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### **Gardner-Webb Officials Name New Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences**

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# Gardner-Webb Officials Name New Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

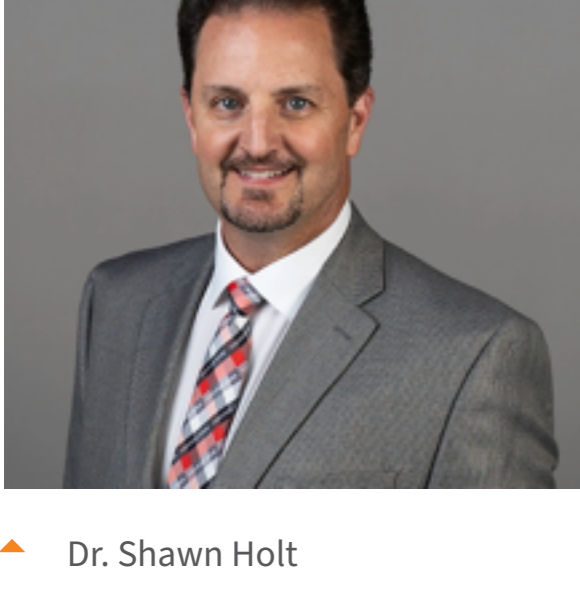
BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 26, 2021



## Author, Lecturer and Researcher, Dr. Shawn E. Holt, Begins Duties on July 1

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Officials at Gardner-Webb University have named Dr. Shawn E. Holt as the new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Since 2016, Holt has served as professor and chair of the Department of Natural Science and Mathematics at Richard Bland College (RBC), a branch of William & Mary, in Petersburg, Va. He will begin his new position at Gardner-Webb on July 1.

“The College of Arts and Sciences is a well-established academic division at Gardner-Webb, but we are just now naming the college’s first dean,” shares University President Dr. William M. Downs. “Dr. Holt impresses me by his understanding that inspirational teaching and impactful research can indeed complement one another. His commitment to advancing the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts is firm. I look forward to his innovative leadership.”



Dr. Shawn Holt

As the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Holt will report to Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. Ben Leslie. He will play a significant role in determining and implementing the University’s strategic priorities, providing leadership to academic programs, fostering faculty and staff development, and supporting engaged student learning.

Leslie said the new dean was chosen after a rigorous nine-month national search process from a pool of highly qualified, diverse and exceptional candidates. “We sought an individual who would bring not only a solid record of teaching and research to the university, but also someone with a demonstrated record of academic leadership and a vision for innovation and advancement,” Leslie

stated. “Dr. Holt is an exciting choice for the College of Arts and Sciences. I am confident that under his leadership we will see the development of new opportunities for program development and enrollment growth.”

The new dean’s responsibilities will also include collaborating with the Office of Enrollment Management to grow enrollment in arts and sciences programs and the Office of Advancement on fundraising activities for the College of Arts and Sciences. He will determine new program development and program review, and support and promote faculty research efforts as well as the University’s robust program of undergraduate research. He will work closely with other deans and professional program leaders to integrate the arts and sciences with professional programs.

Holt is looking forward to fostering and nurturing long-term relationships as an administrator, faculty member and community leader. “My wife, Abbey, and I are excited about joining the Gardner-Webb family,” Holt asserted. “I am particularly excited about leading the College of Arts and Sciences with a Christ-centered, analytical approach.”

Holt has authored or co-authored 72 peer-reviewed papers, which are published in journals on such topics as virology, oncology, cellular biology, and genetics. At RBC, he was responsible for leading and mentoring a diverse faculty. He taught and created courses in Natural and Physical Science, Engineering, Mathematics, Computer Science, Health, and Physical Education. He served on various faculty and college committees, such as Institutional Effectiveness, Strategic Planning, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Reaccreditation and Reaffirmation, Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Taskforce, Racial Justice and Equity Taskforce, Institutional Review Board, and others. He was involved in all aspects of faculty matters—hiring, mentoring, restructuring, development, and review. Holt created schedules and managed an annual budget of \$1.6 million.

Additionally, Holt is experienced with all aspects of higher education. At RBC, he was the head coach for men’s and women’s golf and men’s soccer coach, and was involved in admissions, advising, student success. He has also worked in finance and budgeting, financial aid (FAFSA, especially for student-athletes), fundraising, and faculty affairs related to grants, projects, donations, event planning, and auxiliary camps. He established a research program, while advising and mentoring faculty interested in research from all disciplines, on project development and funding strategies.

In another capacity, Holt serves as scientific review officer for General Dynamics IT (formerly CSRA, Inc.) in Frederick, Md. In this position, he reviews, organizes, and directs governmental review panels for grant proposals submitted to the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program, which includes Department of Defense Materiel Command [CDMRP], the Institute for Educational Sciences (Department of Education), and the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).

In 2005, Holt founded Presidium Athletics, LLC, in Midlothian, Va., and served as the chief scientific officer for 10 years. He developed and successfully tested novel technology for athletic injury prevention and protection. He also obtained preliminary (\$300,000) funding from VTen Capital Partners for research, product development, and patent generation. He wrote and submitted a patent that was approved in March 2014 on first review cycle, and his continuing application was approved in November 2015, also on the first review cycle.

From 1998 to 2011, he was an assistant and associate professor at Medical College of Virginia Campus, Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va. His key accomplishments during this time were obtaining over \$6 million in extramural funding and publishing more than 50 papers and six book chapters. He presented more than 80 invited lectures, and mentored more than 50 students, fellows and junior faculty, graduating six Master of Science students and nine doctoral students. He was the director of the Pathology Graduate Program, member of the Massey Cancer Center, the Molecular Biology and Genetic Program, the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Functional Genomics Program and Graduate Education and Graduate Admissions Committees.

Through the years, Holt has served on numerous community and ministry boards. Currently, he is judge for the Virginia High School League Debate in Chesterfield County, Va., and chair of the Board of Directors for Richmond Emmaus. He serves as a judge for the Metro Richmond STEM Fair at The Science Museum of Virginia. He is also a volunteer for the Inner-City Baseball Clinic in Richmond and is a featured panelist on the Colonial Heights (Va.) High School Author Visitation Panel. He has served as a Stephen Minister at Bethia United Methodist Church in Winterpock, Va., and led a medicinal ministry outreach for the church from 2012 to 2017.

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*

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We welcome your suggestions and feedback, contact:

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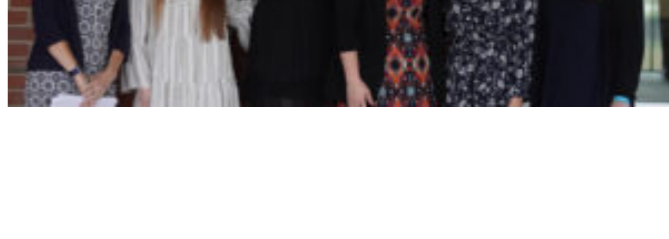
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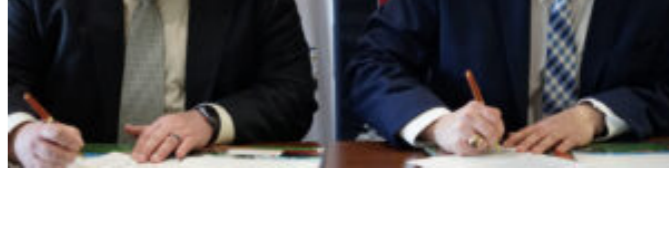


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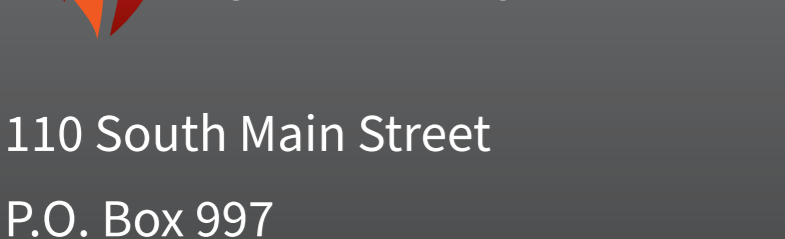
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