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Brinkley Softball Field Project to Offer Top-of-the-Line Facility for Student Athletes

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Office of University
Communications

September 19, 2014

By: Jill Blank, GWU Softball Player and Communications Intern

As a softball player at the start of my junior year at Gardner-Webb, I am honored to witness the beginning of a monumental project and be a member of the first class of players to use it. A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the future Brinkley Softball Stadium on the morning of Sept. 19. This brand new stadium will include seats for 350 spectators, a concession stand and a press box, and much more. A few of the additions that I am most thrilled about are the brand new locker rooms, an athletic training area, and an 80-foot-by-80-foot covered turf practice facility that will allow our team to practice at any time, rain or shine.

In the past two years at Gardner-Webb University, I have been privileged to play at many wonderful softball stadiums. The ones that I have most enjoyed playing at were also the most player-friendly by providing a welcoming atmosphere and updated facilities. Building a new field will increase growth and interest in Gardner-Webb's softball program and improve the caliber of our stadium above most other universities in the Big South Conference. □ One of the main benefits of the Brinkley Softball Stadium will be that Gardner-Webb will now be able to host softball tournaments, including the Big South Conference Tournament. In the past, this was not a viable possibility because we did not have the space needed to host more than two teams at a time. Another restriction that Gardner-Webb softball has also faced is being limited to playing only during the day. The new facility includes stadium lights which will finally allow the Runnin' Bulldogs to play games at night. As a player, it is fun to travel to different stadiums but there is nothing quite like playing on your home field.

The impact that the Brinkley Softball Stadium will have on the future of Gardner-Webb softball has not been overrated. Kellie Beres, senior outfielder, believes that a facility like this one will affect Gardner-Webb for years to come. "A top-of-the-line stadium like this one will bring in stronger recruiting classes to make the team more successful," she shared.

Gardner-Webb's entire softball team is grateful to the Brinkley family and all other donors for their generous support of our program. "I really appreciate the fact that they believe in us enough to donate to the softball program," said sophomore catcher Mahaila Irvin. "I think that the field will uplift all of our spirits and make us work even harder than we

already do.”

L to R: Coach Tom Cole, David & Marie Brinkley, Dr. Frank Bonner, and Chuck
Burch