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Alumni from GWU's Natural Sciences Department Make a Difference All Over the World

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ACADEMICS

Alumni from GWU’s Natural Sciences Department Make a Difference All Over the World

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON MARCH 9, 2021



Dr. Jeremy Griffin, '13, Recognized for Research in Renewable Energy

Biology and chemistry graduates from Gardner-Webb University are making an impact around the world—studying in prestigious graduate schools, publishing in top chemistry journals, researching the COVID-19 virus, and serving in healthcare fields. They leave GWU prepared for the next step, whether that’s beginning a career or pursuing a graduate degree.

These graduates, such as chemistry alumnus, Dr. Jeremy Griffin, '13, are experiencing the benefits of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. [The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) forecasts overall employment in the economy to grow by 3.7 percent in a 10-year period, while jobs in STEM fields are expected to grow by 8 percent. The projected median annual wage for STEM job holders is \$86,980 compared to \$38,160 for non-STEM occupations.



A post-doctoral student in the chemistry department at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Griffin published his research in one of the most prestigious chemistry journals in the world, the “[Journal of the American Chemical Society](#).” His paper details the synthesis of bipyrimidines and their use as low-potential electrolytes in redox flow batteries. Redox flow batteries are a key tool in the search for energy storage solutions in renewable energy research.

“It is so profoundly gratifying to see Gardner-Webb graduates out doing cutting-edge research on topics that have the potential to alter our understanding of the natural world,” lauded GWU President Dr. William Downs. “Dr. Griffin’s work is just one example of how students armed with both a strong liberal arts foundation and a passion for STEM can help push forward the frontiers of science.”

At Gardner-Webb, Griffin’s professors encouraged his pursuit of knowledge. In their mentorship role, the faculty allow students to drive their research projects. “The professors give general guidance about topics that we feel we can do with the resources we have, but we let the student choose the specific project and define the hypothesis and some of the experiments to test it,” noted Dr. Ben Brooks, professor of chemistry. “This is the type of research project that is achievable at a school like Gardner-Webb, where research is not the primary focus of the professor’s time but instead an outgrowth of our dedication to teaching.”

Griffin was the first student to receive a grant from the GWU Undergraduate Research Scholar Program. Working with his mentor, Professor of Biology Dr. David Judge, Griffin compared two methods of extracting the chemicals from ginger ales. He won the first-place presentation prize for chemistry at the North Carolina Academy of Science’s annual meeting. He also received the Stefka Eddins Undergraduate Research Award from GWU for excellence in a student/faculty collaborative project. Griffin earned his Ph.D. in chemistry in 2018 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Dr. Judge helped me to sharpen my skills in experimentation, and under his guidance, I learned how to become an independent scientist,” he concluded. “He helped me to critically think about a problem and ask questions about what interested me. Also, my professors were always available outside of class to answer my questions. Courses at GWU challenged me to become more independent, and learn about things that I was interested in, not just because they were required by my professors.”

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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Jeremy Griffin, '13, was the first student to receive a grant from the GWU Undergraduate Research Scholar Program. Working with his mentor, Professor of Biology Dr. David Judge, Griffin compared two methods of extracting the chemicals from ginger ales.

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We welcome your suggestions and feedback, contact:

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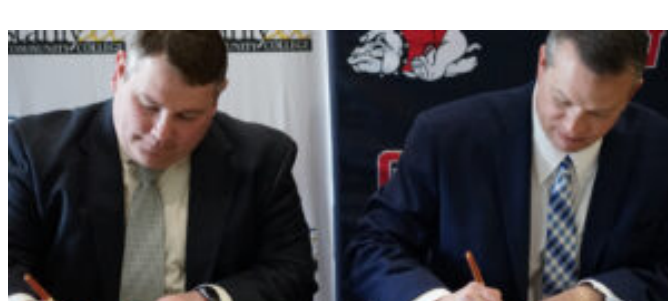


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