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GWU Honors Students Clean Up Trails at Broad River Greenway

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CAMPUS NEWS

GWU Honors Students Clean Up Trails at Broad River Greenway

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON OCTOBER 28, 2020



Community Service Project Also Preparation for Annual Enchanted Forest, Nov. 6-7

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Unable to take their annual trip to clean up the New River in West Jefferson, N.C., Honors students from Gardner-Webb University worked on the trails at the Broad River Greenway near Boiling Springs. A group of 29 students and Dr. Tom Jones, associate dean of the Honors Program, removed kudzu, honeysuckle, and large poison ivy vines and cleared overhangs on trails. The students also spruced up the Greenway’s Phifer Cabin.

Jordan Mitchell, a GWU sophomore, enjoys visiting the Greenway with his friends, walking on the trails and watching the sunset. He is a biology and chemistry double major with concentrations in biomedical and pre-health. “By cleaning up the trails and picking up trash, we not only made it a more pleasant experience for guests, but we also made it a safer place for wildlife,” he shared. “The Honors group also helps with Enchanted Forest, so cleaning up the trails will hopefully make it a more enjoyable experience for the families who come.”



First-year student Marissa DiMatteo had not visited the Greenway before. “It was fun to hang out with my friends and learn new things about the forest and community from Dr. Jones,” offered DiMatteo, a double major in biomedical sciences and Spanish with a minor in psychology. “I was scared to clean the cabin out at first, because Dr. Jones said there were spiders and snakes. Luckily, we didn’t see any.”

Sophomore Allyson Butts, a pre-professional exercise science major and psychology minor, went to New River last year and enjoyed getting to know the other Honors students. While she missed not being able to go on the weekend camping trip, she was excited to help keep the local natural areas and forests clean. “My group and I were responsible for hiking the 5K/equestrian trail at the Greenway,” she related. “We picked up any trash in the area, cut back briars and branches growing into the path, and moved a few fallen trees.”

Additionally, the students built a bear den for the Enchanted Forest, an annual event where GWU students dress in animal costumes to teach children about the nocturnal animals in the forest. The event is scheduled for Nov. 6 and 7, from 6:30-9 p.m.

Between 35 and 40 students and other volunteers will help this year. Participants include Honors students along with students from the UNIV 111 first-year classes taught by Dr. Meredith Rowe, Dr. Shea Stuart and Dr. Tom Jones. Some will act as tour guides, who take the groups through the forest to visit the “animals” in their habitats.



Because of COVID-19 concerns, there will only be one trail this year with 11 animals in 10 locations. Children will learn about the rat, spider, bobcat, owl, bat, bear, opossum, luna moth and caterpillar, skunk and firefly. “In order to better protect our students and the visiting families, we are avoiding areas where people may be grouped or in close contact,” Jones informed. “We’ll have a couple of activities for the kids, as well. Adults will wear masks. Groups will be lead in small family groupings. The first tour will begin at 6:30 each night and the last tour out will be at 8:30.”

Learn more about the GWU Honors Program. >

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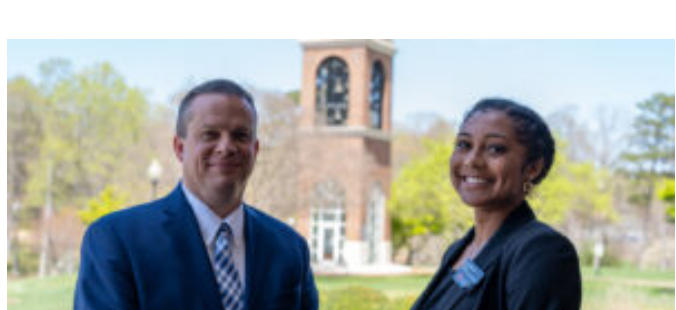


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