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### Gardner-Webb Mourns the Death of Its First Orchestra Conductor

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# Gardner-Webb Mourns the Death of Its First Orchestra Conductor

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Office of University Communications

June 4, 2013

## *Dr. Robert Decker Remembered for His Love of Christian Music*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A former and respected faculty member of Gardner-Webb University, Dr. Robert (Bob) Decker, recently passed away at the age of 85. Decker served the GWU Fine Arts Department as associate professor of music and was named Professor Emeritus after 20 years of service.

Decker, originally from Miami, Fla., graduated from the University of Miami with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education, where he served as a drum major in the marching band. He next received a Master of Arts in Christian Education from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, located in Louisville, Ky. Decker's desire for learning also earned him additional degrees in music (later in his career) from Appalachian State and UNC Greensboro, both located in N.C.

Decker started his teaching career on the high school level as a music teacher and band instructor. More than anything else it was his love of church music that remained a main focus throughout his career. He served as minister of music for several churches in North Carolina and Georgia, including Elizabeth Baptist of Shelby, N.C. He eventually made his way to Gardner-Webb and was the founding conductor of the GWU Orchestra. His two decades at Gardner-Webb were filled with not only a love for performing music but, a joy in helping students to gain an appreciation for the art so entrenched within him.

Decker also served as a member of the United States Navy, where he was a veteran of World War II, and was instrumental in the Cleveland County chapter of Habitat for Humanity, serving as board chairman in the late 1980's.

*Memorials may be made by mail to Gardner Webb University, 110 S. Main Street, Boiling Springs, N.C. 28017 or to the Solace House (Hospice care service for the Asheville area) at PO Box 5779, Asheville, N.C. 28813.*

*Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University's purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).*