

IN MEMORIAM

Gardner-Webb Community Remembers Professor Emeritus Dr. Glenn Bottoms who Passed Away at 76

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Longtime Professor Respected his Students and Passionate About Helping Them Succeed

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Dr. Glenn Bottoms, professor emeritus of economics and management, passed away on May 12. He retired from Gardner-Webb University in 2018 after more than three decades as a professor of economics and management information systems. Before moving to Boiling Springs in 1985, Glenn taught in Canada, Georgia, and Cullowhee, N.C. He valued the relationships and Christian environment that Gardner-Webb offered. “That’s why I wanted to teach,” he once commented. “I wanted to know the students.”

Friend and colleague, Dr. Sandy van der Poel, associate professor of accounting, knew Glenn for many years. “Prior to working at GWU, I knew him from church, and later as a professor in my MBA program here at GWU,” she reflected. “As a student, I remember that he enjoyed his job immensely, cared deeply for each of his students, and had a passion for his chosen discipline in business and economics. As a colleague, I remember him as a good friend with a big heart for others, and someone that loved to laugh and enjoy life. He will always be remembered here at GWU, and he will truly be missed.”

Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, professor of economics and international business, also praised “his good friend, Glenn—he was one of the most prolific faculty members I have worked with in many years. He cared for all students. He was the first to donate a vehicle to assist international students who needed ride to Shelby and the Charlotte airport. He and his wife hosted students regularly in their home. He was also a teacher’s teacher and taught with passion. In aggregate, he mentored several who are now very successful in their chosen disciplines. He will be missed.”



▲ Dr. Glenn Bottoms

Coming from a family of educators, Glenn often discussed his passion for teaching. He believed that teaching the individual was the most important aspect of his job as a professor. His wife, Dr. Nancy Rogers Bottoms, said Glenn remembered his students by name, the year they graduated and what they did after graduating.

A post on Facebook sharing Glenn's death received more than 200 responses in a few hours. Alumni shared their memories of his humor, laughter, and love for hot dogs. Brian Riggins, a manager of commercial underwriting, wrote about taking a MBA statistics course in summer school, and he and another student didn't know Excel. Glenn met them after class for a week staying past midnight to give them a crash course in the program. Larry Durham Jr., a chief human resources officer, noted, "I met Dr. Bottoms during scholarship interviews way back when. He was my advisor and the consistent face I knew I'd see and the laugh I'd hear at football games a decade plus after finishing my masters."

Professor of Accounting Dr. Earl Godfrey also recounted Glenn's devotion not only to his students but to his advisees. "He would follow their progress and congratulate them when they performed well," Godfrey stated. "He would offer a firm but encouraging prompt if they fell behind. I used to accuse him of being a den mother to his advisees, while aspiring to pick up a few tricks from him that might cause me to do a better job with my own."

Godfrey also stated that Glenn taught the first online class at Gardner-Webb and led his students by example to push the boundaries of management information systems. "Glenn Bottoms left an indelible mark on Gardner-Webb," Godfrey observed. "We are all better off for having known him."

Glenn attended his hometown university, Emory. He and Nancy met there and married when they finished in 1969. Both taught middle school for two years and then the couple moved to Pukatawagan, a town in Manitoba, Canada. They had responded to a newspaper ad to teach junior high at a Federal Reserve school. Glenn remembers celebrating temperatures of 32 degrees because above freezing meant spring was on its way.



He completed his Master of Arts in economics at the University of Ottawa, Canada. They returned to Atlanta, Ga., in 1976, and Glenn obtained his Ph.D. in economics in 1981 from Georgia State University. During his doctoral studies, Glenn taught at Western Carolina University as an assistant professor of economics and as a visiting assistant professor of economics at West Georgia University in Carrollton.

While functioning as president and general manager of Computer Alternatives Inc. based in Asheville and Wilmington, N.C., Glenn heard about the teaching opportunity in Gardner-Webb's Broyhill School of Management. Through his years at GWU, he shared a special connection with international students, recalling how bright and full of energy they were. He and Nancy often opened their home to them. One time he organized help for a student who needed to return home to Guatemala after the death of his sister.

Glenn and Nancy were married for 54 years. She is also retired from Gardner-Webb and a professor emerita of art. Their son, Ary, has a bachelor's degree and Master of Divinity degree from Gardner-Webb and is AV, printing and bindery coordinator for the Dover Library. Also surviving are his daughter Christine A. Robinson and grandchildren, Ebony Verdelle Apolonia Wilson, James Nari Kalif Mayo, Ira Glenn Bottoms IV and Carolynn Elizabeth Bottoms.

A celebration of life service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 20, at Boiling Springs Baptist Church with Rev. Keith Dixon officiating. The family will receive friends following the service in the Family Life Center. View the full obituary, [here \(https://www.cecilmburtonfuneralhome.com/obituary/ira-bottoms\)](https://www.cecilmburtonfuneralhome.com/obituary/ira-bottoms).

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/).