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2-2-2022

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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications, "Family with Close Connections to Gardner-Webb Establishes Scholarship" (2022). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 2396.
<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/2396>

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ADVANCEMENT

Family with Close Connections to Gardner-Webb Establishes Scholarship

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON FEBRUARY 2, 2022



From left to right are Eric and Teresa Davis' sons and their families: Amberlee, Alex, Anderson, Teresa, Eric, Tyler, Eli, Jeremiah and Stephanie.

The Dr. J. Eric and Teresa Davis Family Scholarship Available to Students in all Educational Disciplines

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A family with five alumni and an employee with nearly two decades of service to Gardner-Webb University recently established a new scholarship. The Dr. J. Eric and Teresa Davis Family Scholarship will be available to any student.

Eric is the former senior pastor of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, and his wife, Teresa, has worked for the GWU Office of Christian Life and Service since 2003. Although their lives have been dedicated to ministry and missions, they wanted the scholarship to go to students in all educational disciplines. The only criteria is a commitment by the recipient to maintain a certain GPA. “We knew these students would also be able to utilize their career choices to share Christ and reflect the values of our wonderful University,” Eric asserted.



▲ Teresa and Eric Davis

Vice President for Advancement Nate Evans expressed his appreciation for the new fund. “We are grateful for the generous support that Eric and Teresa have provided,” he praised. “The Davis Family Scholarship will provide access to quality Christian education for years to come. Scholarships like these give students an opportunity to pursue their dreams and passions at Gardner-Webb.”

The Davises’ relationship with Gardner-Webb began three decades ago, when Eric and Teresa moved to Cleveland County so Eric could attend classes. Eric earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology in 1995, his Master of Divinity in 2001 and his Doctor of Ministry in 2007. “We often would come to the campus just to let our boys (Alex and Tyler) walk around, and we all enjoyed swinging underneath the large oak trees located all around the campus,” Eric reminisced. “I was so blessed to meet folks who were very helpful in assisting us to find the financial aid that we needed for me to attend classes here. The professors became friends to me and interactions with the other students became valued relationships. More recently, we have gotten to know the University President Dr. William Downs, and his wonderful wife, Kim. In the time we have spent with them, we know that the University is continuing to grow in a way that reflects our Christian values.”

Additionally, both sons earned their bachelor’s degrees from GWU, while Tyler also completed his Master of Business Administration. Further, Amberlee, Alex’s wife, received her bachelor’s degree in education, and Stephanie, Tyler’s wife, received her bachelor’s degree and her master’s degree in school counseling.

“Gardner-Webb has given so much to our family,” Eric affirmed. “We realized that we have benefited so much from our relationship with the University, and we wanted to be able to afford students of Gardner-Webb to experience some of the unique opportunities that only Gardner-Webb could offer. We have been blessed in many ways, and we wanted to share that blessing in a way that will have eternal implications.”



▲ Teresa Davis and her mom, Auralee Mull

Another source of motivation to establish the scholarship came from Teresa's mother, Auralee Mull, who passed away in September 2021. "My mom lived with us for most of the last year and a half of her life," Teresa shared. "During that time, she shared many stories about her great love for education. In fact, she often attended classes at a community college in Catawba County to pursue her love for knowledge, even when she was in her early 80s. Although she never earned a four-year college degree in her youth, she constantly tried to better herself through attending classes that were offered through the community college near her. Her continuing pursuit of knowledge was part of the inspiration behind the Davis Family scholarship made available to Gardner-Webb University."

The Davises want to encourage others to consider establishing a scholarship or supporting the program they care about the most. "This is an opportunity to be a blessing," Eric affirmed. "When a student attends an institution of higher learning, that person's experience becomes much more than books and study. In that brief time, the student is exposed to many opportunities to broaden their cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual horizons. The student learns how to become a responsible adult and how to contribute to the betterment of mankind. The relationships established by students at Gardner-Webb transcend time, and we never know how many lives will be changed by the influence that a young person may carry into his/her career. We want to be world changers, and we know that journey begins right here, in our own backyard!"

For more information on how to have a positive impact and make a difference at Gardner-Webb, contact Nate Evans at njevans@gardner-webb.edu (<mailto:njevans@gardner-webb.edu>) or by phone at (704) 406-4253.

Learn more about giving to Gardner-Webb. ➔

Learn more about scholarship programs at GWU. ➔

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.