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CAMPUS NEWS

Longtime Supporters, David and Marie Brinkley, Provide Gift for New Amphitheater Complex

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON MAY 4, 2022



▲ Rendering by Holland and Hamrick Architects, P.A.

Construction on The Brinkley Amphitheater will Begin Soon on Site of Former Hardee's

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A family that has enthusiastically supported Gardner-Webb for more than a decade is making another transformational gift to the University. David and Marie Brinkley are providing the lead gift for a new amphitheater complex, which will be constructed on the former Hardee's location, 206 South Main Street. Gardner-Webb purchased the 1.78-acre property in January 2021.

With the couple's multi-year pledge, GWU will begin work on the project this month. In honor of their commitment and past generosity, the amphitheater will be named "The Brinkley Amphitheater."

"I am profoundly grateful to David and Marie Brinkley for their kind and continued investment in the people and programs of Gardner-Webb University," shared GWU President Dr. William Downs. "They are truly special people, and they are helping us turn some ambitious dreams into action. The Brinkley Amphitheater will enliven not just our campus but also our broader community. It will be a showcase venue for the performing arts. It will bring new energy to our great college town, and it will serve as a catalyst for year-round entertainment and engagement. A big, big win for our campus and for all of us who love this area."



▲ Marie and David Brinkley

The first phase of the project will be to construct a 600-seat amphitheater, stage and courtyard. This event space will be home to the performing arts, a summer concert series, future Webbstock events, and speakers. The attractive place will also be an area where students can gather, read or study. The second phase involves the construction of a Main Street-facing building that will house both a campus shop and a nationally recognized eatery.

The Brinkleys have lived in Kings Mountain, N.C., since the late 1970s, and have two daughters, Kristie ('04) and Carrie ('06), who graduated from Gardner-Webb as student-athletes. David, who serves on the GWU Board of Trustees, is a former high school football coach, and is retired from the Brinkley Financial Group investment firm.

When David saw Downs' presentation on the proposed amphitheater, he went home and shared the details with Marie. As with all their decisions, they prayed about it and decided to join the effort. "We felt like this is a worthy project that will be used quite a bit at Gardner-Webb for a lot of different events and hopefully the community of Boiling Springs and all of Cleveland County," he affirmed. "We felt like the amphitheater is going to be a good opportunity to bless a lot of people."

The Brinkleys encourage people to help fund the effort to make the amphitheater dream a reality. "I really think it is going to have an impact not only on the University but the community and the county," he asserted. "It will be a nice attraction when children, parents and grandparents, or relatives visit, come to a football game, or sporting event. There's not too many universities Gardner-Webb's size that can boast about having an outdoor amphitheater."

The couple have been familiar with Gardner-Webb since moving into the county and became more engaged when their daughters attended. After Kristie and Carrie graduated, their philanthropic support increased. Guided by their faith and a commitment to help improve the lives of children and young adults, the Brinkleys have supported academic programs; gave the lead gift for the Brinkley Softball Stadium in 2015; and most recently, provided the lead donation for the Marching Bulldog Band Uniforms.

The Brinkleys also serve the community through other organizations. They have been active members of Central United Methodist Church in Kings Mountain since 1981. David serves as chairman of the church Endowment Fund, and Marie is president of the Methodist women's organization and serves on the Administrative Council. They lead the Kings Mountain Touchdown Club, a non-profit sports organization they founded in 2008 for the purpose of promoting high school sports in the Kings Mountain community. They also support the Kings Mountain Elite, children's sports program, and many organizations in Kings Mountain, such as the Museum, Little Theatre, Women's Club, YMCA, Hospice, Life Enrichment Center, and the Optimist Club, and others.

An announcement will be forthcoming related to a formal groundbreaking. For more information about giving opportunities for Gardner-Webb, click [here \(https://gardner-webb.edu/give/\)](https://gardner-webb.edu/give/).



▲ Rendering by Holland and Hamrick Architects, P.A.

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.