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GWU Student Serves as Delegate for 10th Congressional District at Recent DNC

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Office of University Communications

September 12, 2012

Living His Passion

GWU Freshmen Nick Carpenter Gets Opportunity of a Lifetime at Political Convention

Written by: Katie Spiro, GWU Political Science & Journalism Student

Charlotte, N.C.— “I don’t know what party these men and women belong to. I don’t know if they’ll vote for me. But I know that their spirit defines us. They remind me, in the words of Scripture, that ours is a “future filled with hope.” President Barack Obama, Democratic National Convention Acceptance speech.

It is this hope for a better future that inspires Gardner-Webb freshman, Nick Carpenter. A 19-year-old collegiate freshman who enjoys ramen noodles and free t-shirts as much as the next undergrad, Carpenter is your classic college kid. Oh, did we mention he is also a North Carolina delegate for the Democratic National Convention?

Standing at six-foot-one and eager for the removal of his blue braces, Carpenter was elected by North Carolina’s 10th Congressional District, which includes Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Cleveland, Lincoln, and Mitchell counties. He is the second-youngest delegate in North Carolina.

“I missed out on the ‘youngest delegate’ title by eight months, but I can remember having an interest during the 2000 Bush v. Gore election while in elementary school. Then along came Obama in 2008. I signed up to volunteer on his campaign,” said Carpenter.

As if this title alone wasn’t enough to put on his college applications, Carpenter is also the President of Cleveland County Young Democrats, chairman of the 10th Congressional District of Young Democrats, and one of three vice chairs of the Cleveland County Democratic Party.

“I never really planned on starting my political career this early; it has just kind of happened even though it may seem well planned out. I’ve just gone with the flow and taken opportunities that have presented themselves to me. I don’t know if it will be a career, but it is very likely,” he said.

After a full week at the Democratic National Convention, located just 40 minutes from his own backyard, Carpenter explained that his mornings were filled with committee meetings working to complete the 100-page Democratic Party platform. His afternoons were spent on the convention floor, listening to speakers such as First Lady Michelle Obama, Actress Scarlett Johansson, and Arizona Rep. Gabby Giffords.

“Being on the convention floor was truly an amazing experience,” added Carpenter. “The energy level was very high the whole time— it did not matter who was speaking. That in itself was very inspiring and motivational!”

‘Undecided’ on his major, Carpenter is contemplating his pursuit in a Political Science degree. He was quoted in a Charlotte newspaper in July stating, “I didn’t want to major in Political Science, because I didn’t just want to be good at Jeopardy.” To that statement, Carpenter now comments,

“After the last two months, I’ll admit that my thought on a major has changed several times. I thought I wanted to major in athletic training...but I don’t see myself being an athletic trainer all my life, like I do my involvement in politics.”

Whether he is shaking hands with politicians or playing a match of tennis at the Cleveland County Country Club, Carpenter is ready for his new life at Gardner-Webb University.

“I am excited to be able to stay in my area a few more years and continue to help in the community while earning a four-year degree at a very good school. I’m also excited to meet new people and build lifelong friendships,” said Carpenter.

His political aspirations are big and his passion for the promotion of people is even greater, but Carpenter is not done growing up just yet.

“There is a saying that says something like when your passion crosses paths with something you are good at stick with it. So I’m sticking with it. I’m passionate about people and I’m good at politics.”

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