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Family Members Reaching Their GOAL

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Office of University Communications

July 31, 2012

Houser Family Thankful to Graduate on August 6

Emily Houser is a busy woman. She is a wife, a mother, an auditor at Gaston Community College, and a Mary Kay sales director. On top of that, she is working toward her human services degree at Gardner-Webb University. How does she do it? Through Gardner-Webb's Greater Opportunities for Adult Learners (GOAL) Program, of course!

The GOAL program is a family affair for the Housers. Emily and her husband, Todd, both plan to graduate on August 6, 2012, and her mother, Vicki Greene, graduated with her degree in Business Administration Management in 2002. In fact, it was Greene who convinced Emily and Todd to pursue their bachelor's degrees through the GOAL program.

Greene worked in the Office of Admissions at Gaston College for over 10 years and loved every minute of it. In 1999, Greene discovered GWU's GOAL program on Gaston College's campus. "I saw this as an opportunity to continue my education, along with other adult learners, and continue to work full-time at Gaston College, so I enrolled," Greene said.

She insists it was well worth the long hours and weekends. When she graduated in 2002, Greene was able to move into a new position in academic advising. "I saw this as a great opportunity to move into a different area to do what I love best—help students." Greene continued to work in that position until she retired at the beginning of this year.

Todd Houser is a detective with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department. He enrolled in the GOAL Program in 2010 and will be graduating with his degree in Criminal Justice.

"I liked the fact that GWU offered classes at a satellite campus close to my home and the convenience of online classes. I have had some amazing instructors, and they were able to teach me a lot of valuable information," Todd said. He hopes that having his bachelor's degree will assist him in the promotional process at the police department.

Emily says she has most enjoyed making new friends and learning from the instructors in the GOAL program. "Most instructors really seemed to understand we were all working adults with families," she said. Emily is planning on continuing in her current career and is considering pursuing her master's degree; however, she is going to take a short break from school to focus her energy on her family.

Emily and Todd have made many sacrifices over the two years they have been enrolled in the GOAL program. But on August 6, both Housers agree that "it will all have been worth it," Emily said.

For more information about the GOAL Program, call Elizabeth Pack at 704-406-2173.

Written by communications intern Jeanie Groh.