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B.E.S.T. Program Provides High School Students a Chance to Partner with Business Leaders

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Office of University Communications

July 29, 2013

Gardner-Webb University's Godbold School of Business Facilitates Unique Annual Event

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University's Godbold School of Business recently completed another highly successful B.E.S.T. (Bringing Executives and Students Together) Program, as Cleveland County area high school students gathered on campus for three days to participate in an opportunity to learn from professional entrepreneurs and other community leaders at no cost to them.

The 8th annual B.E.S.T. Program was once again tailored to educate, encourage, empower, and energize rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. The event included a number of workshops on business, finance, and marketing and included a visit from Cleveland County (N.C.) Commissioners Susan Allen, Jason Falls, and Johnny Hutchins, along with county clerk Kerri Melton. They even helped set up a mock board meeting, where students served as commissioners.

“We talked to them about the roles of a county commissioner in the daily lives of our residents,” said Falls. “They reenacted a commissioners meeting that dealt with topics that we discuss on a regular basis to give them an idea of what's expected of us. I hope they realize that servants are made out of everyday, regular people that care about their community.”

There were a variety of guest speakers throughout the program, such as Stephanie Herndon, evidence specialist with the Shelby Police Dept.; R. Alexis Pearson, human resource officer and training manager with Wal-Mart Distribution Center of Shelby; and newspaper tips and layout design with the Shelby Star's Graham Cawthon, who serves as online editor. A number of GWU representatives within the Godbold School of Business were also on hand to assist, along with a representative from the GWU undergraduate admissions office.

“I came here last year for the first time and had a lot of fun, so I decided to come back,” said Jasmine Brown, a participant from Burns High School (Lawndale, N.C.). “I learned about how to dress when going to a job interview and things I can do that will better prepare me for college.”

Student projects, included laying out a front page with headlines for a pretend edition of the Star newspaper, where cash awards were given to the top judged winners, as well as a lemonade stand contest between four teams to see whose promotion and choice of location

on campus resulted in the most sales profit. Upon completion of the program, each student graduated and received a certificate for his or her work.

Falls said, “Through a program like this, they can learn that they don’t have to wait for someone else to step up. They are fully capable of doing that and taking the lead themselves.”

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

The B.E.S.T. Program is thankful to the following sponsors of this year’s event: The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners, Cleveland County Schools, Cleveland Regional, Chick-Fil-A, GWU Enactus, GWU Undergraduate Admissions, GWU Graduate Business, and New Beginnings World Outreach.