

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

4-1-2022

GWU's Noel Center for Disability Resources Promotes World Autism Awareness Day and Acceptance Month

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications, "GWU's Noel Center for Disability Resources Promotes World Autism Awareness Day and Acceptance Month" (2022). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 2409. <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/2409>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Gardner-Webb Publications at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu.

CAMPUS NEWS

GWU's Noel Center for Disability Resources Promotes World Autism Awareness Day and Acceptance Month

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 1, 2022



On April 1, Wristbands Supporting Students Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder will be Distributed on Campus

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—World Autism Awareness Day is on April 2, and the observance on Gardner-Webb University's campus will be supported by multiple groups, including the staff of the Noel Center for Disability Resources (<https://gardner-webb.edu/resources/academic-support/noel-center/>), and the students they serve. Over the last two decades, the number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased significantly. Based on the most recent data, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that approximately 1 in 44 children have been identified as having ASD, which compares to 1 in 150 in 2000.

A neurodevelopmental disorder, ASD can cause social, communication, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Individuals with ASD think, learn, and behave in ways that are often neurodivergent from the general population. There is no one way that all individuals with ASD look or behave. Their symptoms and their related need for support can vary greatly, which is part of why the term "spectrum" is used.



To kick off the month on April 1, the Noel Center staff and members of Delta Alpha Pi (<http://deltaalphahonorsociety.org/>), the international honor society for students with disabilities, will distribute wristbands to show support for World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month. The staff and students will be stationed at various places on campus, such as the Caf, Chick-Fil-A, and Tucker Student Center.

“Wear the Autism Awareness wristband to visibly celebrate differences and express a desire to know more,” suggested Assistant Dean of the Noel Center Robin Weaver. “Ask yourself what you currently know about ASD and identify what you want to know more about to be a better friend, teammate, teacher, or support staff to your fellow Runnin’ Bulldogs with ASD.”

Students with ASD can register with the Noel Center to determine if they are eligible for accommodations. For example, depending on the functional limitations that ASD may cause for the student, they may be eligible for academic or housing-related accommodations. This academic year, the Noel Center also launched the first PEERS® Group on campus. PEERS® (Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills) is a 16-week social skills training experience for young adults with ASD and other social challenges. The program focuses on conversational skills, dating etiquette, handling disagreements, and bullying.

Weaver noted that research continues and there are many organizations focused on ASD, but they often have differing and even controversial positions on the condition. In North Carolina, the TEACCH® Autism Program (<https://teacch.com/about-us/>) is one of the most well-respected and reliable resources of support for individuals with ASD across the lifespan.

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.

