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“Welcome Week” for Class of 2016 Begins Saturday, Aug. 18

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – The dog days of summer are quickly transitioning into the Bulldog days of fall for hundreds of students as Gardner-Webb University prepares to launch the annual “WOW—Week of Welcome” beginning on Saturday, Aug. 18.

Over 600 freshmen and new students will begin check-in on Saturday morning as they move into residence halls, attend orientation, and participate in activities and events designed to acclimate them to the University environment.

Highlights of the week include the “presidential picnic” on Saturday, the “parents split” on Sunday, freshmen service projects on Monday, the student clubs/organizations fair on Tuesday, and the first day of classes on Wednesday. A concert, magician, and a welcome-back bash will round out the rest of the week.

The events are organized by Karissa Weir, the student leadership and activities director, along with officials from the first-year programs office. Community Engagement Coordinator Stephanie Capps helps connect new students to the community through the freshmen service projects day.

Jessica Herndon, director of GWU first-year programs, believes that “Welcome Week,” along with corresponding program activities, helps students develop academically, personally, and socially. “The first year of college is very exciting and challenging,” Herndon says. “Our goal in first-year programs is to ensure that incoming students make a successful transition into university life by exposing them to Gardner-Webb services, encouraging them to become leaders, and promoting their success through every opportunity.”

The GWU First-Year Experience Program includes UNIV 101 and UNIV 111 classes and is designed to help participants develop personal and academic skills; simulate intellectual curiosity and interdisciplinary thinking; encourage assimilation into university culture; foster a sense of community; nurture students’ spirituality and faith; and involve them in service-based leadership. “By making the most of their first year at Gardner-Webb, students effectively unlock their potential for success through graduation and beyond,” Herndon explains.

“Welcome Week” will begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 18 and continues through Sunday, Aug. 26. The activities are coordinated by the GWU Student Activities Department in conjunction with the GWU First-Year Experience program. For a complete schedule, visit gardner-webb.edu/welcome-week.