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November 11, 2016

Anna Burgess ('16) Began her GWU Journey with Associate Degree in Nursing

Anna Burgess ('16) of Ellenboro, N.C., went into the nursing field because of her interest in studying science, anatomy and the disease process. As she started her college search, the Hunt School of Nursing at Gardner-Webb University appealed to her for a couple of reasons. "I knew I wanted a bachelor's degree," she shared. "But I liked the idea that I could complete my ADN (Associate Degree in Nursing) and start working while completing my BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing). This was a rare option. I was also drawn to GWU, because I could get the full college experience just 30 minutes from home."

She received a scholarship and lived on campus, earning her ADN in 2006. She began working as a nurse full time and completed her BSN in 2007. "Classes at GWU gave me a core knowledge to build upon in the clinical environment," Burgess observed. "Classes such as pathophysiology, pharmacology, and health assessment provided the basic knowledge I needed to begin to provide care to my patients."

Burgess also learned lessons about team building and leadership in the Alpine Tower class she took her freshman year to satisfy the physical education requirement. "In fact, I wasn't very good at climbing at all," she offered. "But I learned skills in this course that are still helpful in my career some 12 years later."

When she decided to obtain her Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN-FNP) Concentration, again the GWU program fit her needs. "I was interested in the part-time format that would allow me to continue working while in school," she assessed.

Two months before she graduated with her FNP, Burgess was offered a position in a family care practice in Forest City, N.C. She was overwhelmed at first, but then remembered what her GWU professors had shared with her. "It was helpful that my professors had once been in my shoes and shared with us that they once felt the same way too. It helped give me the confidence I needed," she reflected. "I see about 15 patients a day ranging in age from young children to the elderly. I manage chronic diseases, treat acute illnesses, and perform wellness exams. I would like to precept future nurse practitioner students as they set out in their new profession."

National Nurse Practitioners Week is Nov. 13-19. For more information about Nurse Practitioners and the GWU program, [click here.](#)