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Office of University Communications

February 14, 2014

North Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities Annual Competition Held in Raleigh, N.C.

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A team of students from Gardner-Webb University finished second during this year’s North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU) Ethics Bowl. The event was held at Campbell Law School in Raleigh, N.C., and featured 20 colleges and universities, including these names that Gardner-Webb faced head to head – Campbell (Buies Creek), North Carolina Wesleyan (Rocky Mount), Wingate, and this year’s champion, Wake Forest (Winston-Salem).

This was the third year for the relatively new event, and GWU has participated each year. Making this year’s accomplishment even more significant was the fact that not a single participating student had prior competition experience.

“I had to recruit an entirely new team,” said Dr. Kent Blevins, professor of religious studies at Gardner-Webb and campus coordinator for the ethics team. “Various reasons prevented former members of returning to the team.” The new members are A.J. Francioni (Hendersonville, N.C.), Jeremiah Hamby (Lenoir, N.C.), Jessica Saltijeral (Oswego, Ill.), Austin Story (Huntersville, N.C.), and Dylan Tate (Forest City, N.C.).

The two-day Ethics Bowl competition began with all participating groups divided randomly into two divisions of 10 teams each to begin single team debates. After two debates for GWU on day one, and two more the following morning, the team took a 9-3 overall score into the championship round that evening vs. Wake Forest University.

“The final round with Wake Forest was held in a large auditorium in front of all the other teams, plus other personnel including judges, moderators, and NCICU representatives. I’m very proud of our students and how they represented our school. Wake finished second last year. Next year, we’re going to bring home the first place trophy,” Blevins predicted.

“All our students are sophomores except for Austin, who is a freshman. I think they are all committed to returning to the team next year, and they seem hungry for that first place trophy,” smiled Blevins.

The NCICU Ethics Bowl is an annual competition in which students address ethical issues by responding to specific case studies. Participants are given 10 cases in advance as part of their preparation and then during the event, teams receive one of those cases along with an unknown case for the first time. The event provides an academic experience that increases student awareness about applying ethics in leadership, decision-making, interpersonal relationships and other issues in today's society. A panel of trained judges, including business and community leaders from across the state, scores the debates and evaluates teams on the quality of their argument, research, presentation style, and moral theory.

NCICU is comprised of North Carolina's 36 private, non-profit liberal arts, comprehensive and research colleges and universities accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. NCICU represents independent higher education in the areas of state and federal public policy and on education issues with the other sectors of education in the state. It also provides research and information to and about private colleges and universities, conducts staff development opportunities and coordinates collaborative programs. For more information, visit www.ncicu.org.