

## CAMPUS NEWS

# Ron Newcomb is Gardner-Webb University's Next Chief of Police

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON NOVEMBER 9, 2022



## Cleveland County Native Has Nearly Three Decades of Law Enforcement Experience

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A familiar face on the Gardner-Webb Campus has been named the University's next Chief of Police. Ron Newcomb, who began his law enforcement career in 1993, has served as GWU assistant chief since 2020. He succeeds Chief Barry Johnson, who retired in September after 26 years of service to the University.



▲ Ron Newcomb

Vice President for Student Development Lesley Villarose made the announcement and noted, "I am pleased that Ron will be our next Chief of Police. His experience in leadership of public safety and police in his tenure and on the campus of Gardner-Webb exemplifies his commitment to community

policing, support of the mission of the institution, and dedication to the safety and security of faculty, staff, and students.”

As assistant chief, Newcomb performed a multitude of administrative duties and was responsible for maintaining incident report software and annual Clery Reporting of campus crime data. He served as evidence custodian, managed body camera software, approved personnel logs, facilitated ID software, and handled various other day-to-day operations of University Police.

Newcomb shared that he is honored to serve as the next chief and expressed his gratitude to Johnson, who asked him to join University Police in 2019 after he retired from the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office. “I’ve enjoyed every minute of my job at Gardner-Webb. I don’t just work here. My family has called Boiling Springs home for many years,” he affirmed. “This opportunity to serve as GWU’s chief comes after 30-plus years of public service, first to the country, as a member of the U.S. Army, then as a member of Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office.”

Newcomb explained that, above all, the priority of GWU University Police is the safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors. “We will accomplish this by building stronger professional relationships within the Gardner-Webb community,” he noted. “I want parents of prospective students to recognize that Gardner-Webb University is an institution where their children will feel safe, respected, and part of a great community.”



“Chief Newcomb brings a lifetime of experience and expertise to his new role at GWU, and we are now entrusting him to lead a team of officers who will protect and serve our campus community,” affirmed Gardner-Webb President Dr. William Downs. “That is a huge responsibility, and it is one that we all take very seriously. I look forward to Ron’s leadership and to a continuation of excellence in our University Police.”

Newcomb served as an infantryman in the Army, rising to the rank of sergeant. From 1988 to 1991, he was deployed to the Middle East during Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield. He earned the Expert Infantry Badge, Army Achievement Award, Airborne Wings, and Army Commendation Medal, among other awards. Newcomb joined the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office in the early ’90s as a patrol deputy and field training officer. During his tenure there, he held several leadership positions in

training, court security, criminal investigations, and SWAT team, and retired as captain and range master/director of the Foothills Public Shooting Complex.

He has additional training in firearms instruction, physical fitness, rapid deployment, and other Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates from the N.C. Sheriffs' Educational Training and Standards Commission, as well as the N.C. Criminal Educational Training and Standards Commission. A Cleveland County native, he graduated from Shelby High School, and has an Associate Degree in criminal justice from Cleveland Community College.

*Gardner-Webb University is North Carolina's recognized leader in private, Christian higher education. A Carnegie-Classified Doctoral/Professional University, GWU is home to nine colleges and schools, 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](https://gardner-webb.edu) (<https://gardner-webb.edu>).*