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### **Gardner-Webb University ASL Students Volunteer for Community Deaf-Blind Camp**

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# Gardner-Webb University ASL Students Volunteer for Community Deaf-Blind Camp

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Office of University  
Communications

October 20, 2015

## *Students Provide Assistance, Interpretation to Disabled*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Three Gardner-Webb American Sign Language (ASL) students volunteered at a 10-week camp for the deaf and blind over the summer at Lake Norman, N.C. Hosted by the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Associates, Camp Dogwood entertains hundreds of weekly visitors for recreational enjoyment through myriad outdoor activities.

ASL senior Natalie Cardwell and juniors Madison McMahon and Marissa Richardson served as support service personnel (SSP) for campers on the weekend of Sept. 10-13. Their roles involved acting as sighted guides between activities and assisting with communication using sign language for those who have some degree of hearing and vision handicap.

“Volunteering at Camp Dogwood was an incredible experience that I was honored to be a part of,” Richardson said. “I learned so much from the campers, other SSPs and interpreters, and camp coordinators linguistically, culturally, and personally.”

Students initially learned about the opportunity to volunteer at Camp Dogwood through Gardner-Webb’s Noel Center for Disability Services and personal connections, but took it upon themselves to get involved.

“I heard of Camp Dogwood my freshman year through a friend who had previously graduated from Gardner-Webb’s ASL and interpreting program,” McMahon said. “She told me it was by far her favorite way to event hours each semester, and highly recommended I attend.”

“The deaf and blind communities don’t consider themselves as a disabled population,” Cardwell said. “They are not a population that needs help and pity. They are a group of people that we can learn and benefit from. Learning to adjust and adapt to the hurdles life throws at you is important. I help assist them with communication and equal access.”

For more information on Camp Dogwood visit [nclionscampdogwood.org](http://nclionscampdogwood.org). For more information on the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Associates, visit [ncdba.org](http://ncdba.org).

*The mission of the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Associates is to advocate for the needs and*

*rights of individuals who are Deaf-Blind and to enable individuals who are Deaf-Blind to achieve their maximum potential by being independent and productive citizens of the state of North Carolina.*

*Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University offers a comprehensive academic experience that introduces students to the diverse world of ideas and to the people who think them, preparing them for professional success and for productive citizenship.*