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Office of University Communications

March 8, 2012

“Rachel’s Challenge” Events Scheduled for March 28th and 29th

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— After Rachel Scott was murdered during the infamous 1999 Columbine High School shooting, her family launched Rachel’s Challenge, an organization that overcomes violence and bullying in the schools through intentional compassion and kindness. On March 28th and 29th, Gardner-Webb University, along with WCNC, will host “Rachel’s Challenge Day” events for Crest, Shelby, Burns and Kings Mountain High Schools, preparing 2,600 freshmen and sophomores and their families to take a stand against violence and bullying.

In an ethics essay written just months before her death, Scott explained, “I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go.” While Scott’s life ended tragically, her courage during the Columbine shooting has inspired millions of students around the world to follow her example of empathy, compassion and kindness through Rachel’s Challenge.

Each “Rachel’s Challenge Day” will feature a special program from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. that shares Rachel’s story of faith and conviction, along with her vision for changing the world through intentional acts of kindness. Counseling will also be available for past victims of bullying or violence, and for former bullies themselves.

Each school will also designate 40 students as “Friends of Rachel,” leaders in the movement against violence and bullying on their particular campuses. From 10:30 – noon, special training will be provided for those student leaders.

The events will conclude with an evening presentation on Thursday, March 29, at 7:00 p.m. in Gardner-Webb’s Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center. Open to parents and the public, the evening session will outline Rachel’s Challenge and provide resources for parents and adults to aid in the effort against school violence.

The event is part of Gardner-Webb’s educational initiative for the President’s Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge in Washington.

More information is available at rachelschallenge.org. For questions about the GWU Rachel’s Challenge events, contact Noel Manning at 704-406-4631.