

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

5-27-2016

Transferring to Gardner-Webb was Right Decision for Softball Player

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Transferring to Gardner-Webb was Right Decision for Softball Player

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/transferring-to-gardner-webb-was-right-decision-for-softball-player/

Office of University
Communications

May 27, 2016

Studies Prepare Christa Fullwood ('10) to Pursue Career in Nursing

Searching for a college that felt more like a family, softball player Christa Fullwood ('10) contacted Coach Tom Cole at Gardner-Webb University. Her best friend and former teammate was there, and college was the first time they hadn't played together in over 10 years.

"I called Coach Cole and discussed the possibility of coming to Gardner-Webb, and he was open to it," recalled Fullwood, a native of Wilmington, N.C. "I wanted to go to a smaller school where I was going to know my professors and they were going to know me. I didn't want to be just another face in the crowd. I also wanted to go to a Division I school to play softball, and Gardner-Webb seemed like the perfect match for me."

She transferred as a sophomore and discovered the University had everything she was looking for—the encouragement of professors, the promise of new friendships and the chance to grow in her faith. "I met some of the most incredible people during my time at Gardner-Webb," Fullwood shared. "My softball team was amazing. I also met some of my closest friends while at GWU, many of whom I still talk to regularly, even though we are miles apart now. I was blessed to play for a God-fearing coach while at Gardner-Webb. He led us on the field, but far more importantly, he led us in faith. Every week began with a devotional on Sunday, and it didn't matter if it was a practice day or a game day, devotions were a part of our day."

Her professors helped her ask tough questions, and ultimately she decided to change her major. "I came wanting to be a biology major," she explained. "I took Developmental Psychology my first semester with Dr. Willie Fleming (former professor of psychology and counseling) and fell in love with the subject. He made learning so much fun and delivered the content in a way that everyone could understand. He was dedicated to the class and even held study sessions in the evenings. Not only was Dr. Fleming a great teacher, he was a wonderful role model to many students at Gardner-Webb."

After taking classes with Dr. Dianne Sykes, associate professor of sociology and Dr. Robert Munoz, professor of sociology, she chose to double major in sociology. "Dr. Sykes was so passionate about the material, she just made learning fun," Fullwood assessed. "She gave

me the opportunity to explore the way I thought about the world, and express it during class. Dr. Munoz brought so much knowledge about the content to class. These two teachers are such a dynamic duo and really make learning personal.”

In her classes, she had opportunities to develop her critical-thinking skills and discovered useful and relevant information. “Dr. David Carscaddon (dean, School of Psychology and Counseling) challenged the way I thought, and for that I am forever thankful,” Fullwood observed. “Dr. James Morgan (professor of psychology) gave me the opportunity to do an independent study my senior year in neuropsychology. To this day, I still use information that I learned from that class. And the late Mike Roebuck (former athletics administrator), kept me on track to graduate through my flip-flops in majors. He was an outstanding man and cared for student athletes as if they were his own kids.”

She also took sign language, which helped her communicate on the softball field, and she still finds useful. “I cannot tell you how many times I have benefited from the ability to sign,” she affirmed. “It was fun in college because a lot of my teammates took sign language so we were able to sign to each other on the field and other teams had no idea what we were talking about. I have had several other opportunities to use the ASL I learned in college.”

After graduating from Gardner-Webb, Fullwood completed her Master of Business Administration at Frostburg (Md.) State University where she did a graduate assistantship coaching softball. She came back to Gardner-Webb and worked as an assistant softball coach for a year then realized it was time to pursue a degree in nursing. “I have always wanted to go into the medical field, I just took a detour getting there,” Fullwood reflected. “I’ve enjoyed the path that God has led me down, getting my MBA, and coaching softball at Frostburg, as well as my alma mater, and just experiencing life. I decided to go into nursing this past year when my grandfather passed away. He meant the world to me, and the nurses that day made one of the worst days of my life bearable. I hope that I can impact families’ lives one day, the same way those nurses did for me.”

Everything she learned at Gardner-Webb—in the classroom and out, on the field or off—has enhanced her nursing studies at Duke University. “Psychology taught me to question why individuals do the things they do and sociology, to question why society as a whole does the things they do,” she related. “This is important in nursing and reminds me that people come to us from many different backgrounds and have their own stories. The study habits I gained have definitely stayed with me as well. Playing softball for Coach Cole prepared me for life. I learned the importance of hard work, dedication, and being on time for everything. I still get a little anxious when I show up to something on time, as opposed to 15 minutes early.”

After spending her first year at the wrong college, Gardner-Webb turned out to be her perfect match. “I would love for everyone to have the same wonderful college experience that I did at Gardner-Webb,” she offered. “I met some of my best friends there. The professors are extremely knowledgeable and care about you as a student, but more importantly as a person. Go, visit Gardner-Webb, and ask a lot of questions. If you are looking for an outstanding university where your faith will grow, the professors know your name, and the campus is beautiful and ever changing, Gardner-Webb is for you!”