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May 24, 2011

Jimmy Martin, Dr. Roger Gaddis, Dr. Oland Summers, and Dr. Tony Eastman Receive Retirement Awards

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – As the 2010-2011 academic year closed, so did the tenures of four of Gardner-Webb University’s cherished faculty and staff members. At a recent recognition program, the University presented retirement awards, celebrating long careers of service to the University, to Jimmy Martin, Dr. Roger Gaddis, Dr. C. Oland Summers, and Dr. Tony Eastman.

Jimmy Martin began what he calls his “adventure” at Gardner-Webb as a contract construction worker in the late 1970s. He was hired as a full-time maintenance employee in 1978 and was promoted to Director of Maintenance in 1981. Martin helped build the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center, the Williams Observatory, Lake Hollifield, the Lake Hollifield Bell Tower, and the first University Commons Apartment. Ann Dellinger, director of facilities services, said that Martin is “a true southern gentleman” with “a heart of gold,” and that Martin will be missed as a friend more than as a coworker.

Dr. Roger Gaddis was named associate professor of psychology at Gardner-Webb College in 1974. Gaddis served as chair of the Department of Psychology from 1978-1995, and he oversaw the development of both GOAL (Greater Opportunities for Adult Learners) and graduate programs in psychology. He served as the coordinator of the Human Services program until 2010, and as his colleague Dr. Frieda Brown said, he was “the architect” of Gardner-Webb’s School of Psychology and Counseling. Brown insisted that Gaddis will leave behind “students who are making a difference in others’ lives, colleagues who are grateful that it is his value system that has defined us, a school that is better for his having served it, and friends who remember his loving support and commitment to excellence.”

Dr. C. Oland Summers joined the Gardner-Webb faculty as assistant professor of music in 1976, and started Gardner-Webb’s first marching band that year. Prior to coming to Gardner-Webb, “Doc”—as his students affectionately call him—taught band, choir, and orchestra in various Indiana and Illinois public school for 19 years. In total, then, Summers has taught music for 54 years. Dr. Tracy Jessup, GWU’s vice president for Christian life and service, was one of Doc’s former students. In recognizing Summers, Jessup reminded the audience that Summers had also served as minister of music for over 52 years in part-time and interim church positions. Jessup said, “I don’t think I’ve ever met anyone who moved with greater ease between the academy and the church. That’s because Doc truly sees both as a ministry to which he’s been called to use his knowledge, his gifts, and his talents to glorify God.”

Dr. Tony Eastman joined the Gardner-Webb faculty in 1966 as professor of American history, and helped transform the junior college into a four-year institution. In fact, the University graduated its first four-year class during Eastman's fourth year. Part of an eager group of young professors, Eastman helped initially define the values of faith, service, and leadership, and the standards of academic excellence, for which Gardner-Webb College would be known. In recognizing Eastman, Jessup said, "there is not a single graduate of Gardner-Webb as a senior college who has known this institution apart from Dr. Tony Eastman. Students have not only gained from his role as a sage in the classroom, but from his role as father figure and friend outside the classroom. He has truly left an indelible impression."

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