

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

8-31-2020

Gardner-Webb University Students Stand 'Together as One'

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

COMMUNITY

Gardner-Webb University Students Stand ‘Together as One’

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON AUGUST 31, 2020



More than 300 Gather to Begin Tough Conversations About Racial Injustice and Inequality

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Holding signs that read “Black Lives Matter,” “My life matters,” “Act justly, Love mercy, Walk humbly (Micah 6),” and “We stand with you,” a diverse group of students, faculty and staff marched peacefully down Main Street and through campus on Monday. Coordinated by Darian Reynolds, Donnie Thompson and other members of the football team, the group’s message was “Together as One.”

The march ended at the O. Max Gardner Music Building, where more than 300 gathered to hear speeches from students, a NAACP representative from Charlotte, N.C., and GWU officials.

Reynolds and Thompson talked to their coaches about having the march and then spread the word on social media. Reynolds is a senior who graduates in December with a criminal justice degree and minor in homeland security, and Thompson graduates next spring with a sports education degree and minor in communication.

“There’s not a lot of African American students on campus, and I wanted everyone to be educated on what we go through and our lifestyles on a daily basis and make them understand what’s going on in America,” Reynolds said.

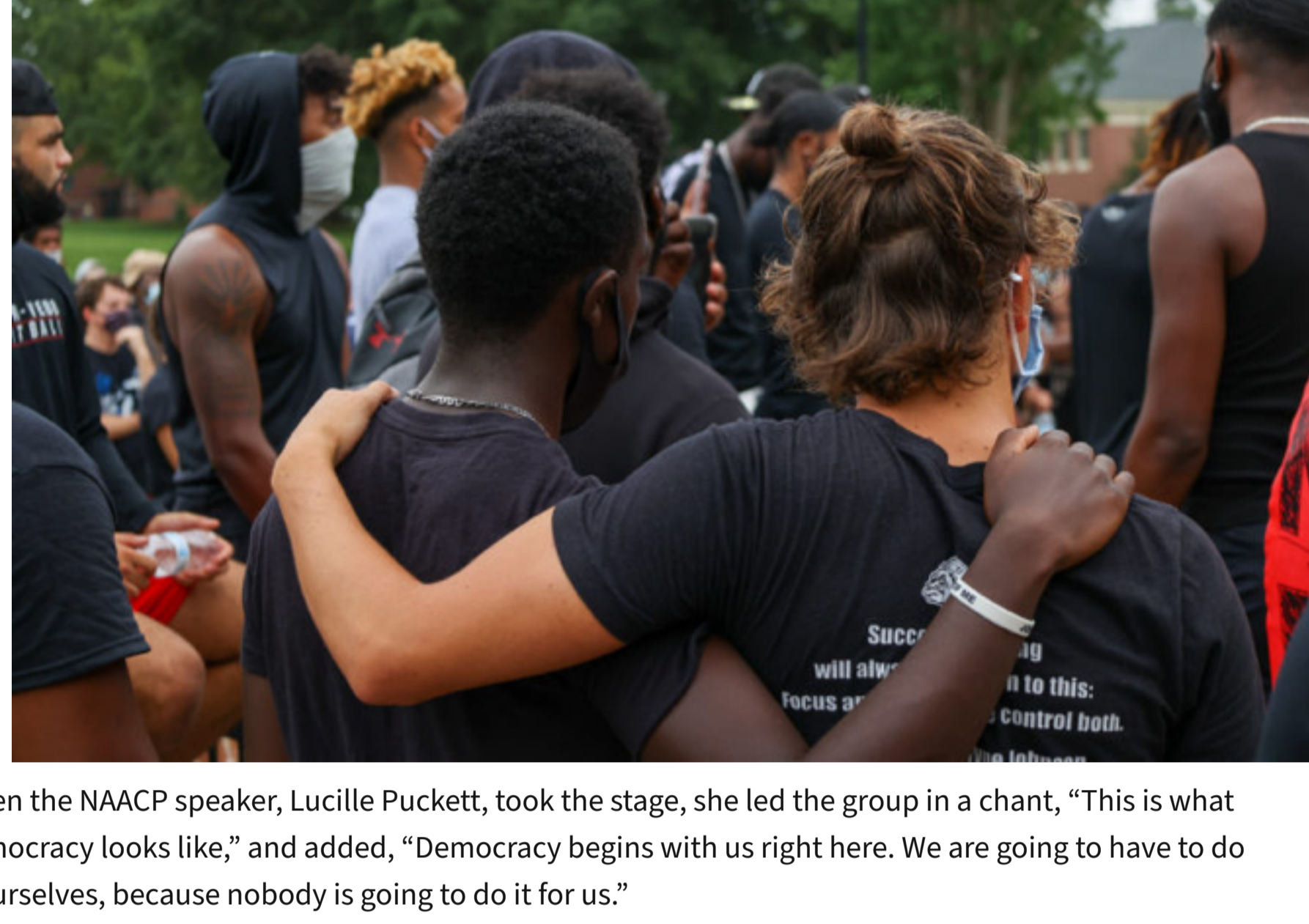
Thompson added, “I was pleased with the turnout, but still very hungry to have a bigger crowd next time we put an event together. Racism is real, and it’s everywhere. I want all students to have those hard conversations with their friends and family about ending racism. I want to encourage all the white students to use their voice, because in my opinion, they have the biggest one to help fight this battle and break the chain of hate. We are the strongest when we come together as one.”



Head Football Coach Tre Lamb

Gardner-Webb Head Football Coach Tre Lamb told the crowd that the football team had been discussing racial injustice for six months. “But, the fact of the matter is, we have been talking about it for 200 years,” Lamb observed. “In my opinion, our generation can be the one to stop it. I’ve got an 8-month-old daughter, and I don’t want her to see this when she gets older. It breaks my heart. Our generation can end it, period. I think we need to encourage each other to have intelligent, difficult conversations. Be around people you’re uncomfortable being around and have real conversations. Get to the depth of what they believe and why they believe it. Have some humility.”

JeNai Davis, GWU director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives, also emphasized the need to have real communication and to participate in local, state and national elections. “This is a huge movement right now, what you guys are doing,” she shared. “You are leaving your mark. You are making the change and that is important. Don’t let the conversations end here. Don’t get out here and march, post your pictures on social media and then go on with your lives tomorrow. If it stops here, the violence still continues as it has for all these years. I want to thank these guys who put this together, because they have friends at other universities who are doing the same thing.”



When the NAACP speaker, Lucille Puckett, took the stage, she led the group in a chant, “This is what democracy looks like,” and added, “Democracy begins with us right here. We are going to have to do it ourselves, because nobody is going to do it for us.”

Downs thanked the students for organizing the event. “You know, we talk a lot at Gardner-Webb about ‘community,’” he said. “We talk a lot at Gardner-Webb about ‘family.’ This crowd here today is family. This is a big, diverse, amazing family. Of all the groups that exist in society, family is the strongest. Family has the strongest of bonds. Students, faculty, staff ... we have to stay glued together. These are uncertain but historic times, and we have to stay together.”

He pledged the University’s commitment and support to every student. “If you want to march together and call on those around us to help make a better world, then we will walk that journey with you,” he affirmed. “We will walk together as one. We will not repay hatred with hatred, but we will make a powerful statement about justice, a powerful statement about respect, a powerful statement about peace, and a powerful statement about unity. Gardner-Webb will stand with you.”

Downs ended his comments with a quote from the late John Lewis, the civil rights leader and Congressman from Georgia who passed away last month. “You are a light. You are the light. Never let anyone — any person or any force — dampen, dim or diminish your light ... Release the need to hate, to harbor division, and the enticement of revenge. Release all bitterness. Hold only love, only peace in your heart, knowing that the battle of good to overcome evil is already won.”

The Conversation Continues



The GWU office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives has the following programs planned this month in the Tucker Student Center.

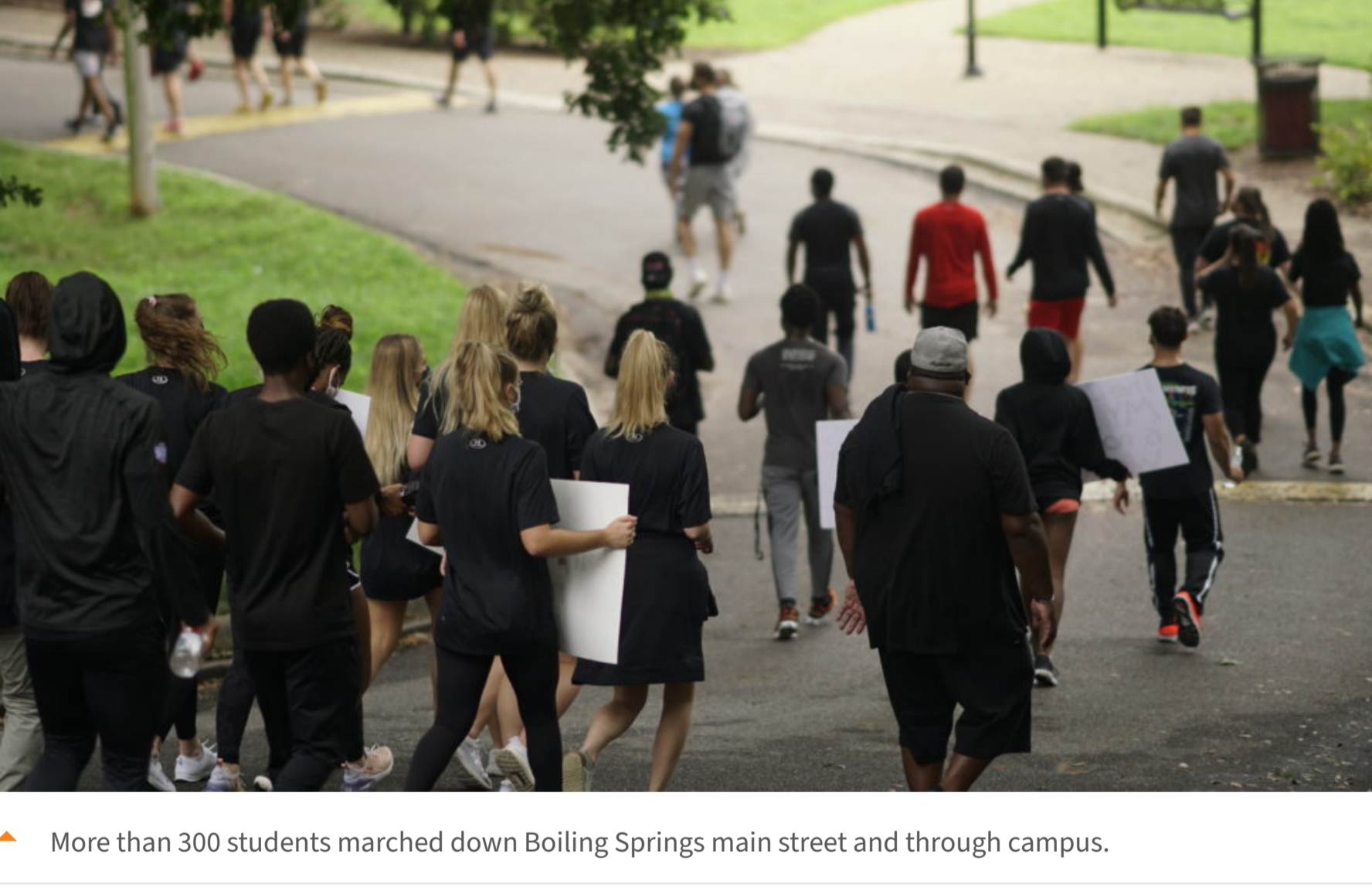
- Sept. 3:** Diversity Dialogue, “I want to be an ally, but I don’t know how,” discussing what being an ally really means and going over ways to practice this daily in our lives.
- Sept. 14:** Launch of the 21-Day Equity Challenge, complete one action per day to further our own understanding of power, privilege, supremacy, oppression and equity.
- Sept. 15:** Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, in partnership with Student Activities, come out to the front of Tucker for free chips and salsa.
- Sept. 17:** Diversity Dialogue, “How to Have Conversations with Someone Who Has Differing Opinions.”
- Sept. 23:** Webb Cart, (similar to the game show, Cash Cab) featuring trivia for Hispanic Heritage Month.

For more information, email JeNai Davis at jdavis16@gardner-webb.edu or call 704.406.2647.

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.



Gardner-Webb University President Dr. William M. Downs and Lucille Puckett, NAACP representative from Charlotte, N.C., lead the crowd in a chant, “This is what democracy looks like.”



More than 300 students marched down Boiling Springs main street and through campus.

PREVIOUS NEWS ARTICLE

Marion Family Donates New Scoreboard for Gardner-Webb’s Spangler Stadium

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS | AUGUST 28, 2020

NEXT NEWS ARTICLE

Before Completing her MBA, GWU Alumna was Offered New Job in Financial Industry

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS | SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

Related News

See All News >

NEWS ARTICLE

President’s 2022 Early Career Award Recognizes Social Sciences Professor

Dr. Aihua Zhang Honored for Exceptional Productivity in Scholarship, Creative Discovery and Instruction BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Dr. Aihua Zhang, assistant professor in the Gardner-Webb University Department of Social Sciences, has been [...]

WEB COMMUNICATIONS | APRIL 5, 2022

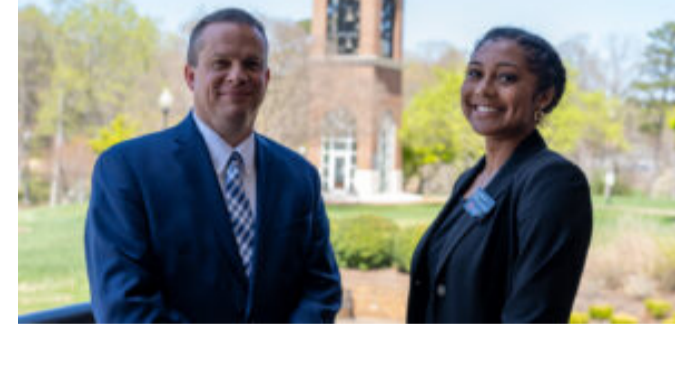


NEWS ARTICLE

Gardner-Webb Presidents Switch Places for the Day

While Student Government President Jada Newton Attends Meetings, President William Downs Goes to Class BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—This week, Gardner-Webb University had a new president for eight hours. Student Government Association [...]

WEB COMMUNICATIONS | APRIL 5, 2022

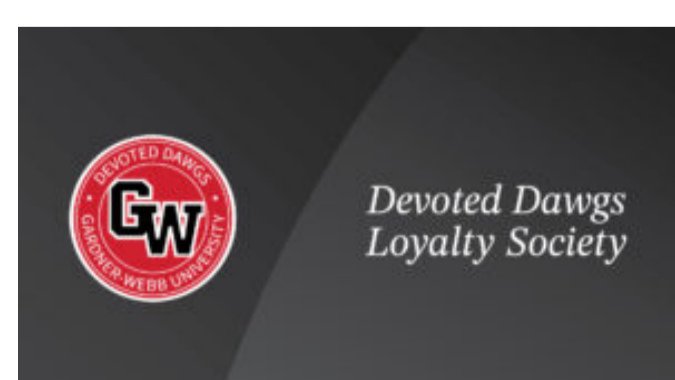


NEWS ARTICLE

Gardner-Webb Devoted Dawgs Loyalty Society Honors University’s Dedicated Donors

Double Dawg Day Supporters Recognized with Stewardship Items for Three or More Consecutive Years of Giving BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—The Gardner-Webb Advancement team recently launched the Devoted Dawgs Loyalty Society [...]

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS | APRIL 4, 2022



Give Request Apply



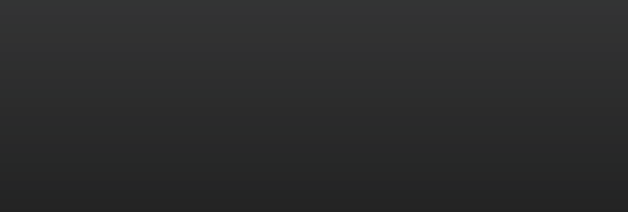
110 South Main Street
P.O. Box 997
Boiling Springs, NC 28017
(704) 406-4000

- MAIN
- About
- Academics
- Admissions and Aid
- Resources
- Student Life
- University Police

- UTILITY
- Athletics
- Accessibility
- Title IX Compliance
- Directions
- Directory
- Job Openings
- Contact Us

I Am ...

Media & Events



Apply Info Give Contact Webmaster

© 2022