

TITLE IX

Gardner-Webb University Celebrates Title IX 50th Anniversary

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Etta Curtis and Dee ‘Doc Hunt’ Were Caring and Influential Campus Leaders

To our readers: In 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments (<https://gardner-webb.edu/about/policies-and-information/title-xi-compliance/celebrating-50-years/>) was signed into law by President Richard Nixon. In a year-long celebration of the law’s 50th anniversary, Gardner-Webb will recognize its individual pioneers and trailblazers, women influencers and administrators, and honor several teams and alumni groups at games and events on campus. Profiles on these women will be published in the Newscenter (<https://gardner-webb.edu/news/>) twice a month.

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—In Gardner-Webb University’s 117-year academic history, many outstanding women made their mark on the school. Two of those influential and caring leaders were Etta Curtis and Dee “Doc Hunt.”

Etta Curtis



In 1909, Curtis was “Lady Principal,” a title that changed to Dean of Women in 1928. She served in that position until 1936. She was appointed alumni secretary in 1933. In the book, “Lengthened Shadows: A History of Gardner-Webb, 1907-1956,” Curtis is described as “a lady of refined culture, kind and sympathetic, rich in experience, firm and steadfast in purpose and prizing the cardinal virtues above everything else.”

The Gardner-Webb history book also noted that Curtis was a tireless worker, on duty at all times, watching over the girls. Curtis made sure the girls didn’t visit each other during study hours and called for the oil lamps to be blown out at 10 p.m. She also worked to decorate and furnish the parlors and social halls, and contributed to many improvements on the campus. She retired at the age of 78, and a year later, the Memorial Building on Gardner-Webb’s campus burned. Curtis wrote a check for all of her savings to help in its rebuilding, and she died a pauper in 1940.

Dee “Doc Hunt”



Hunt retired in 2017 as vice president of Student Development, after working at Gardner-Webb for nearly 40 years. During that time she held several roles: professor, coach, administrator, dean, department chair and other positions. Over the years, students gave her the nickname, “Doc Hunt,” which was used by everyone on campus.

Hunt joined the GWU faculty in 1978 as associate professor of health education and physical education. She distinguished herself as a coach and consultant in the field of women's athletics, particularly volleyball and softball. She also provided distinguished leadership to the Department of Physical Education, Wellness and Sport Studies as chair from 1988 to 1995 and again from 1998 to 1999. As the founding dean of the College of Education, Hunt provided innovative and energetic leadership, directing the program's inception and accreditation from 1995-99.

She continued to teach physical education until 2010, when she was named vice president of Student Development and dean of students. In 2012, Hunt successfully directed the physical move of the Student Development division into the newly constructed Tucker Student Center, which she helped plan. The dedication ceremony was at the top of her list of favorite GWU memories. She once said, "Robert Tucker surprised me—surprised us all—with an additional half-million dollar gift. He didn't know he was going to do it. I'll never, ever forget that."

One year after her retirement from Gardner-Webb, Hunt became the first faculty member to receive three emeriti titles. On May 4, 2018, she was honored for her service as a professor emerita of physical education, dean emerita of the College of Education and vice president emerita of Student Development. In 2020, the Dr. Dee M. Hunt Student Development Suite in Tucker Center was named in her honor. Hunt passed away on July 8, 2021.

#GWUHerStory Submission Form

Help us tell the Title IX story by sharing your experiences. We want to recognize and celebrate our alumni, faculty, staff, and students who have been impacted by the Title IX law and the opportunities and experiences it has provided and protected.

Share your story, [here](https://gardnerwebb.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7PrdigvPftaav30) (https://gardnerwebb.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7PrdigvPftaav30). You can include a photo or video/audio recording with your story that we can publish on our website and social platforms.

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.