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Office of University
Communications

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Bekah Rhea ('17) Appreciates the Environment of Learning at GWU

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Bekah Rhea ('17) of Knoxville, Tenn., is preparing for a career in cross-cultural evangelism by majoring in theatre and world religions at Gardner-Webb. Focusing on world religions gives her an understanding of different cultures and beliefs, while participating in theatre helps her become an effective communicator, developing skills in presentation and professionalism.

Disabled from birth, Rhea uses a motorized wheelchair. One reason she chose GWU is because she found the campus more accommodating than other schools. “I could easily find my way around, and find help when I needed it,” Rhea assessed. “That really swung me in favor of Gardner-Webb, because I could, as a disabled person, see myself living here fairly independently without it causing a lot of extra stress.”

A student in the University’s Honors Program, Rhea appreciates how the Gardner-Webb community encourages her quest for knowledge. “I have professors who can point me in the right directions, asking ‘Have you read this?’ ‘Have you tried this?’ ‘What are your thoughts about this?’” she observed. “Not only are professors willing to challenge me, but they encourage me, pray for me, and care for me as a person. I feel super prepared to pursue graduate school, because of the education and affirmation I have received here.”

She’s also built a network of support by participating in campus organizations and working in the Undergraduate Admissions Office. “I have friends who foster meaningful conversations, and I have connections with both underclassmen and upperclassmen that I wouldn’t have at a larger school,” she shared. “I can roll down the walkway, and in five minutes I could have said hello to 12 people, high-fived at least four, and hugged at least two. It’s not that I’m famous, it’s just Gardner-Webb. You are noticed here. You are invited in.”

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).