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### **Alumna will Study Infectious Diseases in Postdoctoral Fellowship**

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# Alumna will Study Infectious Diseases in Postdoctoral Fellowship

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Office of University  
Communications

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## *GWU Provided Foundation for Carrie Long's ('11) Doctoral Research*

Workers often encounter a host of chemicals while exploring mining, hydraulic fracturing and other occupational sites across the country. In the historically mining-rich state of West Virginia, Gardner-Webb alumna Carrie Long ('11) is studying the impacts of some of those substances on the human immune system, in hopes of discovering information that will lead to health improvements for workers in a variety of professional fields.

A Ph.D. candidate at West Virginia University (Morgantown, W.Va.), Long performs research in labs connected to both WVU and the neighboring Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health facility.

"Our lab looks at chemicals likely to be used or currently in use in a workplace setting and we determine if exposure to these substances impacts the immune system and, if so, how and why," Long explained. "The opportunity to be involved in research that impacts workers in a positive way at such a storied institution has been a true blessing that would not have been possible without my undergraduate experience at Gardner-Webb."

Already fueled at an early age with a passion for science by her parents' careers as physicians, Long studied biology at Gardner-Webb. "I got into the major, every professor was knowledgeable and caring, and I loved it," she shared. "All of my professors had their own research experiences that I could learn from, which gave me realistic expectations for my own Ph.D. studies."

After graduation from WVU, Long begins a postdoctoral fellowship position at Rocky Mountain Labs in Hamilton, Mont., which is a National Institutes of Health (NIH) – National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) facility.

"The laboratory that I will be working in focuses on a highly pathogenic bacteria that is studied in a high containment setting," Long said. "This fellowship will give me the opportunity to learn more about bacteriology and microbial pathogenesis, while applying my immunology experience to broaden the scope of the lab's research. I can't say enough about how great of a foundation GWU gave me as a student, scientist, and person."