

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

2-26-2016

Gardner-Webb Gave Alum Opportunities to Explore Future Career

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Gardner-Webb Gave Alum Opportunities to Explore Future Career

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gardner-webb-gave-alum-opportunities-to-explore-future-career/

Office of University
Communications

February 26, 2016

Political Science Classes Prepared Michael Peterson (’15) for Challenges of Law School

One of Michael Peterson’s favorite photos is a picture of himself in front of the U.S. Capitol. More than a souvenir from a vacation, the picture represents what Gardner-Webb University means to the 2015 graduate.

“I never would’ve thought my journey at Gardner-Webb would take me from Boiling Springs, N.C., to Capitol Hill,” Peterson declared. “It shows anything can be accomplished at Gardner-Webb.”

Serving the U.S. House of Representatives in the nation’s capital, he conducted legislative research on a variety of issues including tax policy, healthcare, education and foreign affairs. He also had the responsibilities of communicating with constituents via phone and email, as well as helping to set up for events and prepare for presentations. Peterson’s internship opportunity reflects the connections Gardner-Webb professors have in professional circles and with their students.

“During my time in the Department of Social Sciences, I struck up a strong bond with assistant professor Dr. Joseph Moore and former associate professor Dr. Michael Kuchinsky,” Peterson shared. “I had over half of my political science classes with Dr. Kuchinsky, and he became a mentor. His door was always open, and he helped lead me to my D.C. internship and was an intricate piece in getting me to law school. As for Dr. Moore, I could always come to his office and discuss my future or even just discuss current political affairs. Dr. Moore always had a cunning ability to challenge me mentally and force me to broaden my knowledge of politics and the law.”

Those skills were necessary as he made the transition to law school at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Ky. “My social science classes challenged me to think critically and this is a paramount trait for law school,” Peterson explained. “Everything isn’t black and white, certainly not when dealing with the law, and my Gardner-Webb professors’ incessant demand for me to think more complexly and really search for answers has really helped my analytical and research capabilities as I have continued my education.”

His goal is to practice law in a number of fields, but he primarily wants to work with local businesses and corporations and also practice Constitutional law in the Charlotte, N.C., area. “I could also see myself starting my own law firm at some point down the road and helping build better law and pre-law educational paths for local universities, including Gardner-Webb,” he offered.

Peterson chose Gardner-Webb because he felt welcome on campus the first time he visited. “It is an intimidating transition to go from high school to living on your own at college,” he assessed. “Gardner-Webb made that transition easy, however. Being a Christian community made the Gardner-Webb campus more welcoming. The people on campus were much closer and friendly to new students. It is easy for incoming freshmen to be ignored by the upperclassmen, but the Christian community made the transition easier for new students.”

He developed friendships and met many people while serving as Student Government Association (SGA) Senior Class President and SGA Senator. He was also a member of the Political Science Honors Society, treasurer of the College Republicans and a participant in Model United Nations.

“There is no doubt in my mind that I would not have been able to meet the number of people and establish the same number of contacts at a bigger school,” he affirmed. “I knew almost everyone in my graduating class and the majority of faculty on campus. These relationships have materialized into lifelong friends and professional contacts.”

He believes the chance to form these friendships is more important than a college’s name recognition, large student body, or national championships. “I have found all of that can ultimately be a hindrance on your ability to grow and mold your future,” Peterson advised. “I like to say the makings of a truly great university are the three F’s—Faith, Family, and Future. If you are looking for a school that has a strong family bond, a place to grow your faith, and a place that will give you the tools to seize your future potential, then Gardner-Webb is the right school for you.”