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Adam Benfield '16 Enjoys Working in Family Medicine

When Adam Benfield '16 of Hickory, N.C., began looking at schools for Physician Assistant (PA) Studies, Gardner-Webb

 photo of Adam Benfield with a patient

University was at the top of the list. A native of Fallston, N.C., Benfield had attended a larger university for his undergraduate degree but wanted the “hometown feel of a small campus and small class sizes for graduate school,” he shared.

He became a member of GWU’s first class of PA students and as he got to know his professors and classmates, he was grateful for the opportunity. “The individualized care you receive at Gardner-Webb is far and above the most valued part of my experience,” Benfield observed. “Each professor brings different background experiences, knowledge, and approaches to learning and medicine, which mesh to create the perfect environment to push each student to achieve his or her maximum potential and beyond. Each professor knows you by name and, particularly in the PA program, you spend so much time with the professors that they will know you almost better than you know yourself. Given this, there is no lack of available professors to write references for you once you graduate and begin looking for work.”

 Adam Benfield works on an assignment in the GWU Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program lab

Adam Benfield works on an assignment in the GWU Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program lab. He was a member of the PA Program’s first graduating class.

Benfield works in a family medicine practice, seeing patients of all ages. Being a PA combines his two interests. “I’ve always been intrigued by science and driven by the desire to understand the world around me,” he assessed. “I’ve also been compassionate and caring. The rigorous academic studies and science combined with the ability to manage my own patients once I graduated led me to choose the PA profession. Family medicine gives me a broad range of experiences and is not limited to one specialty or one body system, which keeps my job interesting as well as academically engaging.”

His advice to new PA students is to persevere. “The PA studies classes provide the base knowledge you need to succeed in a career as a PA, and the Gardner-Webb faculty instills a desire in each student to never stop learning,” Benfield affirmed. “It is going to be a grueling several years of lectures, studying, late nights, and early mornings. You’re going to feel like you’re being torn down, but ultimately, with enough tenacity and resilience, you will arise with the knowledge, tools, and will to succeed in medicine. By providing this base knowledge and giving you the tools and the know-how to continue your education throughout your life, Gardner-Webb prepares you for every situation that you could possibly face in the real world.”