

## ACADEMICS

# The Honors Experience Introduces High-Achieving High School Students to Gardner-Webb

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## One-Week Immersion Program Includes Staying in Dorms, Attending Classes and Community Service

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—High-achieving high school students who want a preview of college life are invited to attend The Honors Experience from July 18-23 on the main campus of Gardner-Webb University. This one-week college immersion program is for academically gifted and talented students who are currently in the ninth- through 11th-grade. Participants are automatically qualified to compete in the Gardner-Webb Ignite Excellence Scholarship program—the highest honor includes full tuition as well as room and board, totaling over \$30,000 per year.

“Most of the students who come haven’t yet decided where they want to go to college,” noted Mindy Robinson, assistant director for The Honors Experience and coordinator for Community Engagement and Student Ministries. “Hopefully, this experience makes them want to come here! They can earn two hours of college credit, meet new friends, participate in local service projects, and hopefully grow in their relationship with Christ while they are here. They will leave here with a taste of college life, and hopefully, excited for what’s to come.”

Participants spend a full week living in dorms, traveling to field experiences, and laying the foundation for success in college. Through various classes and projects, the high schoolers are provided hands-on opportunities to develop their skills. The credit-bearing college courses are designed to help them

develop the confidence to continue in their pursuit of academic excellence, while engaging academics with Christian faith.



- ▲ From left, juniors Amelia Borders and Makenzie Denning, and rising sophomore Lauren Sudduth attended The Honors Experience and decided to make Gardner-Webb their college home.
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Many of the students who attend decide that Gardner-Webb will be their college home. Amelia Borders, a junior nursing major, participated in the program in 2018 and last year, served as a Resident Assistant (RA). She said the times of community service, which involved hard work, were her favorite parts of the week. “Giving back to the community really highlighted the Gardner-Webb mission: ‘For God and Humanity,’” Borders stated.

However, what ultimately led her to attend GWU were the RAs who served her group the first year she came to the event. “They told us their experience,” she said. “The realness helped a lot.”

Another former participant, Lauren Sudduth, is completing her first year at Gardner-Webb. She is a double major in American Sign Language and music. She was also influenced by the RAs who provided leadership for her group. “One night, our RAs took us to the chapel, and we had a little worship night,” Sudduth described. “One guy played piano, and we had several singers. It was powerful. I realized that night that this is where God was sending me. Whether you’re 100 percent committed or just exploring, I totally recommend coming to see if this might be a school you’re interested in. I realized at the Honors Experience that the people here are genuinely kind and supportive, and that support has carried me through my first year here.”



▲ Dr. Nicole Waters, dean of the College of Health Sciences, leads students in how to perform surgery on a banana.

Makenzie Denning, an accounting major who plans to graduate in December 2023, also enjoyed doing the service projects at Honors Experience, which allowed her to help someone in the community while making new friends. “The Honors Experience helped me decide to attend Gardner-Webb, because I was able to get an inside look at what to expect from college,” Denning asserted. “I was able to build relationships with people that I am still friends with today.”

This summer’s courses will introduce students to biology, religion, Holocaust history, pottery, nursing and African American literature. Topics range from “Molecules to Muscles,” to “Dealing with Crises in the Psalms and Job.”

Students must meet academic requirements. The cost for The Honors Experience is \$500 per person. A \$100 deposit (refunded if not accepted) is due with the application, which must be submitted by July 1. Tuition covers room and board (five nights lodging and 15 meals), transportation to field experiences, course instruction, activity fees, and materials. Discounts are available.

**Learn more about The Honors Experience and apply by July 1.** ➔

*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.*

<https://gardner-webb.edu/news/honors-experience-is-preview-of-college-life-2/>