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Gardner-Webb ROTC Cadet Perseveres to Earn Master's and Become an Officer

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON JUNE 7, 2022



2nd Lt. Ngoufack Tsafack, '22, Received Help from GWU and Fellow Cadets to Stay in School

A native of Cameroon in Central Africa, Ngoufack Tsafack, '22, came to America in 2007 to attend The Miller School of Albemarle, a boarding school in Charlottesville, Va. He was a middle school student with a dream of joining the U.S. Army, which he did in 2016.

Recently, he achieved another milestone. Tsafack was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army and received a Master of Accounting degree from Gardner-Webb University through the Green to Gold (<https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/advance-your-career/green-to-gold/green-to-gold-active-duty.html>). Active Duty Option Program. This two-year program provides active duty enlisted soldiers an opportunity to complete a two-year graduate degree and earn a commission as an army officer.

When he began looking for a master's program, someone suggested Gardner-Webb because of its small community. He loved the campus; everyone he met at Gardner-Webb treated all students with respect.

"When I went to the cafeteria, the post office ... every time I asked something, they tried to help me. There was just fair play to everybody. They would help any student the same way. That was what affected me the most about Gardner-Webb. I was very impressed. Gardner-Webb received all students that way," Tsafack affirmed.



2nd Lt. Ngoufack Tsafack receives congratulations from GWU President Dr. William Downs.

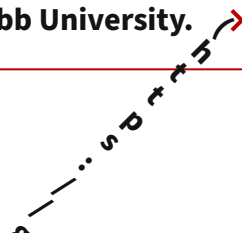
Tsafack said his Professor of Accounting, Dr. Earl Godfrey, spent extra time outside of class answering his questions. He appreciated how Instructor of Military Science Capt. Michael Meissner created a family atmosphere among the cadets in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program.

He was grateful for all the kindness shown to him, but what happened next amazed Tsafack even more. Through various conversations, Meissner discovered that Tsafack had been staying in his car on campus. When Tsafack entered the ROTC program, he gave up his housing at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. During the week, the program's full schedule didn't allow him to drive back to Columbia, where he had a place to stay with a friend. Having no money for room and board, Tsafack slept in his car and asked his fellow cadets to give him meal punches from their cafeteria plans.

Together, he and Meissner asked Gardner-Webb officials for help. "Gardner-Webb offered me a room," Tsafack noted. "I was so shocked that the school would do that."

Meissner was humbled and surprised that Tsafack endured the situation for a year. "Faced with many challenges, he continued on his pathway to not only graduate with a Master of Accounting, but also receive his commission," Meissner reflected. "I remember him saying, it will get better. He maintained a positive outlook and continued completing all assignments when in this difficult situation."

Learn more about the ROTC program at Gardner-Webb University.





▲ 2nd Lt. Ngoufack Tsafack, center, poses with supporters after the commissioning service.

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.