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Office of University Communications

October 8, 2013

\$2500 Cash Reward Offered for Information Leading to Arrest/Conviction of Alumna's Rapist

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University Campus Police announced a \$2500 cash reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the man who attacked and raped a GWU alumna a week ago near the Lake Hollifield complex on the University campus. Officials are continuing their investigation into the assault and hope the offer of a reward might compel someone with evidence pertinent to the case to come forward.

On Tuesday, Oct. 1 around 9 p.m., a recent Gardner-Webb graduate reported she was walking on the path along Lake Hollifield when she was attacked from behind and raped. She was not able to offer many details on the assailant, other than he had a beard, a southern accent, and that he had a smoky/burnt odor about him. Officials have utilized surveillance footage from cameras at GWU apartments to confirm the presence of several individuals along the path within the same time frame. At this point, the investigation has resulted in very few leads.

Chief Barry Johnson told University officials that officers are reviewing all possibilities. While campus police will continue the investigation, officers with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office and the Boiling Springs Police Department—and other law enforcement agencies as deemed necessary—will assist them.

The case has sparked a renewed awareness about the importance of safety on and off campus. Plans are underway to launch additional safety awareness programs to ensure students and others understand the importance of reducing their chances of becoming targeted for a crime. Details on those plans are currently being finalized and will be announced within the next several days.

In the meantime, authorities are encouraging students to remain vigilant and observant of their surroundings at all times. They suggest utilizing the buddy system and walking in pairs especially at night. Campus police have increased their campus patrols throughout the evening hours, and as always are available to escort any student who may not have someone to accompany them by calling 704-406-4444.

If you or someone you know has information that may be helpful in this case, please contact campus police at 704-406-4444. All calls are confidential and officers ensure anonymity.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University blends a liberal arts core curriculum with more than 55 major and minor professional programs of study, a comprehensive academic experience that flows from our Christian commitment to intellectual freedom, service and leadership.