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### **Gardner-Webb MBA Student Starts Career Before Graduation**

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# Gardner-Webb MBA Student Starts Career Before Graduation

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Office of University  
Communications

## *While Receiving Education, Evan Rhodes Grew in his Faith*

Before completing his Master of Business Administration (MBA) in 2012 at Gardner-Webb University, Benjamin “Evan” Rhodes was offered a job with Fastenal Company in Shelby, N.C. By the time he finished his degree, he was a top-ranking sales representative, which led to another job opportunity.

“I was recruited to fill a territory sales manager position for a family-owned flooring manufacturer called J&J Invision,” Rhodes shared. “Then, with only 14 months of industry experience, I was approached by Tandus-Centiva, a global commercial flooring manufacturer located in Dalton, Ga., to fill an account executive role covering Charlotte, N.C., and Winston-Salem, N.C.”

Rhodes is the youngest account executive in the company’s history. He calls on architect and design firms, as well as corporate, retail, government, healthcare, and education market segments. In the future, he would like to move into a corporate management. He feels the real-life experiences shared by the faculty in the Godbold School of Business helped to prepare him for the job.

“I learned from seasoned veterans who were extremely successful on a corporate level,” he observed. “The quality of my education was unparalleled. I will unequivocally say that my undergraduate and graduate years of study at Gardner-Webb were some of the best years of my life. Something I will never take for granted and something I will never forget.”

Rhodes completed his undergraduate degree in business administration in 2010 at Gardner-Webb and was involved in many activities on campus. He was a member of the Gardner-Webb wrestling team. He also served as president for Gardner Webb’s Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, was an active member in Students In Free Enterprise (today known as Enactus) and was heavily involved in the Graduates in Executive Management (GEM) program. When he wasn’t busy with those organizations, he assisted the late Dr. Charles Tichenor and Dr. Earl Godfrey for work study. He also served as a graduate assistant in the Godbold School of Business while studying for his MBA.

“The best thing about Gardner-Webb was the quality of people. Everyone I met helped me discover the values of life and had a positive impact on my future,” Rhodes affirmed.

“Gardner-Webb enabled me to integrate the values of faith and service within the context

of rigorously preparing for a rewarding professional career. My professors and coaches wanted me to be successful in the classroom and on the wrestling mat, but more importantly, wanted me to be successful in life after college.”

Rhodes learned about Gardner-Webb when he and his coach sent highlight tapes to the University’s wrestling coaches. He also remembered hearing good reviews from athletes from his high school recruited by the University. After seeing his highlight tapes, the wrestling coaches invited him for a visit.

“As soon as I traveled for an official visit, I was hooked. The inviting campus was just the right size,” Rhodes recalled. “I also wanted to find a school where Christian faith was just as important. I felt like I could be an active part of the University and not just another number compared to other schools. I felt Gardner-Webb could be a place that I could leave my mark, as well as make lifelong friends that share the same Christian principles that I do. Gardner-Webb University was a place for me not only to obtain a degree, but it was a place to strengthen and grow my relationship with Christ.”