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### **Gardner-Webb Students Getting Access to Democratic National Convention**

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# Gardner-Webb Students Getting Access to Democratic National Convention

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Office of University Communications

August 31, 2012

## *Political Science Students Taking Part in Historic Event*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Thanks to the efforts of the Gardner-Webb University Department of Social Sciences, a group of students will have the opportunity to attend numerous events at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) on Sept. 4-6 in Charlotte, N.C., including President Barack Obama's acceptance speech. The first three days of the convention will be held at Time Warner Arena, and the last night takes place at Bank of America Stadium.

"This is an amazing opportunity for Gardner-Webb students to see the political system up close," said Dr. Ben Gaskins, assistant professor of Political Science at GWU. "It means that students will be exposed to both academic and partisan perspectives on electing our leaders, seeing in person how one of the two major political parties nominates its candidate, who is also the sitting president."

Members of Gaskins' political science class will first attend the Congressional Black Caucus Institute's Summit "UFuture: A Summit for Innovative Thinkers" on Tuesday, Sept. 4 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte. This town hall meeting will be hosted by award winning actors Alfre Woodard and Hill Harper and will also include White House officials, educators, business leaders, and local and national elected representatives. Student participants are urged to bring their smartphones, as they will have the opportunity to ask questions via text message and Twitter. The Congressional Black Caucus Institute is a non-profit, non-partisan, social purpose organization that is headquartered in Washington, DC.

On Wednesday, Sept. 5, at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte, members of Gaskins' public opinion class will participate in a National Democratic Institute (NDI) forum. These forums spread out over three days and include morning and afternoon discussions with panels discussing domestic and foreign policy. Democratic and Republican leaders, prominent elected officials, journalists, and celebrities will lead these bipartisan conversations. NDI is also a non-profit, non-partisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

To top off this historic occasion, 10 lucky GWU students have tickets to be on hand for President Obama's acceptance speech on Thursday, Sept. 6 at Bank of America Stadium. "I hope that students take as much advantage of this opportunity as possible, regardless of their

political affiliation, and get inspired to get involved in local and national politics. I hope students see the political system as real and tangible to them, not something foreign and unapproachable,” added Gaskins.

More information is available about Political Science at Gardner-Webb at 704-406-4466.

*Participation in this event does not represent an affirmation of any partisanship on the part of the University. In order to protect the academic and intellectual freedom of our students, faculty and staff alike, Gardner-Webb does not privilege or endorse any particular political perspective, candidate or party. Just last spring Gardner-Webb hosted then GOP presidential candidate Newt Gingrich on campus.*