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GWU and YMCA create close friends



Photo by Joy Marinelli

GWU student/YMCA volunteer basketball coach Tripp Graziano and player Turner Almond join the team huddle for a group cheer.

Joy Marinelli
Pilot photo editor

The score was close, only 26-24.

The crowd, mostly parents, cheered loudly, each side hoping to assist the ball into the basket by voicing their support.

The players struggled and fought to gain the advantage. The whistle blew —time out.

The teams ran to the sidelines and looked up at their coaches for further direction.

Gardner-Webb students, Tripp Graziano and Jake Lehmann, gathered the team around them and started going over the next game plan.

Lehmann explained a new play while Graziano encouraged each player to keep up the defense and the good work. The 11- and 12-year-old boys carefully listened, then gathered in the huddle before running out on the court again.

It's basketball season at the Shelby YMCA.

Three hundred and thirty kids, ranging from age three to 15, have been divided up into teams. After practicing for an hour each week

since November, the teams began their season in early January.

The coaches were just as excited as the kids. "I love working with the kids, and I've done it for three years [coaching]," said Mike Shade, another Gardner-Webb student and volunteer coach for the YMCA.

"It combines my love for basketball and my love of kids."

The YMCA's Sports Coordinator, Ty Oliver, said that Gardner-Webb and the YMCA have been working together the past few years on various programs. Cam Corder, the YMCA CEO, started the Shelby YMCA from scratch.

Then Corby Hangline, a Gardner-Webb graduate, was hired to work as the Sports Coordinator. He has been responsible for 80 percent of the programs presently offered.

Oliver said the YMCA has seen a continual increase in its membership. There are 10 to 12 thousand members.

The move to the new building two and a half years ago has allowed the YMCA to offer more opportunities.

Throughout the growth, Gardner-Webb has been there to

assist the YMCA. Since Oliver has been working as Sports Coordinator, there have been four interns from Gardner-Webb.

Now that it is basketball season, four students from GWU volunteered to coach teams. "It's really awesome that they volunteered," said Oliver. "They approached me."

The volunteers had to stay over into their Christmas break in order to go to all the practices, he explained. "That means a lot to the kids, especially to stay over at the holidays," Oliver continued.

For the GWU students, coaching is an opportunity for them to be involved with sports. "I like working with kids...I have more fun than they do," said Graziano. "I want to coach when I get older and this gives back to the community."

The YMCA/GWU partnership will continue in the future. Oliver said that he is working with GWU women's basketball coach, Edie McCurley, to set up a regular internship program for Gardner-Webb students.

"We work with Gardner-Webb to see what we can do for them and what they can do for us," Oliver said.

Female student attacked on Broad River Greenway

Monica Houser
Pilot ad manager

A female Gardner-Webb student was attacked at the Broad River Greenway at 4:15 p.m. on Jan. 28. Her attacker, a 34-year-old local man, was arrested by the Boiling Springs Police Department on Feb. 5.

"It was a beautiful day with lots of people around—the middle of the afternoon," said Mike McCauley, who was running at the Greenway when the attack happened.

Word of the incident has raised questions among students, especially females, about safety.

"It [the attack] happened

in the middle of the day; it wasn't even at night," said a female GWU student.

The assailant was charged with first degree kidnapping, a Class D felony punishable by up to 40 years in prison. According to North Carolina crime statistics, the average sentence for this charge is 12 years.

The attacker was also charged with assault on a female, which is classified as a misdemeanor.

McCauley, who chased the man in his truck, said that students should always be aware of their surroundings.

"This is a good example that anything can happen to anybody, regardless of where

you are or what time you are there," said McCauley.

Both Boiling Springs Police and Campus Police noted that awareness is the key to staying safe.

"We've got the same problems as everybody else, we just control them a little bit better," said Boiling Springs Police Chief James Clary.

Campus Police Officer Jennifer Archer stated that awareness is one of the most important tools for promoting safety.

"When I heard about the attack, my first reaction was that everyone takes for granted that nothing happens here, but it does," said Archer.

She also emphasized that

being prepared is one of the best ways to ward off any possible attack.

"Walk confidently and be aware of your surroundings," Archer said.

"Think about what you are going to do if you are attacked beforehand. If you know what you are going to do, it's more likely you will do it," she added.

English Professor, David Parker, teaches an Aikido class from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays in the wrestling building as an opportunity to learn self-defense techniques. This service is free to all Gardner-Webb students.

Campus Police Safety Tips:

- never walk or run alone, especially at night
- carry a personal alarm, like a whistle
- carry a cell phone in case of emergencies
- avoid isolated areas
- if you think you are being followed, go to a crowded area
- be aware of surroundings
- always let someone know where you are going and what time you'll be back
- always lock doors
- check out self-defense or safety classes