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CAMPUS NEWS

First-Year Students Excited to Begin Educational Journey at GWU

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON AUGUST 20, 2021



- ▲ Michael and Coshendra Jackson, of North Augusta, S.C., brought a team of family members to help their son, Micah, move into his residence hall.

Administrators, Students and Parents Share Expectations for Fall Semester

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Nearly 450 first-year students moved onto the Gardner-Webb campus this week, as the University is preparing for a total enrollment of around 3,500 for the 2021 Fall Semester. The new students and their parents experienced a mixture of emotions along with enthusiasm for the coming semester.



- ▲ Tabitha Darnell is the first child in her family to go to college.

The Schlimper family drove their daughter, Clara, from Houston, Texas, a 15-hour trip. The Darnells brought their daughter, Tabitha, from Peachtree Corners, Ga. The Jacksons, of North Augusta, S.C., came with a team of family members to help their son, Micah, move into his residence hall. All are first-year students, and Tabitha and Micah are the first children from their families to go to college.

While moving his daughter into her residence hall, Andy Darnell said they felt good about her choice. “We visited (GWU) several times, but after the first visit we felt pretty confident in the school,” he affirmed. “She’s majoring in ASL (American Sign Language). We loved the bubble feel of the school and the values obvious in it. We had a couple totes carried up by Bulldog Movers. I loved seeing President (Dr. William) Downs carry loads too. Not many college presidents like him. It’s obvious he is a servant leader.”



- ▲ Bo says, “Hello,” to Clara Schlimper, class of 2025.

Clara chose Gardner-Webb because of the swim program and the reputation of the Hunt School of Nursing and the University’s other pre-professional pathways in medicine. “I’m most excited about

swimming at a collegiate level,” Clara asserted. “During orientation, I enjoyed meeting people from all over the country and even overseas.”

Her mom, Ester, shared, “After touring GWU in the fall, we fell in love with the campus community and knew it was the perfect fit for her,” she said. “I’m excited for Clara to have an amazing college experience. One that will provide her with the basis for her future career and needs—to continue to grow in faith and to build solid, lasting relationships, and to reach new heights in her swimming potential.”

Michael and Coshendra Jackson had matching T-shirts made for the family to celebrate his big day. The GWU shirts were personalized with the hashtag: “#MovingMicah.” Michael summed up the family’s excitement, “This is another chapter in his life. He’s going to be great in what he does.”

In his remarks to students, Downs shared his enthusiasm for the start of a new academic year. “We’re excited. We’re ready. We’re optimistic about all that lies ahead. We’re eager to get to know you, to work with you, and to help you navigate your path to graduation. You will be our primary focus each and every day from this day forward.”

President Downs also emphasized the importance of staying informed of COVID-19 advisories. “When it comes to our community’s health, we need you to take this issue seriously and we need you to be smart,” he stated. “We will do whatever it takes to keep our University open for business and to keep you safe and on track for academic success.”

Facts about the Class of 2025:

- They come from 24 states (top 6):
 - North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, Pennsylvania
- and 53 N.C. counties (top 4):
 - Cleveland, Gaston, Rutherford, Mecklenburg
- Top S.C. counties:
 - Cherokee, Spartanburg, Richland, Greenville
- Top N.C. High Schools:
 - Crest, Burns, Kings Mountain, RS Central, Shelby
- Top S.C. High Schools:
 - Gaffney, Chesnee, Dorman
- 21 international students from 13 distinct countries:

- Canada, Venezuela, France, Sweden, Belgium, Bermuda, Germany, Ghana, Iceland, Lebanon, Mexico, Serbia, South Korea

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.