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### **GWU School of Business Gave Small Business Owner Tools to be Successful**

Office of University Communications

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# GWU School of Business Gave Small Business Owner Tools to be Successful

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Office of University  
Communications

March 22, 2016

*Amy Rizzuto ('09) is Award-Winning Wedding Photographer in New York City*

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When it was time to declare her major, Amy Rizzuto ('09) had two choices: Follow her business instincts or her artistic abilities. Marketing concepts intrigued her, but she also wanted to develop her talent and passion for photography that began when she was 7 years old. After talking with her adviser at Gardner-Webb University, she chose to major in marketing and minor in communications with a concentration in photography.

She discovered her interest in marketing in a class taught by Dr. Donald W. Caudill, GWU professor of marketing. "Maybe because Dr. Caudill was great at tying our lessons to real-life situations, or maybe because I just love the psychology behind what different companies do to attract specific clients," she observed. "Either way, I looked forward to that hour all semester."

After she graduated and launched her career, Rizzuto discovered she made the right decision. "I truly believe God was equipping me with the tools I needed to start my business, Amy Rizzuto Photography," she shared. "I know from my business background, the ability to attract my ideal clients has been just as important, if not more, than my ability to take pretty photographs."

Rizzuto further believes that her business was God's plan for her life. "My business began shortly after reading the book 'TEN' by my wonderful pastor, Terry Smith," she asserted. "His message centers on John 10:10, which says, 'Jesus Christ came to give us life in all its fullness or more and better life than [you] ever dreamed of' (NCV, MSG). He makes the point that God has a dream for each of us, and we can tap into this dream. I want to live a 'TEN' life by using the talents I believe God has given me to fulfill a dream that will bring glory and honor to my heavenly father every day."

In one year, she grew her New York City business from part time to full time and attributes her success to the concepts she learned from Dr. Caudill. She photographs 40 weddings a year around the world, and her work has been featured on websites and in publications, including Style Me Pretty, The Knot Magazine, Manhattan Bride, New York Weddings

Magazine, Charlotte Weddings Magazine, and The Huffington Post. She's also won several awards for her photography from The Knot, the nation's largest source for wedding news and inspiration.

"I love taking pictures of people in love. For me, there is nothing more exhilarating than capturing the authentic beauty that is so evident in a couple who is committing to spend their lives together," she offered. "I believe marriage is forever and the special memories you create on your wedding day should be preserved for just as long. Years to come, your wedding day photographs should tell a story, communicating on their own without a need for words."

She and her husband, Matt, live in Morris Plains, N.J., with their daughter. "I married my college sweetheart," she shared. "We met the first day of orientation and started dating shortly after. He played baseball, I played tennis, and we always saw each other walking up to the cafeteria after practice."

She was a starter on the Gardner-Webb tennis team and active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Rizzuto was recognized for her academic achievements as the recipient of the University's first Alfred & Shirley Wampler Caudill Marketing Award.

"I loved my experience at Gardner-Webb University," she praised. "Besides preparing me for my career, it gave me the opportunity to play Division I Tennis while being surrounded by a Christian community. I actually looked forward each week to Dimensions (a program to enhance the spiritual, intellectual and cultural life at the University) and loved being surrounded by so many like-minded people. Gardner-Webb is the place where I met my husband, along with many good friends I still keep in touch with today."