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### **Gardner-Webb Dedicates Portrait to Honor Principals of the Lutz-Yelton Company, Inc.**

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# Gardner-Webb Dedicates Portrait to Honor Principals of the Lutz-Yelton Company, Inc.

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Office of University Communications

August 14, 2012

## *Portrait Commemorates Lutz-Yelton Foundation's Transformative Gift in 1980*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— For more than three decades, the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center (LYCC) at Gardner-Webb University has hosted new student orientations and commencement exercises, indoor athletic events and theatrical productions, concerts, distinguished speakers, and more. It has served both the University and the surrounding community. “And it has done all that,” said Gardner-Webb President Dr. Frank Bonner, “through the Lutz and Yelton families’ generosity.”

Bonner shared those words with more than 50 members of the Lutz and Yelton families who gathered in the Wright Concourse of the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center earlier this month, for a special ceremony to dedicate a portrait of the three principals of the Lutz-Yelton Company: Mr. J. Ray Lutz, Mr. Lloyd Lutz and Mr. Paris Yelton.

The Lutz and Yelton families have been staunch supporters and generous benefactors of Gardner-Webb since its days as a junior college. In 1980, the Lutz-Yelton Foundation gave \$500,000 to Gardner-Webb College for the construction of a special events center. At that time, the gift was the largest in the institution’s history. The center was named the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center in recognition of that transformative gift.

“It is no exaggeration,” Bonner said, “that these were three of the most successful and influential businessmen our county has ever seen.” The Lutz-Yelton Company, which grew from a cotton gin enterprise in the ‘30s to eventually encompass more than 15 businesses and over 300 employees, was what Bonner called “the lifeblood of the Cleveland County economy for nearly half a century.”

“Today, as we unveil this stunning portrait of Mr. Paris Yelton, Mr. J. Ray Lutz and Mr. Lloyd Lutz, we remember that it was these three entrepreneurs’ initial investment in this county and this institution that has made this facility and so much of Gardner-Webb’s history possible.”

After Bonner’s remarks, Betty Lutz Bowling, the daughter of J. Ray and Lilly Hoyle Lutz, brought greetings from the Lutz family; and Don Yelton, son of Paris and Donnis Gold Yelton, brought greetings from the Yeltons. “The only way this portrait could be better,” Yelton said, “is if it could capture the faces of all the family members, employees, and friends who also have given generously in support of higher education at Gardner-Webb.”

Rev. Rick Bowling, grandson of J. Ray and Lilly, offered a dedicatory prayer before the portrait, painted by Mary Sparrow at Hanging Moon Studio, was officially unveiled. It will hang inside the upper entrance of the Wright Concourse of the LYCC.