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Program Participants Observed Roots and Past Accomplishments During Ceremonies on Nov. 14

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University's Godbold School of Business observed a milestone event with a day of celebration honoring the Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program's 20th Anniversary. MBA alumni joined GWU administrators, faculty, staff, school of business students, and special guests during several events that rediscovered the program's history, while looking ahead to the future and the hope for continued expansion. A comprehensive anniversary video was viewed by attendees and is available [here](#).

"If I had to describe Gardner-Webb in one word it would be audacious," said Dr. Frank Bonner, GWU President. "The MBA program was not only like that but has become one of the most vital parts of the University. "It has produced business leaders with strong morals and integrity. The MBA program will continue to remain in line with our core values and principles."

The celebration began with an open house in Hamrick Hall, home to the Godbold School of Business, showcasing MBA majors. That was followed by a panel session that included established business leaders, former MBA graduates including Jacqueline Lyon, special agent for the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), Corey Simpson, senior credit analyst for First South Bank of Raleigh, N.C., and Karla Haynes, who serves as executive director of the Cleveland County (N.C.) Community Development Corporation. The panel discussed a variety of topics and took questions from undergraduate students who asked about the benefits of obtaining an MBA degree.

"Diversify yourself," said Lyon. "Even if you have one specific area of study you plan to go into, make sure you learn as much as possible in all fields of the program, be it accounting, finance or management. Have a plan when it comes to paying for school and receiving important job experience. Take an internship if you get the opportunity, as a way that could open a bigger door later."

Other events commemorating the anniversary were a luncheon and service of thanksgiving, where speeches and presentations were made. This included comments by Bonner and MBA graduate (2003) Todd Picou, chairman and owner of Hospice Care of South Carolina and Palliative Care Foundation.

Started in 1997, Hospice Care of South Carolina focuses on training its employees to take care of those in their final days of life. In 2000, amidst the ever-changing healthcare industry, Picou realized he should expand his education. When searching for a convenient MBA program, he found the right choice due to Gardner-Webb's satellite campus in Spartanburg, S.C., just 20 minutes from his home. From that time forward, Picou feels blessed.

“We’ve been a sustained growth company. Its success has to be credited to the education I received through the MBA program and the encouragement of Anthony Negbenebor (Dean of the Godbold School of Business),” Picou said. “Today my company serves over 60 groups, has 32 offices, and employees over 400 people.”

Since its inception, the MBA program has garnered notable accomplishments, such as graduating in excess of 1800 students and being recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as the number nine online program in student services and technology in the country. The program's faculty is made up of a strong group of advisors from around the globe and former business professionals.

More information is available about the MBA program and the Godbold School of Business by contacting Natetsa Lawrence at 704-406-2260 or email tlawrence@gardner-webb.edu.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University blends a liberal arts core curriculum with more than 55 specialized major and minor programs, a comprehensive academic experience grounded in a Christian environment of service, leadership, and intellectual freedom.