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2-24-2015

### **5K Race at Gardner-Webb to Benefit Community Members Battling Eating Disorders**

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# 5K Race at Gardner-Webb to Benefit Community Members Battling Eating Disorders

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Office of University  
Communications

February 24, 2015

## *Feb. 28 Event Completes Week of Awareness Activities at GWU*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University invites the community to participate in a 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, Feb. 28 to increase awareness of eating disorders and raise money for people who suffer from body image illnesses. The “Everybody Knows Somebody 5K” will conclude a week of National Eating Disorders Awareness (NEDA) events at the University.

Preregistration and race day registration are \$20 for community members and \$10 for all GWU students, faculty and staff. Participants may register online in advance at [gardner-webb.edu/everybody-5k](http://gardner-webb.edu/everybody-5k), or in person in front of Gardner-Webb’s Tucker Student Center, beginning at 7:30 a.m. Saturday. The race begins at 9 a.m.

“We would love to have the community participate,” shared Cindy Wallace, director of counseling services at Gardner-Webb and an organizer for the 5K. “Funds raised will go toward eating disorders awareness and treatment for our students. Many suffer from different forms of eating disorders, and our desire is to bring understanding.”

Eating disorders are often misunderstood and can affect friends and family members, as well as the person who suffers from the illness, offered Aubry McMahan, a GWU student who said she has battled an eating disorder for the past five years. This week’s events and the 5K focus on the theme “Everybody Knows Somebody.”

“Unfortunately, many people suffer in silence because they are afraid, fear judgment and don’t know what to do,” McMahan said. “Eating disorders cause a decline in every aspect of a person’s life, including things like academics, emotional well being, physical health and relationships. Without help, a person can experience life-threatening health problems. This is why it is vital to talk about it and prevent someone from the grip of an eating disorder.”

Gardner-Webb plans to host a free event from 2-4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25 in the Tucker Student Center, to help educate the community about the dangers of eating disorders and empower women to celebrate and embrace true beauty and self-love.

Saturday's 5K will take an out-and-back course that will start at the Tucker Student Center, travel to Main Street in Boiling Springs, move along Memorial Drive and College Avenue, circle the College of Health Sciences building and then return to the student center. The event will include T-shirts for participants who preregister, as well as water and bananas for everyone at the end of the race. First-place awards will be presented in elementary, middle and high school, college and adult age groups.

“Gardner-Webb and the surrounding community can help by simply talking about eating disorders and attending special events,” urged McMahon, who said she has previously hosted fundraisers for NEDA. “Many people fail to understand the reality of the disorders because they just are not talked about often. If you suspect someone is struggling with an illness, gently approach them about it and let them know you are there for them.”

*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.*