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Office of University
Communications

January 23, 2015

Military Organization Recognizes GWU for Strong Support of Service Personnel

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. — Gardner-Webb University is proud to announce it will be designated as a Purple Heart University for its military and veteran support, the first such honor for a higher education institution in the state of North Carolina.

The Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) and Gardner-Webb invite veterans to a ceremony to mark the honor at 10 a.m. on Jan. 28 in the University's Dover Campus Center. The program will include a salute to veterans, a proclamation and plaque for the University and a presentation on the Purple Heart, which is bestowed on U.S. military members who are wounded by adversaries in combat.

Members of the local MOPH chapter seek to recognize businesses, government entities and other organizations that demonstrate outstanding support for all active-duty and veteran military personnel. Chapter 634, which includes Cleveland and seven other nearby counties in North Carolina, has also recognized the NFL's Carolina Panthers, the NBA's Charlotte Hornets, Lowe's Motor Speedway, Caromont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia, N.C., and others with the Purple Heart designation. The Citadel in Charleston, S.C., is the only other Purple Heart college or university in the Carolinas, shared Stephen Zenes, junior vice commander for MOPH Chapter 634.

"We're trying to make the whole state purple for its outstanding support of military members and for honoring the Purple Heart," Zenes said. "Gardner-Webb is exceptionally friendly to the military, and that's why we pushed to honor the University. We like to see a university that welcomes and supports its veterans. The designation as a Purple Heart University honors that support."

Gardner-Webb has consistently been recognized for its support of the nation's troops. Among those honors, the University was recently named a military-friendly institution by Military Advanced Education, an organization that promotes higher education opportunities for military personnel and their families, and by G.I. Jobs/Victory Media, which advocates for educational and career opportunities for veterans and active-duty service members. U.S. News & World Report also ranked GWU best in the Carolinas among schools that offer online graduate business degrees to meet the needs of veterans.

GWU currently serves more than 100 military veterans, active-duty personnel and dependent family members in undergraduate and graduate degree programs, according to David Hawsey, a U.S. Navy veteran and the University's vice president for enrollment management and marketing. "Gardner-Webb University's recognition as a Purple Heart University further confirms our commitment to our active-duty personnel, veterans and their families," Hawsey offered. "We are grateful for the many Purple Heart recipients in our region, the state of North Carolina and nationwide for their service and sacrifices that ensure our freedom."

For more information on the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the ceremony at Gardner-Webb, visit moph634.org or contact Zenes at 704-470-5494.

Chartered by Congress in 1958, the Military Order of the Purple Heart is composed of military men and women who received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds suffered in combat. Although membership is restricted to the combat wounded, the organization supports all veterans and their families with various nationwide programs.

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.