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## Alumna Shares Her GWU Marching Band Experience with Area Band Directors

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON MAY 27, 2021



- ▲ Daniel Graves, left, an alumnus of the music department, who works in GWU Undergraduate Admissions, and Miss Gastonia Julia DeSerio, also a GWU alumna, spoke to area band directors about the relaunch of the GWU Marching Band Program.

### Miss Gastonia, Julia DeSerio, Talked About Her Growth as a Musician, Excitement for Band's Return

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Julia DeSerio, 2018 alumna and current Miss Gastonia, loved music so much that she participated in both chorus and band programs throughout high school and as a student at Gardner-Webb University. Recently, DeSerio, spoke at a dinner for marching band directors about the relaunch of the GWU Bulldog Marching Band program.

“It was privilege to be asked to speak at this event highlighting the Gardner-Webb University School of Performing and Visual Arts and the impact the Marching Bulldog family has had on my life and student experience,” DeSerio commented on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/missgastonia_nc/) ([https://www.instagram.com/missgastonia\\_nc/](https://www.instagram.com/missgastonia_nc/)) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Miss-Gastonia-2020-Julia-DeSerio-102981157872267) (<https://www.facebook.com/Miss-Gastonia-2020-Julia-DeSerio-102981157872267>). “The event for local middle and high school band directors from a four-county radius allowed us to educate our stakeholders about the revival of the band and encourage them to help recruit future members.”



DeSerio, a trumpet player in the band, was a music education major at GWU, but her concentration was in voice. She is the chorus teacher at Crest Middle School in Shelby, N.C., and for the talent portion of the Miss Gastonia pageant, she did a vocal performance. The Miss North Carolina pageant, postponed last year because of COVID-19, will be held in June. “I am in awe of how the Miss America Organization has opened doors for me, given me such memorable and precious experiences, and how it allows me to connect with the many communities I love and cherish,” she reflected. “I am very proud of my University and am so honored to represent them as Miss Gastonia.”

She also shared on Instagram about what she learned as a student in the GWU Department of Music. “As a music education major, I blossomed into not only a better musician, but a better educator, advocate, servant, and human,” she reflected. “After four-and-a-half years of growth at GWU, I graduated cum laude, ready to enter my first classroom. Once a young girl with a dream in her heart, I am now sharing my love for music with the next generation and forging the path to becoming a leader within music education.”

The marching band directors also heard from Dr. Mark Cole, associate professor of music, the director of bands and chair of the Department of Music, and Daniel Graves, also an alumnus of the music department, who works in GWU Undergraduate Admissions.



▲ The new uniforms for the Marching Bulldogs

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Julie C. Fleming, assistant vice president for Undergraduate Admissions, noted that besides hearing from alumni, the event was an opportunity to give band directors information on the Gardner-Webb admissions process and scholarship opportunities. “The program allows high school band members to continue their marching band career at the Division I football level,” Fleming offered. “It is open to non-music majors and is great way for students to be involved on campus, playing the instrument they love. And, it comes with a \$1,000 scholarship.”

Applications for the Bulldog Marching Band program are being accepted now. More information about the program is available [here \(https://gardner-webb.edu/academics/colleges-schools/arts-and-sciences/school-of-performing-and-visual-arts/music/marching-band/\)](https://gardner-webb.edu/academics/colleges-schools/arts-and-sciences/school-of-performing-and-visual-arts/music/marching-band/).

*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.*