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### Why I'm 'Caught in The Webb'

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# Why I'm 'Caught in The Webb'

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Office of University  
Communications

September 21, 2016

**By Bryton Mitchell ('17), GWU Intern for University Communications**

If you have been at Gardner-Webb for any length of time, you have probably heard people say, “Watch out, or you’ll get caught in the Webb.” Although this may sound corny, it speaks a lot of truth.

It doesn’t take long for this to happen. There is something about this place that is captivating. Is it the beautiful sunset that falls behind the tree line over Lake Hollifield? Maybe it’s the delicious Mexican and Japanese food that can be found down the street from campus. Perhaps it’s the quad where people gather and play ultimate Frisbee on spring days.

Though these characteristics are great and unique to Gardner-Webb, one thing grabs my attention more than anything. For me, the web of Gardner-Webb is spun by its community. The brilliant professors, friendly staff members, caring leaders, and my fellow peers are what make this place special. Gardner-Webb also provides a variety of enjoyable activities that help connect you with others.

After only a couple weeks of being a freshman, I had already established relationships with the staff around me. Harold, a former housekeeper of Mauney, my residential hall, was one of the first people I got to know. He greeted every student with a smile, loved his work, and always had something to say. He once stopped in the doorway of my room and we had a conversation about his vacuum cleaner. For some reason, it made my day.

After declaring myself an English major, I quickly got to know the professors in the department. Dr. Chris Davis, someone I have now taken several classes with, became my advisor. I’ve been walking into his office to chat, often times without an appointment, for as long as I can remember, and he, like every professor in the English department, is always welcoming and willing to help or listen.

I see Dr. Davis as more than a professor. He is a mentor and a friend, but it’s not just him; I have a relationship like that with all the English professors, as well as professors outside the department. Dr. James Morgan of the psychology department keeps his office door open at all times in case students need a listening ear.

No matter who you are, what your major is, or what your interests are, GWU faculty members love interacting with students. I once went to an art professor's house with many students to watch a movie. I've played intramural football with staff members. Religious studies professors gather at the coffee shop on Wednesday nights to play music, and they never forget to remind you to join them.

Besides getting to know the incredible faculty here, establishing relationships with my fellow students and participating in campus events has been just as important. My class time is spent working and collaborating alongside them, and my free time is spent socializing with friends during fun activities. This can happen at any university of course, but Gardner-Webb events like The Gathering set it apart.

The Gathering is one of the biggest weekly events on campus, and it is a wonderful way to get involved in Christian life here. Not only do I get to worship at my church on Sundays, but I get the opportunity to worship beside my peers on Tuesday nights at The Gathering. Better yet, the music is led by students and they, as well as faculty, also do the speaking. Worshiping and learning with and from your peers and professors creates an unbreakable community.

Along with the Gathering, I spend my extra time with GWU Campus Civitan, which is a club where service-minded people gather together and figure out ways to give back to the community. Civitan is one of many ways to serve, and service is a large part of Gardner-Webb.

You will not find another university that has staff that care about their students in such a unique way or a community that is so closely intertwined. I consider myself caught in the Webb, and though I do not plan on spending my life in Boiling Springs, I do consider myself emotionally caught. While here, I plan on continuously growing my relationships with the faculty around me and staying involved in the welcoming community that exists.