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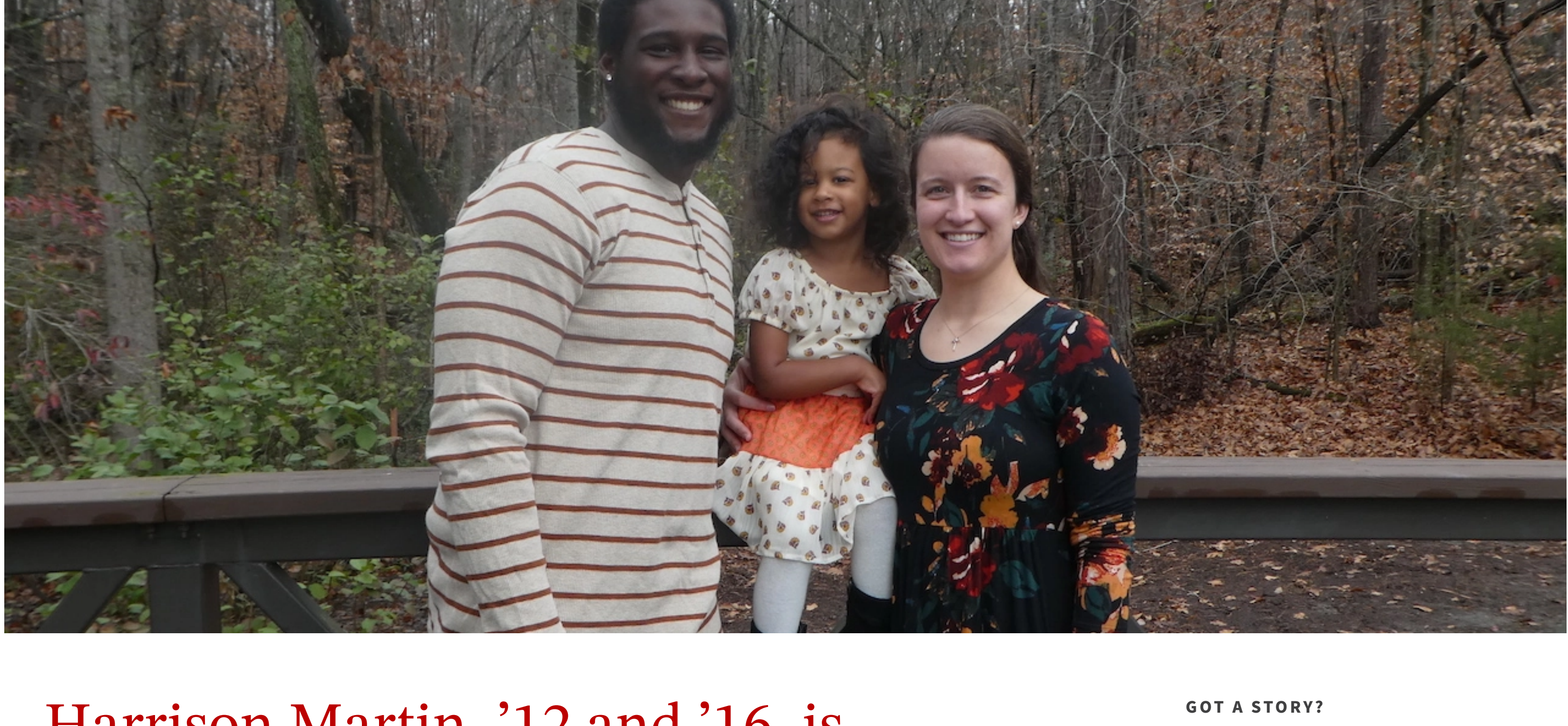
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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Gardner-Webb Alumnus Uses Writing and Entrepreneurial Skills to Start Business

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON FEBRUARY 12, 2021



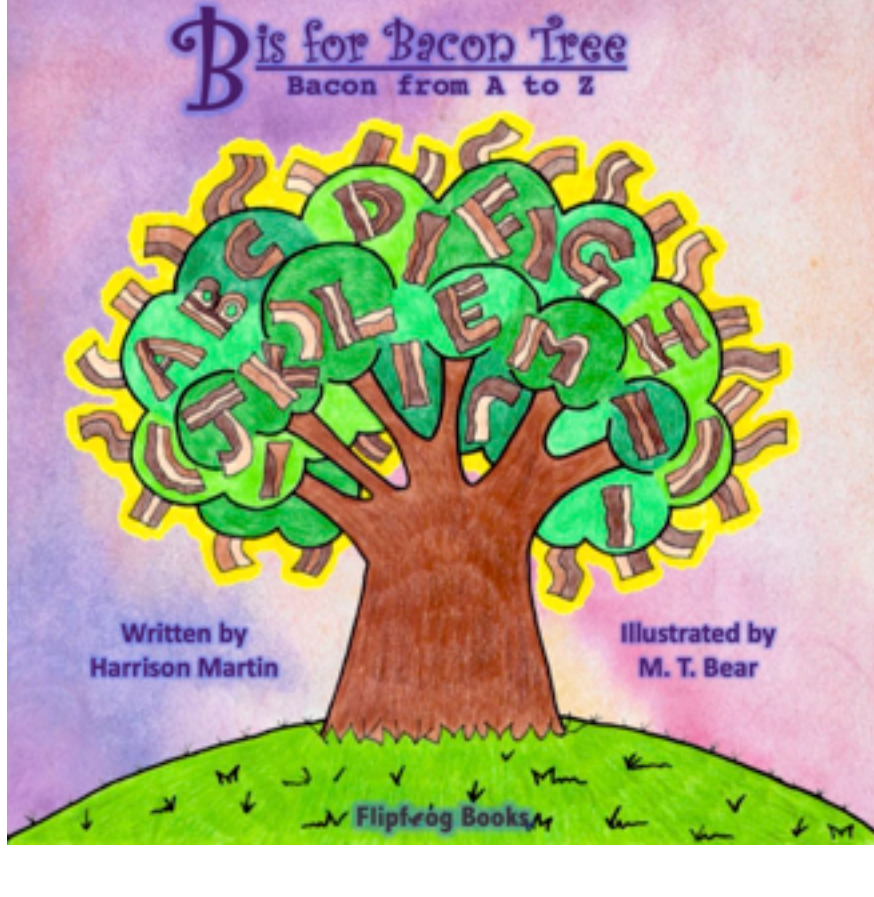
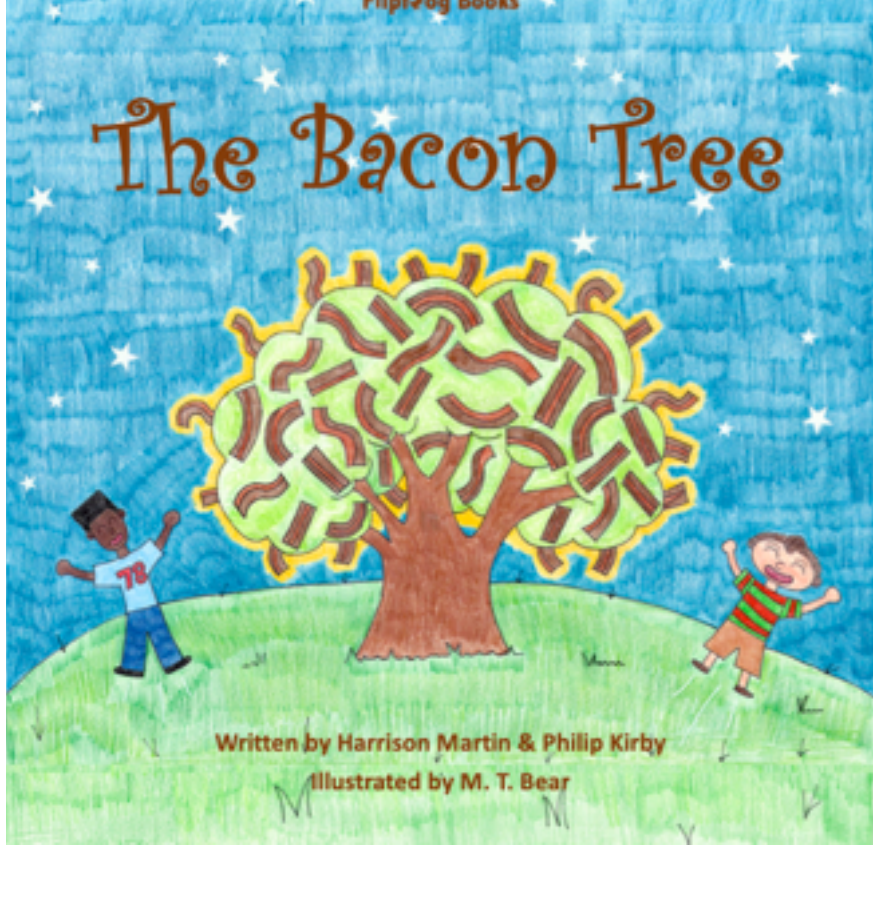
Harrison Martin, '12 and '16, is Film Critic and Author



To our readers: In celebration of Black History Month during February, Gardner-Webb University will introduce you to alumni who are making a difference in the world around them. Through their jobs and creative passions, these alumni are inspiring others to achieve their dreams.

Since earning his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Gardner-Webb University, Harrison Martin, of Pfafftown, N.C., has started a business doing what he loves—reviewing movies and writing. The entrepreneur is a member of two film critics organizations and recently published a children's book, "The Bacon Tree." His second book, "B is for Bacon Tree: Bacon from A to Z," will be available soon at [Flipfrog Books](#).

Martin, who played football at GWU, received his Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies: Video and Film with a minor in business administration in 2012. He earned his Master of International Business Administration in 2016.



His interest in critiquing films broadened as an undergraduate student. "I have loved watching movies my entire life and really enjoyed talking about them with my friends," he shared. "My goal was to be a professional film critic for a major publication or pursue another job in the film industry such as writing, directing, or producing. Reviewing movies professionally gained traction over the other jobs after I took an award-winning film class with Noel T. Manning II. It was delightful, and I learned a lot. Before that class, I wasn't really interested in Oscar-bait movies, because I felt they were too artsy. But after taking the class, my appreciation for different film genres increased."

After college, one of the first jobs he took was at Regal Cinemas in Charlotte, N.C. This allowed him to see movies for free and write reviews for his website, [Flipfrog](#). "I continued writing on my site while applying to join critics organizations, so that I could also get into advanced screenings," he explained. "Now, I am a member of the Black Film Critics Circle (BFCC) and the African-American Film Critics Association (AAFC). There are a few other critics groups I am trying to get into as well."

Writing the children's book began spontaneously. "I really love bacon!" Martin asserted. "I wrote the book with my brother-in-law, Philip (another bacon lover) for fun back in 2016. We were hanging around the table after breakfast with our wives, and I came up with the idea to make up a book. So, I started spouting out a few rhyming lines, and Philip would type them on the computer. He also threw in a few lines when I couldn't think of anything. We got to the end, and his wife, Elizabeth, said the story should have a moral, so that children can learn something. I took that and was easily able to come up with a good ending to the book."



Martin decided what they had created was a good story and began working to get it published. "Eventually, I got the book illustrated and put it together," he related. "I started my own business to publish the book and sent off the necessary documents to purchase some physical copies. I have many ideas for other books floating around in the old noggin, as well as at least 10 more children's books written that just need to be illustrated."

Martin was a student at East Mecklenburg High School (Charlotte, N.C.) when he was offered a football scholarship to Gardner-Webb. "I really enjoyed my visit and liked the size of the small campus, and I felt personally that going to a Christian university was good for me," he affirmed. "I also had a teammate from East Meck who had already committed, so that helped solidify my choice."

The small campus community allowed him to make lasting friendships, and he met his wife, Jennifer. His professors in the Godbold College of Business and the Department of Communication and New Media provided encouragement, and taught him how to start and grow a business. "I have so many good memories from the school, but I mainly just want to thank all the wonderful professors I had," he stated. "I learned how to multitask, how to write, how to edit my own videos and a good amount of business skills. Most importantly, I learned how to operate as a Christian while being in a business environment."



Harrison Martin's photo from the GWU 2011 Football Guide

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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