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Office of University
Communications

June 24, 2016

Father of Three Earns Bachelor's Degree to be an Example to his Children

Homeless at 19, Charles Franklin Friday Jr. ('15), of Denver, N.C., became determined to make a better life for himself and the family he hoped to have some day. He joined the military to get off the streets, and when his service ended, enrolled in a community college.

He was sitting in class when a representative from Gardner-Webb University talked to them about the Degree Completion Program (DCP). "She explained how we could take our education further while taking care of our family and working full time as well," recalled Friday, who is married now. "My mother and father didn't get past grade school, so I needed to be a positive example to my three children."

A man of faith, Friday appreciated Gardner-Webb's Christian foundation and decided to major in criminal justice and human services. "I not only wanted to help those in need—I needed to help them," he affirmed. "I tell my children that the world has enough bad people in it, so they don't need to become one of them. Life is about keeping God first and loving your neighbor. We should help those in need, because everyone needs help at some point in life."

Since graduating, he has been hired as a North Carolina Probation/Parole Officer. The topics discussed in class were immediately relevant to his job. "I am able to take something from each one of my classes and use it on my current job," Friday reflected. "One example is Positive Psychology. I work with offenders who have a hard time finding a way to be positive, but it's my job to help them approach life with a positive outlook and see a better outcome."

Because of his desire to help those in need, Friday hopes to enter politics someday. "I want to be a positive force that God can use," he asserted.

Friday achieved his educational goals and recommends the DCP program to others. "DCP is great for many reasons," he observed. "You can work and go to school, but you still receive the same education of someone who attends classes on campus. And, you have the freedom to make it work for you—online or seated classes—you take your pick."