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Gardner-Webb Mourns the Loss of Loving Student Ariane Noelle Patterson Dead at 21

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Office of University Communications

January 20, 2012

It has been a challenging week for many friends and family members of Ariane Patterson.

The Gardner-Webb religious studies major was celebrating her 21st birthday on Jan. 17 when she collapsed in class, and was later pronounced dead at the hospital.

Her friends say she had an “outrageous love for Christ and people,” and that “her beautiful smile was as infectious as her loving spirit.”

Patterson woke up that morning and began her day by tweeting “Thank you God for another year of life.” That final tweet captured who Ariane was, a person completely thankful for the gifts that God had given her. According to her friends and family, Ariane lived each breath to the fullest and wanted everyone to know that God was her reason for this joy.

While attending her “Life and Letters of Paul” class, Ariane lost consciousness. One of her classmates, who is a trained emergency medical technician, immediately began CPR. GWU nursing faculty arrived shortly after that and assisted until the ambulance arrived and transported Ariane to Cleveland Regional Medical Center.

According to Cleveland County Coroner Dwight Tessneer, an autopsy revealed Ariane suffered a heart attack due to systemic lupus erythematosus. Ariane had been diagnosed with lupus at age 9. Her mother said the disease had taken its toll on Ariane’s body over the years, but her friends say even on days when Ariane wasn’t feeling her best, her best always came out for others.

University officials released the following statement: “We are deeply saddened and in shock by this monumental loss. We continue to pray for Ariane’s family and friends during this difficult time, and hope they will somehow find peace in the midst of this tragedy. No words can adequately express how we feel as a university during this time.”

The outpouring of memories flooded social media during the week as friends shared their thoughts of Ariane and her captivating presence. News of this tragic loss showed up in media outlets around the globe from New York, to California to Sydney, Australia.

The University offered counseling services to students and recognized Ariane in two separate services. Ariane’s gift to others was how she lived her life: full of love for others and completely dedicated to her heavenly father—a father she is dancing with today.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/nWLF1xclA8c>



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/bArpFoP1IKE>



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/EqSeBlnXAds>

Memorials

Memorials can be sent to Gardner-Webb in Ariane's honor to the following address:

Gardner-Webb University – Attn: Becky Robbins

PO Box 997 – Boiling Springs, N.C. 28017

Memo section of check: Romania Summer Mission Trip Fund

A Celebration of life service for Ariane Noelle Patterson

When: 1 p.m. Saturday

Where: New Bethel AME Zion Church, 263 Forest St., Forest City, NC

Visitation: The family will receive friends from noon until 1 p.m. at the church

-Ulysses Miller Funeral Services in Rutherfordton is serving the Patterson family