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Office of University
Communications

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Keon Williams ('14) Gained Valuable Insights From Real-World Experiences of Godbold School of Business Faculty

Football brought Kyeonta “Keon” Williams Jr. ('14) to Gardner-Webb in 2010 for a visit, but a business professor convinced him to stay.

“I was offered a full-scholarship to be a student-athlete,” the Runnin’ Bulldogs cornerback recalled. “I chose to attend Gardner-Webb shortly after hearing Dr. Anthony Negbenebor’s presentation during my official visit. Negbenebor (dean emeritus and professor of economics and international business in Godbold School of Business) discussed how the institution intertwines faith and academics, which my family and I felt was a competitive advantage.”

Once he began his studies at GWU, Williams found Negebenebor’s statements to be true. Along with playing football, he learned business concepts crucial to his career and participated in a variety of campus organizations, including the Student Government Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Students in Free Enterprise (Enactus) and French Club.

“Gardner-Webb gave me the opportunity to become involved with Career Athletes (Athlete Network) during my freshman year, which led to obtaining a Top 10 Internship with Northwestern Mutual,” Williams offered. “The experience of playing collegiate football helped fuel a sense of leadership and team spirit, which is vital in corporate America. The curriculum of the Godbold School of Business helped mold me into a responsible professional. Most importantly, my experience at the Godbold School of Business gave me a sense of moral discernment and ethical awareness that is needed for a career in an industry plagued by conflicts of interest.”

He was impressed with the caliber of the GWU faculty and their constant pursuit of knowledge. Negbenebor stood out because of his teaching style.

“He went above and beyond my expectations. He integrated the three main cognitive learning styles into our course study which helped me tremendously: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic,” Williams observed. “As a result, I was able to learn and retain complex theories and concepts that are beneficial for

me today. For instance, Dr. Negbenebor would ask ‘What is economics?’ at the beginning of every lecture, and the class would answer ‘Economics is the study of how you and I allocate scarce resources given certain restrictions to maximize our wants and needs.’”

In his job as an investment adviser representative, Williams creates and implements investment strategies for retail investors. He also had an opportunity to attend the China Europe International Business School’s (CEIBS) 2015 Shanghai boot camp, where nearly 70 participants from around the world heard lectures from well-known professors, visited the offices of multinational companies and engaged in various career-development activities. During his experience in China and since receiving his degree, he has come to appreciate the value of having the faculty of the Godbold School of Business share their real-world experiences.

“The faculty is accessible and hands-on with their approach given the University’s focused class size. It is important for an individual to get to know the story of who’s leading their journey through higher education,” Williams suggested. “Many of our faculty have served in executive roles and conducted business efforts around the world. Globalization is the prime focus of business now, so it is important to have insight pertaining to other parts of the world. The diversity within the faculty gives students the opportunity to collect first-hand accounts about the nature of business and the interconnectedness of emerging markets and Europe with the U.S.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University provides exceptional educational opportunities within a Christian environment, preparing students to think critically, to succeed professionally, and to serve faithfully as members of their local and global communities.