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Office of University Communications

August 2, 2011

GWU to Grant First-Ever Posthumous Honorary Degree to the Family of Jeanna Brown Ayers

 summer commencement

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University will award 273 degrees during the 2011 summer commencement exercises on Monday, Aug. 8. The ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center.

David K. Wells, who will receive his Master of Science in Nursing, will give the commencement address. A. Antonia Cox, receiving her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, will offer the invocation and Robert J. Crawford, receiving his Doctor of Ministry degree, will read scripture.

Gardner-Webb will award its 5,000th graduate level degree during Monday's commencement, and the Godbold School of Business will award its 4,000th bachelor's degree in business administration.

The University was saddened this spring by the untimely death of student Jeanna Nicole Brown Ayers, who passed away shortly after the birth of her son, Cameron. Ayers had completed 33 hours toward her B.S. in Business Administration, and was in good academic standing. To commemorate her life, and to honor her academic progress, the University is proud to award Mrs. Ayers its first-ever posthumous honorary bachelor's degree, which will be presented to her husband, Matt Ayers, carrying son, Cameron, and her father, Mark Brown. Several others of Mrs. Ayers family will also be in attendance.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University was founded in 1905 and is home to over 4,300 students from 37 states and 21 foreign countries. Gardner-Webb 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.