

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

6-15-2017

10 Students Participate in Gardner-Webb University's Summer Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

Office of University Communications

Emily Eidson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications and Eidson, Emily, "10 Students Participate in Gardner-Webb University's Summer Undergraduate Research Scholars Program" (2017). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 609.

<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/609>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Gardner-Webb Publications at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu.

10 Students Participate in Gardner-Webb University's Summer Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/10-students-participate-in-gardner-webb-universitys-summer-undergraduate-research-scholars-program/

Office of University
Communications

June 15, 2017

Students Spend Summer Completing Scholarly Research and Boosting Academic Careers

By Emily Eidson ('18), GWU Intern for Communications

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—While many college students will be spending their summers lying by the beach under a shady umbrella, 10 Gardner-Webb students have chosen to spend their break working on an extensive project that could potentially shape the course of their academic careers.

The Summer Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (SURS) is specifically designed for students such as these, who are looking to broaden their horizons during the summer months. “The Undergraduate Research Program’s mission is to involve students and professors in scholarly projects that come to fruition outside the boundaries of the classroom,” says Dr. June Hobbs, creator and director of the Summer Scholars program.

Hobbs started the program in 2012 as part of her job as Director of Undergraduate Research. Five years later, the endeavor has rapidly expanded from only one researcher the first summer it was introduced to 10 researchers in the current summer of 2017. Each will complete academic ventures of their own choosing. Over a five week period, students must work for 40 hours a week on a project ranging anywhere from a scientific experiment to a creative writing project to an assignment combining research with service learning.

According to Hobbs, the enterprise gives students the opportunity to work closely with a chosen faculty mentor or collaborator in order to produce a project that can be presented in a professional forum. For example, students can present papers at Gardner-Webb’s Life of the Scholar Multidisciplinary Conference, publish manuscripts in a scholarly journal, exhibit their work in an art gallery, etc.

The experience is meant to be fully immersive, much like a full-time job, as participants live on campus and meet with their mentors on a weekly basis in order to perfect their individual projects and research their chosen topics.

Not only does the undertaking provide students with an opportunity to research a topic related to their field of study, it also benefits students in their future professional endeavors. “The program is a good springboard into highly competitive graduate programs,” says Hobbs. “It enhances their student experience and professional development as well as the reputation of GWU.”

Previous Summer Scholars have already used the experience to their advantage. One alumna, Stephanie McKellopp, received a full scholarship to a Ph.D. program at the University of Pennsylvania as a result of her own SURS project. Many others have received similar benefits as well as further exciting opportunities, such as securing an internship with film score composer Hans Zimmer, much like undergraduate Christian Jessup is completing this summer.

This summer’s batch of students look forward to working with their mentors and completing their scholarly projects in the hopes that they, too, will learn priceless skills and go on to achieve great success because of their involvement.

Ten students have chosen to partake in this year’s Summer Scholars program:

- Dalton Blackmon – Researching economic life of African Americans in Reconstruction Era
- Sarah Branch – Researching environmental sustainability practices at GWU
- Caroline Burnette – Researching gender roles and mental illness in Victorian Era women
- Summer Byers – Composing a Young Adult science fiction novel
- Eli Hardin – Researching Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and the aftermath
- Aaron Hilton – Researching dystopian/apocalyptic fiction and composing original piece
- RuthAnne Lievsay – Creating an art portfolio based on individuals with developmental disabilities
- Rachael Meachem – Conducting a service-learning project focusing on educational challenges associated with poverty and racial barriers
- Mallory Moore – Researching foreign-language films depicting females with depression and/or suicidal ideation
- Ethan Ramsey – Researching the Committees of Safety and Correspondence in western Massachusetts during the Revolutionary period

For more information about opportunities for undergraduate research at Gardner-Webb, including the Summer Scholars Program, contact Dr. June Hobbs, professor of English and director of undergraduate research, at 704-406-4412 or jhobbs@gardner-webb.edu.

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.