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Communications

October 1, 2014

Jess Ekstrom Offers Story of Entrepreneurship and Service

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – The Dimensions program at Gardner-Webb University announces its seventh guest for the 2014-2015 academic year. Founder of Headbands of Hope Jess Ekstrom will share her love and passion for young children with deadly diseases on Tuesday, Oct. 7 at 9:25 a.m. in the Paul Porter Arena, located inside the Lutz- Yelton Convocation Center (LYCC). The event is free and open to the public.

During the summer of her junior year, Ekstrom worked for the Make-a-Wish Foundation. As she interacted with children facing life-threatening illnesses, she discovered that young girls loved to wear headbands instead of wigs after losing their hair to chemotherapy. She then founded the organization Headbands of Hope.

Dr. Tracy Jessup, vice president of the Office of Christian Life and Service and senior minister to the University shared, “Her story of social entrepreneurship is one which will remind our students that they don’t have to wait until after they have graduated to make significant contributions for God and humanity.”

During her junior year of college, Ekstrom started Headbands of Hope to help brighten the lives of children battling cancer. For every headband purchased, one is given to a girl with cancer and \$1 is donated to the St. Baldrick’s Foundation to fund life-saving childhood cancer research. Ekstrom now works full-time as the CEO of the company, regularly visits hospitals around the country to deliver headbands to girls and visits campuses nationwide to share her story of how she turned a summer internship into an organization that changes the world.

As founder of Headbands of Hope, she has learned the amazing power of service – changing thousands of children’s lives. She understands that service often means doing grunt work, but she knows how a connection to those who are served makes all of it extremely worthwhile.

For more information and how you can get involved, visit headbandsofhope.org

Gardner-Webb University's Dimensions programs are free and open to the public. The goal of Dimensions is to enhance the spiritual, intellectual and cultural life at the University and also to promote a sense of community. Dimensions programs are held on Tuesday at 9:25 a.m. in the LYCC. More information is available by calling 704-406-4277.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University's purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).