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### **Gardner-Webb Alum Pursues Chaplaincy Opportunities**

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# Gardner-Webb Alum Pursues Chaplaincy Opportunities

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Office of University  
Communications

June 21, 2016

## *Studies and Campus Ministries Prepared Adam Barnes ('13) for Duke Divinity School*

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Adam Barnes ('13) of Gastonia, N.C., knew Gardner-Webb University as his pastor's

alma mater. But after two visits to campus, he was ready to discover his own place at the school.

Adam Barnes with his former roommate, Alex, at the Friendship House in Durham, N.C.

"I began to consider Gardner-Webb more seriously as I participated in the interview process for scholarships," he reflected. "Shortly after my interview, I attended a men's basketball game, and those two visits led to my decision to enroll at Gardner-Webb. During my first visit, I met a freshman, Michael Heredia, who was friendly and kind towards my parents and me. Later, at the basketball game, I saw Michael in the middle of Gardner-Webb's student section, and it led me to perceive that Gardner-Webb was a place where students can belong and be valuable to campus as soon as their freshmen year. This appealed to me, and I enrolled at Gardner-Webb to find a community of belonging."

Barnes became involved in various student groups in Campus Ministries. He joined FOCUS (Fellowship of Christians United in Service), which consists of teams of students who are involved in leading youth retreats locally and regionally. He participated in Pastoral Care Ministries, a group of students who pray for the University and individual requests. He also served as coordinator for Prison Fellowship, which gives students the opportunity to visit inmates in regional prisons. Outside of Campus Ministries, he was a student recruitment ambassador with the Undergraduate Admissions Office and wrote articles for the student newspaper.

"Looking back, I value these opportunities Gardner-Webb gave me to listen," Barnes observed. "Through my engagement with Campus Ministries, I was gifted with opportunities to listen to God. My work with the undergraduate admissions office helped me to listen to the voices of concerned parents and optimistic youth. My time with the student newspaper helped me to listen to a variety of people and to ask good questions. As someone pursuing the ministerial life, these opportunities to learn how to listen were invaluable."

As he learned valuable interpersonal skills, Barnes' professors prepared him academically for graduate school. "Duke Divinity School (Durham, N.C.) was a pretty rigorous program, and Gardner-Webb prepared me well for the educational challenge," he affirmed. "My

classes in Biblical Studies with Dr. Paula Qualls, Dr. Ron Williams, and Dr. Scott Shauf taught me how to listen well to the details of biblical narrative. My history classes with Dr. Eddie Stepp and Dr. Joseph Moore helped me to be comfortable dialoguing with the primary and ancient texts of the Christian tradition. In Dr. Qualls' Sacred Writings class, we were assigned volunteer hours at Wendover Hospice House. The time spent there encouraged me to see God at work even in the suffering of God's creation. I also appreciate Dr. Stepp's and Dr. Don Berry's creative moments in teaching and their pastoral nimbleness and wisdom in challenging religious dialogue."

At Duke, Barnes continued serving others as a resident of Friendship House, a home where Duke Divinity students room with young adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Through the experience, the residents with disabilities grow their independent living skills, and the students gain insight into ministering to people with special needs.

After graduating from Duke with a Master of Divinity and a certificate in Prison Studies, Barnes is set to begin a hospital chaplain residency at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, N.C. "Throughout this unit I will also be hoping to discern a potential vocation as a hospital chaplain," Barnes assessed. "This unit could also be helpful in my potential pursuit to become a prison chaplain, something I've been working towards since my studies at Gardner-Webb."

While his time at Gardner-Webb developed his ministry skills, Barnes also grew spiritually. "Gardner-Webb's Christian community helped form my understanding of Christian mission, by giving me opportunities to participate in prison ministry and to go on mission trips," he asserted. "Gardner-Webb also helped me to grow in my worship of God and my appreciation of God's creation. Gardner-Webb is a place where students can grow and flourish as compassionate individuals while being supported and encouraged by their faculty, peers, and the entire Gardner-Webb community."