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ACADEMICS

Gardner-Webb Phi Beta Lambda Chapter and Members Win Awards at State Conference

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 25, 2022



▲ The GWU delegation, from left, Dr. Angelina Smith, Cyrus Richer, Johanna Quezada Salazar and Instructor Brian Cotton.

First Time GWU Delegates Have Attended Event in Over Two Decades

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Two students and faculty advisors from the Gardner-Webb University Chapter of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) recently attended the North Carolina PBL State Leadership Conference (<https://www.ncpbl.org/slinfo>) held in Charlotte. Although Gardner-Webb has not sent a delegation to the event in 24 years, both students won awards, and the chapter received first place in the Western Region for the Largest Local Chapter Membership.

Johanna Quezada Salazar, of Dallas, N.C., an international business major, received first place in business ethics, and Cyrus Richer, of Columbia, S.C., a double major in marketing and photography, received sixth place in impromptu speaking. Salazar competed against other students from UNC-Chapel Hill, Chowan, and the student president of NCPBL, who attends Western Carolina University (Cullowhee, N.C.) With her win, Salazar qualifies to compete at the national level in Chicago, Ill., on June 24-27.

The faculty advisors for the club are Brian Cotton, instructor of healthcare management, and Dr. Angelina Smith, assistant professor. Cotton noted the intention of the Gardner-Webb PBL Chapter is “to grow strong business leaders for tomorrow’s fast-paced organizations.” He praised the two students for their preparation and excellent performance. “Both students really showed the competition just how strong Gardner-Webb’s student body is academically,” he affirmed. “The judges on the panel are

current business leaders in and around the surrounding Charlotte area. They even mentioned how excited they were to see GWU there and were impressed with their level of business acumen.”



Richer was excited to represent GWU and participate in the learning experience. “We were recognized as Gardner-Webb from the moment we walked in,” he observed. “I am personally super proud of the team that I have worked with and of GWUPBL and what we have accomplished this year.”

Salazar was a member of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) in high school and competed in state level conferences. She enjoyed the experience and meeting people from all over the state, so the senior was thrilled when Richer reactivated the GWU Phi Beta Lambda Chapter, which is the college division of FBLA. “I decided that I wanted to compete one last time before I would graduate, mainly to bring back old memories and the joy I felt every year getting to meet new people from all over the state,” she related. “I gave a seven-minute speech about whether it would be ethical for an employer to fire an employee over their social media and if social media would be considered free speech. I practiced my speech over and over just to make it sure it was at seven minutes, as well as to build confidence in myself.”

Cotton noted that PBL will change its name this year to FBLA-College Division. Leaders feel the name change will offer more synergy as high school club members move into the college division. The organization’s leaders also anticipate that regional businesses will be able to easily identify the mission and vision of the organization better.

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