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Communications

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Luke Powell ('18) Set to Learn About Global Issues from European Perspective

Luke Powell ('18) studied German for three semesters at Gardner-Webb University before testing his communication skills during a spring break study abroad trip to Germany. “Being dropped in the country and forced to speak the language was beyond beneficial—these are experiences that you can’t obtain in the classroom,” Powell ('18) reflected. “The best part was seeing so much history, being in the heart of where the Cold War took place, Berlin, and seeing castles, palaces, museums and remnants of the wall. A close second was knowing that I was across the ocean from my home, where I had never left before, and was able to communicate.”

A native of Boiling Springs, N.C., Powell grew up around Gardner-Webb, because his parents work there. He knew that as a student at Gardner-Webb, he would not be a number, but have access to supportive professors who would help him reach his goals. “The relationship that you can have with professors is the most valuable thing about Gardner-Webb,” Powell observed. “I had a professor in economics who saw my work and has confidence in me. I speak with him regularly and he is always offering ways to help me. He encourages me to go get my doctorate in economics and has even offered to help me prepare and potentially attend his alma mater in London. On top of this, we have spoken many times about internship opportunities. It is one thing to have a solid career development department, but to have a professor that cares enough and has enough faith to help me apply and write recommendations to one of the best schools in the world, is another.”

As he prepares to spend a semester studying at the Linnaeus University in Vaxjo, Sweden, Powell is excited about the opportunity to experience the Scandinavian culture. “Their neutrality and peacefulness, along with their seemingly successful socialist economy, will prove to be interesting as I am only familiar with a capitalist economy and a dominant world power,” he assessed. “Americans tend to be ethnocentric and not open to otherness, but I am excited to learn about global migration, international organizations, and global environmental issues from a European perspective.”