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### **Gardner-Webb Students Practice Job Interview Skills During Networking Event**

Office of University Communications

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# Gardner-Webb Students Practice Job Interview Skills During Networking Event

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Office of University  
Communications

November 30, 2016

## *Career Center Enlists Local Business Leaders to Provide Feedback and Advice*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Nervous chatter filled the room while students at Gardner-Webb University waited to present their speeches to business leaders from the community. The networking opportunity, arranged by GWU Assistant Professor of Business Sheldon Gathers, gives students in his Principles of Management classes practice for a job interview.

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Elijah Perry, a marketing major, presents his speech to a business professional.

Gathers collaborated with Lisa Yerrick, director of the GWU Office of Career Development, to offer the event and include assignments in his class that help students with their job search. Working with the Career Center, the students wrote resumes and learned how to introduce themselves to a potential employer in an elevator speech, which is about a minute long or the duration of an elevator ride. The concise message includes a person's experience, expertise and goals.

As the students mingled before the most recent event, sophomore Elijah C. Perry, a marketing major, and freshman Ross Lucia, a business administration major, said writing the speech forced them to think about their strengths and weaknesses. Jessica Carswell, a sophomore business administration major, said working on her speech helped her to realize the importance of being prepared. Afterward, all three students said the event improved their confidence and they appreciated the feedback they received. "All the employers were very helpful," Lucia offered. "The main piece of advice I received was that I should slow down and not try to pitch it like I had a check list."

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Ross Lucia, a business administration major, said the advice he received will help him in the future.

Representatives from banking, government agencies and Gardner-Webb volunteered to listen and critique the elevator speeches. A group of five students sat at a table with one professional. The students took turns making their presentations and receiving feedback. When all five students had presented, the group went to speak with the next business leader. Students presented their speeches three times during the event.

Thomas Fekete III of Fifth Third Bank in Shelby, N.C., was impressed with the students' preparation and noticed how each group's confidence level improved. "You could easily see after the third table that there were some nerves, but a better comfort level," he

Thomas Fekete III of Fifth Third Bank in Shelby, N.C., gives students feedback at the event.

*Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University's purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).*