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### GWU College of Education Doctoral Candidate Nominated by Students for Golden Apple Award

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**GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

## GWU College of Education Doctoral Candidate Nominated by Students for Golden Apple Award

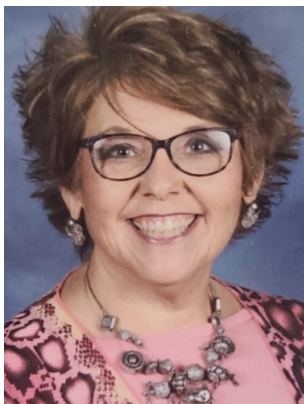
BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON NOVEMBER 19, 2021



### Stacy Fuentes, '22, Recognized for Fun Teaching Methods and Listening Ear

A doctoral candidate in the Gardner-Webb University College of Education was recently recognized by her students for making complicated lessons fun and being available to listen. Stacy Fuentes, a high school teacher in Union County, S.C., received the Golden Apple Award presented by WYFF News 4 and Ingles.

Each week, an area teacher is chosen to receive the award and at the end of the year, a Teacher of the Year is selected from the weekly winners. The Teacher of the Year receives a gift card from Ingles.



Fuentes has completed course work for the GWU Doctor of Curriculum and Instruction (EDCI) and is taking an Add-On Licensure for School Administration while working on her dissertation. She hopes to

graduate in May 2022. Her dissertation topic is on female leadership in education, specifically the discrepancy in the number of female superintendents in South Carolina.

Fuentes energizes her classroom with twinkling lights and colors. Her students practice and learn material through games. For example, she divides the class into teams, and they play a basketball game for comprehension and review. “We call it trash ball. Each team writes the formula and names it. If they are correct, one member of the team shoots the basket (a trash can),” Fuentes explained. “If they make the basket, their team is given a review question, something we learned in a previous unit, to answer. If the team answers the review question correctly, then the team gets a point. It’s simultaneously practicing new skills, getting them up and moving, and reviewing previously taught content—organized chaos at its finest.”

Her students nominated her for more reasons than her engaging teaching methods. They said she is easy to talk to and is always there for them. This is the second time she has won a Golden Apple Award; the first one came in 2002. “I am thrilled to have won,” Fuentes said. “Thrilled because I was nominated by students. I do what I do because of my students and for them to notice and respond with a nomination is very rewarding. It is affirmation for me that my efforts are not going unnoticed by those who I work so hard to teach. Also, I know there are lots of nominations, and it feels good to be chosen from among so many deserving nominees.”



Fuentes’ 22-year career in teaching was not planned. Her goal after earning her biology degree from the University of South Carolina in Columbia was to become a doctor. One day, her husband told her about an opening for a science teacher. She investigated the position and requirements, and on a whim, took the job. In 1998, she was certified to teach through a special critical needs program. She stayed in the classroom, because she liked helping the students. She earned her Master’s in Teaching in 2008 from Southern Wesleyan in Central, S.C.

She entered the Gardner-Webb program because she wants to inspire other teachers. The administrative add-on program gives her a unique perspective, a way to view everyday events at school through a clearer lens. In the EDCI program, she has gained knowledge in a variety of areas and is confident in her ability as an instructional leader. “I have learned about instructional leadership and how to build capacity in my colleagues,” Fuentes noted. “I have learned how to utilize my strengths to

accomplish goals, and I have learned how to be mindful of the strengths of others and delegate responsibilities based on those strengths to create a desired outcome. I have learned how to recognize best practices and how to show others what best practices look like. I can develop curriculum, evaluate programs, lead (groups) and create an action plan.”

See the story on Stacy Fuentes’ award (<https://www.wyff4.com/article/golden-apple-winner-stacy-fuentes-union-county-high/38224644>).

*Gardner-Webb University is North Carolina’s recognized leader in private, Christian higher education. A Carnegie-Classified Doctoral/Professional University, GWU is home to six professional schools, 14 academic departments, more than 80 undergraduate and graduate majors, and a world-class faculty. Located on a beautiful 225-acre campus in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb prepares graduates to impact their chosen professions, equips them with the skills to advance the frontiers of knowledge, and inspires them to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*

