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### **GWU Mourns Loss of Alumnus, Army Special Forces Serviceman**

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# GWU Mourns Loss of Alumnus, Army Special Forces Serviceman

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Office of University Communications

August 5, 2014

## *Staff Sgt. Jerry Gass '03 Posthumously Awarded Medals*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. — Gardner-Webb University is mourning the loss of U.S. Army Green Beret Staff Sgt. Jerry Gass, a 2003 GWU alumnus and former football offensive lineman who passed away Aug. 3 in Afghanistan.

Gass, 33, served his country as a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group and was stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, N.C. He passed away following a non-combat incident while on patrol, according to the U.S. Department of Defense. He was posthumously awarded his second Bronze Star Medal and the Meritorious Service Medal.

Gardner-Webb University will honor SSG Jerry Gass by lowering flags on campus to half-staff beginning Wednesday, Aug. 20 through Friday, Aug. 22. Officials at GWU are deeply saddened by the loss, and extremely proud of his service to the citizens of the United States.

Gass enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2008 and served with the Special Forces since 2011.

A highly decorated serviceman, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal with valor device, Army Achievement Medal, two Army Good Conduct Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one campaign star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, NATO Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon (numeral 2), Parachutist Badge, Combat Infantryman Badge and the Special Forces Tab.

Gass graduated from Gardner-Webb in 2003 with a degree in business administration and minor in management information systems.

Wearing jersey No. 68, he played 32 football games at Gardner-Webb during one of the program's most successful stretches. After a redshirt season in 1999, he played as a redshirt freshman on GWU's first Division I team and was a part of 30 wins over his four seasons with the Runnin' Bulldogs.

That success included back-to-back Big South Conference championships in 2002 and 2003, with a combined 17-5 overall record and an unblemished conference mark. As a starter at left guard in 2003, Gass helped GWU to an 8-4 record and helped pave the way for an offense that averaged 27.8 points per game and 414.9 yards of total offense per game. He was a preseason All-Big South Conference selection heading into his senior season.

**Funeral Information:**

*Beginning at noon on Saturday, Aug. 16, the Community Bible Church of Beaufort, S.C. will live-stream the funeral service for SSG Jerry Gass. If the page is reached before or after the service has begun and the screen is black, simply refresh the page until the video streams. Follow the link here to view the service.*