

From STAR STUDENT to TEACHING FELLOW

Burke Co. grad continues success as UNC Chapel Hill

By Leah Smith
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It only took a few good mentors to steer her in the right direction.

Burke County High School class of 2003 honor graduate Christy Webb is sure of this.

"I had some really wonderful professors at Mercer who really changed the way I saw the world," Webb says. "I decided my junior year that I wanted to pursue a career in higher education."

She did not simply pursue that career; she earned it.

As an undergraduate at Mercer University, Webb was awarded several scholarships.

"I was awarded a Presidential Scholarship at Mercer, which covered my tuition for my four years there," Webb says.

She followed that scholarship up with two others after graduating: the Louie D. Newton Award for academic achievement and service to the Mercer community and the Outstanding History Major Award.

But her academic success did not start at Mercer. Even as a teenager, Webb showed stunning academic promise, as she graduated as third honor graduate in her class and was crowned the 2003 STAR student at BCHS.

Fast-forward 11 years and Webb is still wowing the academic community.

While pursuing her Master's degree in English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Webb was awarded the Doctoral Merit Fellowship, which covered her first-year of graduate study. She also received several other scholarships through the honor societies Phi Eta Sigma and Omicron Delta Kappa.

These days, Webb is writing her dissertation for her PhD at UNC Chapel Hill while completing a graduate fellowship in Washington in publishing.

Amid all of her scholarly success Webb

has not forgotten where she comes from and reminisces fondly over her time at BCHS.

"Some of my favorite memories are probably from trips with the tennis team or working through the night on projects with my AP European History cohort," she recalls.

Although her stellar high school performance was the result of a collaborative effort by BCHS teachers, Webb credits one teacher in particular with igniting her love for learning.

"Without a doubt history teacher Karen Reeves has a way of making every one of her students feel like her favorite," Webb says. "She really fostered my intellectual curiosity in high school and beyond."

Webb hopes to inspire students like Reeves inspired her as she teaches classes in writing, American literature, children's literature, film analysis, and GRE and LSAT prep courses.

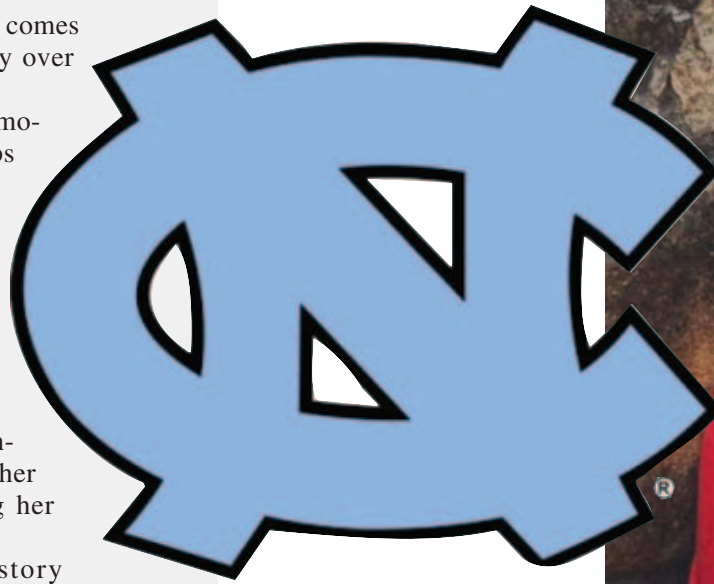
Although Webb's plate is pretty full these days with her academic research and responsibilities as a Teaching Fellow and PhD Candidate, she still finds a way to maintain her personal life.

"In my free time I play tennis and cook," she says. "I also love to travel—I'm looking forward to going to Austria in December. And, much of my free time these days has been spent wedding planning."

Indeed, the future is bright for Webb. Ten years from now she hopes to still be doing what she loves.

"I'd love to be teaching at a college or working at a university in some other capacity," she says.

The sky seems to be the limit where Webb is concerned and one thing is certain; wherever she finds herself, the Burke County STAR student is sure to shine.



Christy Webb, Doctoral candidate at UNC Chapel Hill

HER DISSERTATION

Webb's dissertation combines her History degree with her advanced studies in English as she creates what is known in academia as a literary history by tracing the lives of the Hentz family.

"I trace the lives and writings of popular 19th century novelist Caroline Lee Hentz," Webb says, "her son, a physician who treated slaves; and her daughter, who moved to Brazil as part of the Confederados movement after the Civil War."



FLASHBACK

Back at Burke County High, Christy was voted Best All Around by her graduating class. She competed on the tennis, math and debate teams and was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, French Club and Student Council. At left, she is pictured as a senior in the BCHS Kodiak year-book.

