Caroline Netherly and Julie Sliwinski in

Release the Captives

2013 and has grown from a small group of three students to a larger club of about 20. This year, the club's faculty sponsor is Dr. Paula Qualls, professor of religious studies. The club works to raise awareness about and take action against human trafficking. Along with the Rescue Race, the club also sponsors an annual awareness week on campus to educate the GWU community about these issues.

Release the Captives is active on several social media sites including Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/GWUrelease/>), Instagram (gwu_release) and Twitter (@releasecaptives). More information about the race is available at www.rescueraacegwu.com, and more information about Challenging Heights can be found at www.challengingheights.org.

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.