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Office of University Communications

April 10, 2014

Trio Makes Gardner-Webb a Second Home

By: Alyssa Gutierrez, Communications Intern

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Family is one of the most important bonds a person can have in life, and for the Bennett brothers, nothing rings more true. Hailing from Franklin, Tenn., Zach, a junior and his freshman brothers, Alex and Andy, all call Gardner-Webb home during the school year and are beginning to leave their mark at GWU.

Andy, Zach, & Alex
Bennett

Zach, who was the first Bennett to step on campus, transferred from The Citadel, a military college located in Charleston, S.C., in January 2013. The eldest Bennett wrestled during his time at The Citadel, and decided to join the team here at GWU, paving the way for his younger brothers to do the same. After visiting the campus and falling in love with the small school, small town feel, fraternal twins Alex and Andy also decided to commit to Gardner-Webb and join their brother in Boiling Springs.

The brothers, who got their start wrestling at a young age at the Williamson County Wrestling Club (Tenn.), say that having their siblings on the same team is nothing new to them. “We grew up wrestling together at Williamson,” said Andy. “Then in high school we were all on the team it was cool to hear ‘Bennett after Bennett after Bennett’ coming up next.”

“I thought about going to a big school because I am a social guy,” said Alex. “But I thought it would be cool to go to a smaller school and know a lot of people, and I loved the wrestling coaches and guys on the team.”

With the addition of the younger Bennett brothers, GWU wrestling has continued the tradition of keeping family members on the team. There have been cousins and even a set of twins in the past, but the Bennetts are the first threesome to ever wrestle for the Runnin’ Bulldogs at one time.

“I guess things had to change when we came in,” said Andy, jokingly. “The coaches used to call Zach just ‘Bennett, but that turned to ‘Zackie B’ and they call Alex ‘Ally B’, and I’m just Andy B.”

The brothers are each others biggest supporters in matches against other schools, but when it comes to wrestling each other they tend to disagree on whom the best really is. Alex competes at the 157-weight class but Andy and Zach both compete at 184, which adds to the sibling rivalry. “Oh, I would destroy him,” said Zach of brother Andy, with a chuckle and smile. “If the question is ‘Can I beat him?’ Then the answer is ‘Yes, everyday!’”

The Bennetts, especially the twins, have also involved themselves in other aspects of student life. In addition to wrestling at the Division I level, Alex and Andy serve in the Student Government Association (SGA) as freshman class president and vice-president, respectively. With SGA’s permission, the twins have also started a weekly video news segment called the “The Bulldog Bite.” The twins write, film and edit the show to deliver GWU’s upcoming events in the most informational and entertaining way possible. Alex and Andy have received positive feedback from the show, which is distributed through the Student Activities office and on the show’s Twitter profile (@TheBulldogBite), but they want it to grow and reach more of the student body.

“We did a show like this in high school and I thought it would be beneficial for Gardner-Webb students to hear the news,” said

Zach, Alex, & Andy Bennett with Kyle Blevins

Andy. “I think that people are more likely to let it sink in if they can hear it and watch it.”

With all three brothers majoring in Communications and New Media with concentrations in video and film, they definitely see a future working together after school. “I think we could definitely be doing something together with video and film,” said Zach. “Our father has always worked on video editing and that is where we picked it up.”

Although all three brothers may not have planned to go to college together, it has seemed they all ended up in the right place. The Bennetts have embraced Gardner-Webb and look forward to their remaining time together on campus.

“At first, I thought having my younger brothers come to the same college would be weird,” said Zach. “But after the first couple weeks it just began to feel like home with them here. Now I can say it’s pretty cool to have them here with me.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University’s purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).