STUDENT PROFILES

Contact Kurtis Hiatt at 202-735-6361 or 202-994-6460 to interview any of the below George Washington University graduates.

• **Musadiq Bidar (B.A., Journalism and Mass Communication):** Musadiq began his journey to GW many miles away in his hometown of Kabul, Afghanistan. Forced to flee after an attack from the Taliban, Musadiq experienced the tragedy of war and abject poverty in a manner many could not imagine. Musadiq is an aspiring journalist who has held internships with top national institutions, and he is passionate about media as a means to educate and empower social change.

• **Maddison Bruer (B.A., International Affairs):** As a teenager, Maddison, the daughter of a single mother who got in trouble with the law, found herself living on the streets. Maddison was able to come to GW with the support of Power & Promise, which aims to provide all qualified students with the means to attend the university. She participated in the Women’s Leadership Program and worked passionately to raise funds for Power & Promise. Last year, Maddison received an award that supports students who undertake voluntary public service. Seizing the opportunity to help her home community, she returned to Oklahoma to work at the homeless shelter where she lived growing up. She will work at Deloitte after graduation.

• **Karen Nestor (Ed.D., Educational Administration and Policy Studies):** At 67 years old, Karen Nestor is a lifelong student. In 1970, Karen wanted to apply to a doctoral program but knew she needed funding in order to do so. She called the program head to find out about getting a fellowship and learned that the program she was interested in would never give a fellowship to a woman. Karen put aside her plans and continued a career in education, community activism and philanthropy. Years later, her husband encouraged her to go back to school, and while Karen didn’t think any school would accept someone her age, the GW Graduate School of Human Development (GSEHD) was happy to add her to its roster of students. Her focus while at GSEHD, which looks at how people shape and reshape over time, ties in well with her story. After graduation, she will continue doing research for nonprofits.

• **Timothy Rabolt (B.B.A., with a concentration in Sport Management):** Timothy is a person in long-term recovery. For him that means that he hasn’t had a drink or a drug since April 9, 2011. In his freshman year, Tim overcame thoughts of relapse and suicide to start Students for Recovery, a peer-to-peer support group for students recovering from mental health disorders. He served on the board of the Association of Recovery in Higher Education. He believes that supporting students with mental health disorders begins at a community level and knows that his passion lies with collegiate recovery. After graduation he will attend graduate school at GW.
• Rich Ruiz (M.A., Leadership and Education Development):
Rich is this year's student speaker. The son of immigrants from Mexico, Rich struggled with the English language, failing the first grade. During his senior year in high school, he became a father and worked a midnight shift to provide for his son. Though homeless at the time, he succeeded. Upon graduation, he enlisted into the Marine Corps and married his high school sweetheart. While in the military, he became the first in his family to earn a college degree. He served in Afghanistan, where he was decorated for heroism in combat. Upon graduation, he will teach leadership and ethics at the United States Naval Academy.

-GW-