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October 1, 2013

School of Nursing Helps Remind Public About October's Designation as Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – As Gardner-Webb University prepares for a Relay for Life event on Saturday, Nov. 2 to foster cancer awareness, raise funds, and celebrate the lives of survivors and victims of the disease, October marks another important campaign. Oct. 1-31 is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the annual campaign to increase the knowledge that all adult women should know about the disease.

The GWU School of Nursing shares the latest information on breast cancer from the American Cancer Society. Nicole Waters (MSN/RN), faculty instructor for the school, explains at what point a woman should consider being examined by their doctor. “Guidelines suggest that women should have a clinical breast exam at least every three years starting at age 20,” said Waters. “Woman should have mammograms every year starting at age 40.”

The School of Nursing also shared that statistics show one in every eight women will develop breast cancer. “Early detection is the key to a better prognosis and outcome,” Waters said. “Women should perform monthly breast self-exams and contact their primary care provider if they have any concerns.”

No matter what type of cancer, and regardless of gender, Gardner-Webb's Relay for Life is about unifying as a community for a common purpose. Coming together is exactly what the event's co-chairs Bryte Warrick and Blaire Teeters did thanks to Karissa Weir, director of student leadership and activities at GWU.

“I originally approached Karissa,” said Warrick, a sacred music degree alumnus (09). “I had hoped I could get a few students involved in forming a team for Cleveland County's annual event. That's when I learned that Blaire wanted Gardner-Webb to have its own relay. I was happy to join her and we have been busy planning all year.”

Warrick had personal reasons to appreciate the efforts of the American Cancer Society and see a Relay for Life event in action after being involved through her church as a child. However, a bigger reason came to the forefront in 2009. “I became one of those survivors

walking around the track. Fortunately my cancer was found early on,” she shared. “Watching survivors walk the track at a relay, while being cheered on by families and friends is unreal.”

Teeters is a senior BSN nursing student at GWU and serves as president of the Student Nurses Association (SNA). “The SNA is one of the largest and most active clubs on campus,” said Teeters. “Cancer is something that hits home and brings people back to the essentials of life, humbling us to the core. This is an opportunity to remember what cancer has done and how we can get closer to a cure.”

GWU’s Relay for Life will be held at Spangler Stadium from 8 p.m. to midnight. For more information and how you can get involved email gwurelay4life@gmail.com.