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GWU President Downs Hosts Panel Discussion on COVID-19 in First Event of New Series

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CAMPUS NEWS

GWU President Downs Hosts Panel Discussion on COVID-19 in First Event of New Series

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON FEBRUARY 5, 2021



County Health Representatives and GWU Associate Provost Available Online BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—As part of Gardner-Webb's commitment to serve the community, the University recently began an informative series called "Webb Connections." Hosted by GWU President Dr. William M. Downs, these programs will feature a panel of experts discussing topics of national, regional and local interest. Because of COVID-19 safety guidelines, a small audience of

'Webb Connections' with

to view. The series, held monthly through April, will cover topics surrounding health, diversity, faith and education. "We will discuss issues of critical importance to the Gardner-Webb Community," noted Downs, as he explained the purpose of the new series. "We like to say that we are a private university with a very public mission. We take that responsibility very seriously, so we look for ways to help."

students was invited to attend. The program was recorded live and is available online for everyone



The first question Downs asked the public health representatives was to give a snapshot of the COVID-19 situation in Cleveland County. The current number of positive cases are available here. Hansen explained that the county saw a spike in cases after the holidays, but numbers have improved since then. "Our numbers compared to six months ago probably look fairly similar, but

The title for the first event was "The Pandemic, Healthcare and Recovery: Where do we go from

here?" Three panelists were featured: Tiffany Hansen, Cleveland County health director; DeShay

associate provost, College of Health Sciences.

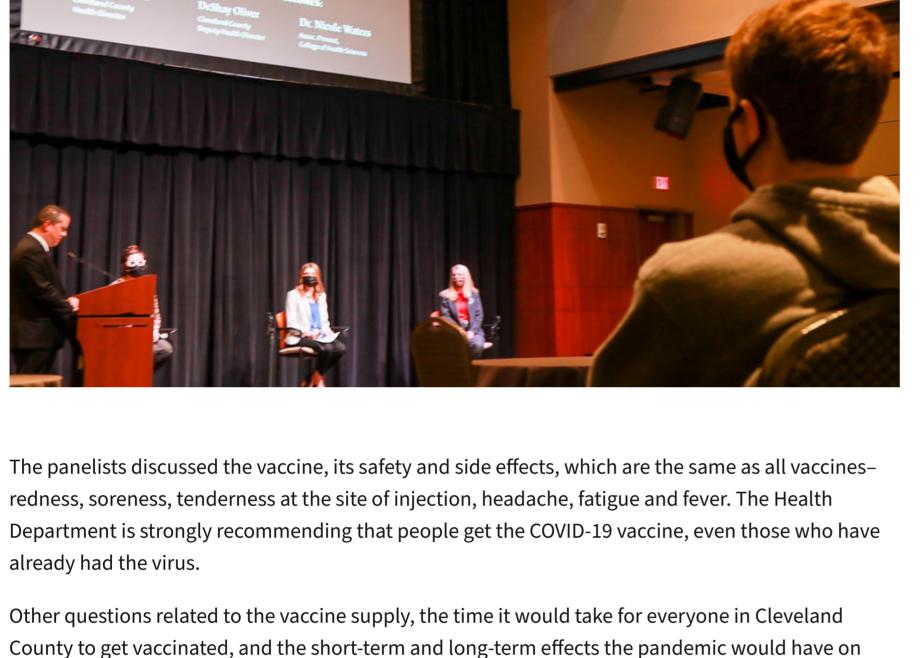
Oliver, deputy health director, Cleveland County Public Health Center; and Dr. Nicole Waters, GWU

Oliver noted that the positivity rate is the percent of people who are testing positive from all total tests done in Cleveland County, so that number is an indication that coronavirus in Cleveland county is still fairly widespread. She also reported that the county is averaging 3,500 to 4,000 tests a week.

Waters commented that Gardner-Webb has had limited cases with more in quarantine, because of

based on those spikes we had after the holidays, we are seeing some improvements," she said.

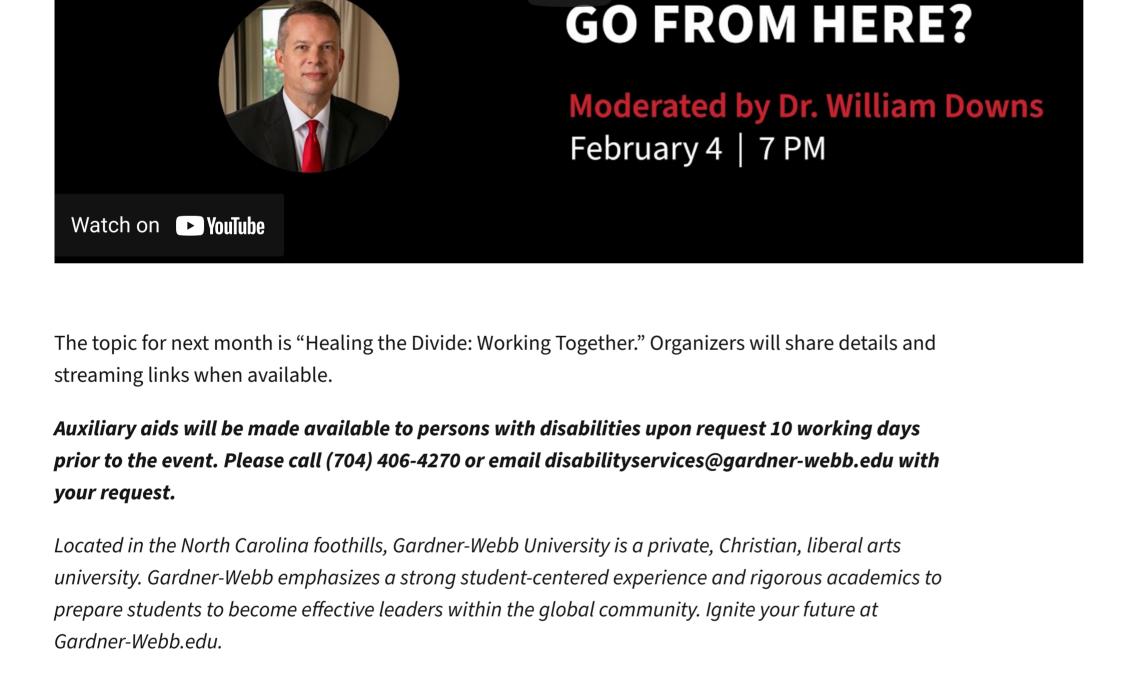
the University's strict quarantine policy. She praised the campus community for wearing masks, staying socially distanced and following the guidelines. Downs thanked Hansen and Oliver for helping the college set up policies and perform contact tracing.



Webb Connections • The Pandemic, healthcare and recovery: Where do we go...

society. Topics such as telehealth, nursing curriculum, handshaking, politics, fear and mental health

were covered. The panel members also took questions from the small group of students invited to



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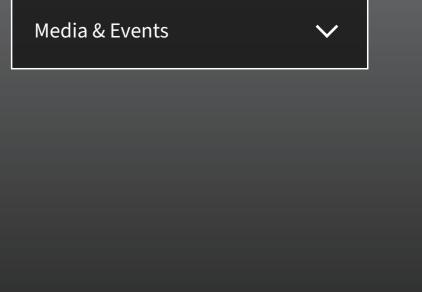
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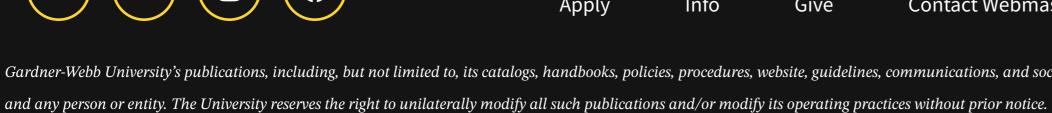
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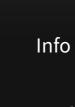
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attend the event.

The full discussion is available below.