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### **GWU Honors its Presidential Societies**


Office of University Communications

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# GWU Honors its Presidential Societies

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Office of University Communications

December 21, 2011

Gardner-Webb University's Office of Advancement recently hosted its inaugural Presidential Societies Dinner to recognize the outstanding generosity of the University's most faithful supporters—the members of its six Presidential Societies. Membership in the Societies is reserved only for those donors who have given \$25,000 or more to bolster the strategic plan, the mission, and the students of Gardner-Webb University.

“This first annual event was simply one way to express our sincere appreciation to many of our most loyal and committed supporters,” said Monte Walker, vice president for advancement at Gardner-Webb. “Through their philanthropic leadership, this special group helps ensure that Gardner-Webb University remains an exceptional institution of Christian Higher education.”

At the dinner, each Society member was decorated with a ceremonial pin, emblazoned with the Gardner-Webb seal and inscribed with stars to indicate the member's specific Society level. If, through their continued generosity, those donors qualify for membership in a higher Society in the future, the appropriate number of stars will be added to their pin.

“As Charter Members of our Presidential Societies,” said GWU Trustee Board Chairman Dr. Rance Henderson from the podium, “you are those select friends who have dedicated your energies, your resources and your hearts to helping shape our vision for Gardner-Webb's future, and you are bringing that future tangibly into the present. For that, we are truly thankful.”

“As Charter Members,” Henderson continued, “you certainly enjoy a position of privilege and honor at Gardner-Webb, but we hope you will also view your position as one of opportunity.” Henderson challenged the Charter Members to pursue others who share the same zeal for Gardner-Webb's mission, who might want to share also in the joy of helping Gardner-Webb realize its vision of reaching a higher ground in Christian higher education.

John Godbold, chair of Gardner-Webb's Higher Ground Campaign, also thanked the guests for their unequalled support. Pointing to the Campaign emblem, which features a mountain climber scaling a peak, Godbold said, “Unlike some downhill initiatives, climbers cannot afford to coast across the finish line purely on the power of their momentum. In fact, for those trying to reach higher ground, the steepest part of the climb is usually the pinnacle—which is precisely where we find ourselves. May we press on toward the goal to which we've been called.”

Below is a description of each of Gardner-Webb's Presidential Societies, including the significance of the Society name and the level of support that qualifies donors for membership at each level.

The \$45 million Higher Ground campaign will solidify the University's commitment to spiritual, academic, athletic, civic, and structural development. Currently, the University has raised \$41 million toward the campaign goal. For more information or to get involved in the Higher Ground campaign, call (704) 406-4250.

**The Huggins Society: \$25,000 – \$49,999**

The Huggins Society is named in Honor of Professor J.D. Huggins, the first principal of Boiling Springs High School, for his unflappable belief in the future of a great Christian institution. The Huggins society recognizes lifetime gift support of \$25,000 or more in outright gifts or irrevocable planned gifts of \$37,500 or more.

**The Wall Society: \$50,000 – \$99,999**

In honor of the visionary leadership of Dr. Xeno Wall, the Wall Society recognizes lifetime support of \$50,000 or more in outright gifts or irrevocable planned gifts of \$75,000 or more. Dr. Wall served as President from 1930-1932 and was also pastor of First Baptist Church, Shelby, when in 1926 he presented a resolution to transition from a High School to a Junior College. At that meeting he said, "Brethren, the leaders can not go alone. You will have to go with them, and give each year in support of the school."

**The Cantrell Society: \$100,000 – \$249,999**

The Cantrell Society was established to honor the work of Reverend J.R. Cantrell, President of Boiling Springs Junior College from 1939-1943, who led the institution during a period of great campus improvement and fundraising efforts. The Cantrell Society recognizes lifetime gift support of \$100,000 or more in outright gifts or irrevocable planned gifts of \$150,000 or more.

**The Gardner Society: \$250,000 – \$499,999**

The Gardner Society honors the generous involvement of then N.C. Governor O. Max Gardner and his wife, Fay Webb Gardner, for whom our University is named. In 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote to Governor Gardner after hearing the news of his remarkable support for the college, and this is what he said: "This is an act of faith in the future, which should be an inspiration to the friends of education everywhere." The Gardner Society recognizes lifetime gift support of \$250,000 or more in outright gifts or irrevocable planned gifts of \$375,000 or more.

**The Elliott Society: \$500,000 – \$999,999**

The Elliott Society is named in honor of Dr. Phil Elliott, President of Gardner-Webb from 1943-1961, and his legendary leadership and accomplishments. In his inaugural address, Dr. Elliott pointed out a danger for any college: "It's easier," he said, "to sell the people the idea

that they have a great college than it will be to actually build one.” This society recognizes lifetime gift support of \$500,000 or more in outright gifts or irrevocable planned gifts of \$750,000 or more.

**The President’s Roundtable: \$1,000,000 +**

Established to honor the individuals contributing at the highest levels, the President’s Roundtable is a group focused on advancing a shared vision for the future of Gardner-Webb. The President’s Roundtable recognizes lifetime gift support of \$1,000,000 or more in outright or irrevocable planned gifts.

*Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University seeks a higher ground in higher education – one that embraces faith and intellectual freedom, balances conviction with compassion, and inspires in students a love of learning, service, and leadership.*