

Contact: George Kantelis
Communications Manager
gkantelis@alphachihonor.org

Alpha Chi National College
Honor Society

8 Shackleford Plaza, Ste. 200
Little Rock, Arkansas 72211
AlphaChiHonor.org
800.477.4225



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PRESS RELEASE

Gardner-Webb University Student Team Wins \$2,500 Prize in Alpha Chi Collaborative Research Competition

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Alpha Chi National College Honor Society is pleased to announce that the North Carolina Zeta Chapter from Gardner-Webb University recently secured the \$2,500 second place prize in the 2023 Trisha Yarbrough Collaborative Research Competition for their compelling project titled, "Environmental Impact of Waste at Gardner-Webb University: A Proposal for Change."

Held in conjunction with Alpha Chi's national convention, this competition carried the theme, "Action for Our Atmosphere" and was judged by a multidisciplinary panel of professors who assessed seven collegiate teams submitting a written research paper, a formal poster for public display, and a live national convention presentation that included a question-and-answer period involving both judges and audience members.

The Gardner-Webb University student team, consisting of Alyssa Church, a senior accounting major, Alexandra Haasser, a senior biology (biomedical sciences) major, Delaney Willette, an MBA student, Trevor Wyatt, a senior mathematics education major, and Anna Yeater, a junior economics and finance major, collaborated on a project to examine the waste production at their institution and its effect on climate change. To achieve this, the team members leveraged their individual expertise: Haasser conducted an experiment demonstrating the lasting impact of waste emissions, Wyatt gathered data and provided numerical evaluations and mathematical interpretations, Church and Yeater conducted a cost-benefit analysis, and Willette student analyzed successful waste management practices in businesses and created a modified business plan for the university. The entire team conducted interviews with dining services staff and financial representatives to gather information on current practices. Their ultimate goal was to encourage positive change at their university and other institutions across the United States, while also raising public awareness on the long-term impact of waste on the environment.

Alpha Chi's executive director, Lara Noah, commended the chapter stating, "The Gardner-Webb teams never fail to exceed expectations. Competing in Alpha Chi's most complex and ambitious competition almost every year since 2014, NC Zeta Chapter Advisor Dr. June Hobbs again mentored the GWU team to great heights. This year's team not only studied a campus issue in

real time, but their research also informed the development of a compelling set of solutions that can be presented to administrators. Their efforts embody the kind of collaborative research and multidisciplinary problem-solving skills that we try to encourage in our Alpha Chi scholars.”

As a multidisciplinary honor society, Alpha Chi fosters collaboration among student members from various academic fields, and this annual competition is one way the society actively promotes interdisciplinary undergraduate research. It encourages students to focus on creating solutions for real-world issues, thus exemplifying the society's long-standing commitment to making "scholarship effective for good."

Alpha Chi National College Honor Society invites membership to juniors, seniors, and graduate students from all disciplines in the top ten percent of their classes at its member institutions. Chartered on more than 300 campuses nationwide, chapters induct approximately 10,000 students annually. Since the Society's founding in 1922, Alpha Chi members, charged with upholding the tenets of Truth and Character, have dedicated themselves to “making scholarship effective for good.” Alpha Chi is a certified member in good standing of the Association of College Honor Societies.

For more information on Alpha Chi National College Honor Society and the Collaborative Research Competition, please visit www.alphachihonor.org/collaborative-research-competition.

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