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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications, "Undergraduate Research Scholars Program Features Work of Seven Stellar Students" (2016). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 801.
<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/801>

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Undergraduate Research Scholars Program Features Work of Seven Stellar Students

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Office of University
Communications

September 20, 2016

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. — The Gardner-Webb University Undergraduate Research Scholars program funded a total of seven students during the summer 2016 term, which represents the greatest number of scholars in the program’s history. As part of their research project, each scholar spends five weeks of a summer term on campus working on his/her topic for 40 hours a week. At the same time, students are mentored by a dedicated faculty member, who provides information and guidance to ensure a successful research experience for the scholar.

Chris Beguhl (Rolesville, N.C.) investigated the presence of third-gendered Americans in nineteenth-century print literature in the South. “Third-gender individuals—those whom society recognizes operate in a socially constructed gender sphere that diverges sharply from their biological sex—are a well-known historical phenomenon,” shared faculty mentor Dr. Joseph Moore. “Research on third-gendered peoples would not be particularly new, however Chris noticed that third-gender studies on American history stop at roughly the American Revolution and he wanted to learn more about this fascinating historical gap.” (For [WGWG.org](#) interview with Chris, [click here](#).)

Chris Beguhl

Mariah Case (Hendersonville, N.C.)—along with mentors Dr. Tom LeGrand and Dr. Lorene Pagcaliwagan—studied refugee populations in an effort to better understand how to provide expedient care and services to displaced people groups. Case’s project was the University’s first to combine primary research with service learning. (For [WGWG.org](#) interview with Mariah, [click here](#).)

Mariah Case

Using primary and secondary research, Shaquavia Chiles (Greenville, S.C.) identified effective strategies for teaching English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) students in regular classrooms when an ESL teacher is unavailable. Along with her mentor, Dr. Anita Sanders, she developed a handbook of tips, strategies, and resources for teachers in K12 classrooms. (For [WGWG.org](#) interview with Shaquavia, [click here](#).)

Shaquavia Chiles

Jeffrey Day (Lancaster, Pa.) took a closer look at racism in mainstream mass media, specifically through the Black Lives Matter movement. Research mentor Dr. Dianne Sykes said Day’s analysis was based on the theories of W.E.B. DuBois and Cornel West, which

offered a synthesis of two theorists who are not typically brought together. Day also observed that the presidential election made the topic even more relevant. ([For WGWG.org interview with Jeff, click here.](#))

Jeff Day

Christopher Lile (Waynesville, N.C.), mentored by Dr. Joseph Oyugi, implemented the first-ever survey and census of small-mammal populations at the Broad River Greenway and in the surrounding areas. Such a survey is the first step in any effort to conserve these animals and connects with aspects of Lile’s interest in primate studies. ([For WGWG.org interview with Christopher, click here.](#))

Christopher Lile

Starr Tate (Gastonia, N.C.) developed a plan for a nursing mentorship program for the Hunt School of Nursing. Under the guidance of Dr. Nicole Waters, she researched programs that paired third- or fourth-year nursing majors with their newer colleagues, and then developed a plan to be implemented at Gardner-Webb. ([For WGWG.org interview with Starr, click here.](#))

Starr Tate

Christian Jessup ('17), a music composition and communication studies double major, developed an original score for the 1977 blockbuster film *Star Wars*. Jessup aims to establish a career in film composing, and with assistance from his faculty mentor Dr. Bruce Moser (assistant professor of music), he wrote two-and-a-half hours of original music. Jessup’s musical score for the film will be screened on Dec. 8 in Tucker Student Center. ([For WGWG.org interview with Christian, click here.](#))

Christian Jessup

With a vision to offer increasing opportunities for Gardner-Webb’s undergraduate students, Undergraduate Research Director Dr. June Hobbs hopes to facilitate the program’s continued expansion. “My dream is to eventually have at least 10 students living on campus and working on undergraduate research projects each summer,” she explained. “Without question, these projects are a very important way we can add value to the overall educational experience for our students.”

For more information on the Undergraduate Research Program at Gardner-Webb, or to find out how to apply for the Summer Scholars Research Program, contact Dr. June Hobbs at 704-406-4412 or email jhobbs@gardner-webb.edu.