

CAMPUS NEWS

Gardner-Webb Officials Announce Hiring of New Associate Vice President of Human Resources

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Sharon Hammonds Starts Feb. 21, Brings 18 Years of Experience to New Position

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University officials have announced that Sharon Hammonds of Roebuck, S.C., is the new associate vice president for Human Resources (HR). Hammonds has 18 years of experience in HR in corporate and higher education settings. She begins her duties at GWU on Feb. 21.

“I am delighted that we have now filled this important leadership position with someone who has the level of experience and strength of character as Sharon Hammonds,” shared GWU President Dr. William Downs. “There is so much that we need to modernize and professionalize in this area at Gardner-Webb, but Human Resources will always remain focused on people; in my view, Sharon has the skillset to grow HR to a level that it meets the daily needs of our thriving university while never forgetting that it’s the people who ultimately matter. Taking care of our employees is central to our institutional mission, and bringing in someone who knows how to do that is a big step forward.”



▲ Sharon
Hammonds

Since 2021, Hammonds has been the HR manager for Walmart Supply Chain and Logistics in Laurens, S.C. She served on the senior leadership team to guide programs focused on attracting and retaining talent and ensuring compliance with state and federal laws. Hammonds managed complex associate relations issues regarding policy violations related to discrimination, harassment, alcohol and drug use and retaliation for up to 900 hourly associates and salaried managers.

Hammonds stated, “In returning to higher education, I wanted to join Gardner-Webb because of its student-focused mission, Christian-centered beliefs which are ingrained in its daily culture, and its plan for educational growth and expansion.”

She added, “I understand the value of education and wanted to be a part of an organization that will support and help develop future leaders.”

Hammonds’ experience in education also includes serving as the chief of staff and operations for Meeting Street Schools in Spartanburg, S.C. In this position, she led HR functions for compliance, engagement and retention, hiring, and employee development. She also advised the leadership team and conducted investigations to facilitate resolutions for employee grievances. Hammonds led the planning and execution of the budget.

She has also worked for Venture Measurement (A Fortive Company), V2D (Vision to Destiny), Spartanburg Community College, Limestone College, and Proaxis Therapy. In these positions, she managed Human Resources. In some of the roles, she created the HR department by implementing best practices, or she developed policies and procedures across multiple facilities.

As she looks forward to joining the Gardner-Webb campus, Hammonds related, “As the Associate VP of Human Resources, I envision this role being centered around leadership collaboration, engaging dialogue, and creating proactive solutions for people and process opportunities.” She continued, “I would like to see the HR team focus on implementing recruiting strategies to attract top talent, expedite time to fill processes, and offer an informative onboarding process based on departmental

needs. We will also review retention strategies by analyzing trends and gauging campus morale to determine initiatives for greater engagement. As a component of this strategy, we will review opportunities in the area of total rewards for faculty and staff. I am excited about this new venture and joining the wonderful family of GWU.”

Hammonds has a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Clemson (S.C.) University and earned her Master of Arts in industrial-organizational psychology from the University of West Florida in Pensacola. She completed the Employee Relations Law Series at Ogletree Deakins Law Firm and Fortive Internal Investigations with Fortive Legal Team in 2018. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR).

Hammonds and her husband, Rodney, have been married for 23 years. They have two sons: Devin, a freshman in college, and Darius, a ninth-grader, who plays soccer, football and basketball. She also has a Maltipoo, Jenna, and long-haired Dachshund, Remington.

Search Committee

Conducting the national search for Gardner-Webb were:

- Dr. Anna Hamrick, Assistant Director, Hunt School of Nursing, Associate Professor, and Faculty Chair.
- Esther Porter, Interim Associate Vice President of Human Resources.
- Steve Serck, University Counsel.

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/>).