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### GWU Physician Assistant Program Helps Student Achieve Longtime Goal

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# GWU Physician Assistant Program Helps Student Achieve Longtime Goal

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Office of University  
Communications

January 19, 2016

## *Joel Stiles ('16) Feels Like He's 'Living the Dream'*

Joel Stiles, a member of the first GWU cohort, dreamed of becoming a Physician Assistant (PA) for several years.

In his previous job with a national home infusion provider working with patients in their homes, Stiles had an opportunity to work with several PAs. They impressed him with the care they were able to provide.

“I decided to make a career change and was interested in pursuing a profession as a PA,” Stiles explained. “Due to prior commitments in life and five children, I had to put that dream on hold. After much life planning and preparations, I was finally accepted to the Gardner-Webb PA school and here I am – living the dream.”

Stiles believes coming to GWU, which was close to home, was the right choice.

“Having now been through four rotations and talking to other PA students, I’m very pleased with the program at Gardner-Webb,” he observed. “I don’t think I could have had a better PA school education and environment to achieve success.”

The clinical rotations test everything he learned during his classroom studies.

“After your first couple days in clinical, you settle into the routine and start interviewing and examining patients,” he said. “You then present the patient to your preceptor (medical supervisor) and develop a diagnosis, differential diagnoses and a treatment plan.”

Surgery has been his favorite rotation. “There is never a dull moment,” he shared. “Human anatomy at its best – the overwhelming amazement of God’s creation.”