

# Amy Perko speaks about athlete and non-athlete divide

By Andrew Glass  
STAFF WRITER

When Milner Hall Director Amanda Baum first came to Guilford College, she felt that something was amiss.

"I came here in September, and I noticed right off the bat that there was a little bit of a disconnect between athletics and the rest of campus," said Baum. "When I started talking about the divide, it was amazing how many students also felt that way."

"There are almost two micro-communities," said sopho-

more Rebecca Marasco, a member of the women's lacrosse team.

Baum was influential in the decision to bring a member of the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletics Administrators' Speakers Bureau to speak at Guilford.

"I wanted to help us all try to come together and see the importance of developing ourselves not only in the classroom or on the field, but in the community as well," said Baum.

On March 3, Executive Director of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics Amy Perko spoke in Bryan Jr. Auditorium on how to intermix college sports and the community.

"(Athletics should be) a part of the institution rather than apart from the institution," said Perko.

According to Perko, one of the reasons for the athlete and non-athlete divide is common preconceptions held about athletics in general.

In Division I athletics, the spending is increasing at twice the rate as academic spending in colleges and universities across the nation. Perko said that although Guilford is a Division III school, these statistics affect the view of Guilford athletics.

"The money creates a divide in what athletics is about," said Perko. "Perceptions about Division I athletics seep into faculty, staff and student perceptions about Division III athletics."

Another factor Perko brought up is the social isolation of athletes and non-athletes. She explained that athletes do so many activities together that it is hard to socialize and get involved outside of the athletic circle.

"When you are an athlete, there's a big pressure that being athletes is the one commitment you are allowed to make," said Marasco. "You feel that you always have to be with your team; that's your way of bonding, that's your way of knowing

people."

Perko spoke of the need for athletes and non-athletes to interact to bridge the gap between them.

"You have lots of common experience that you may not be able to see right now," said Perko. "You have to step outside your comfort zone."

Senior and economics major David Thomson, a member of the baseball team, believes that Perko's advice will help close the gap.

"It would be beneficial in the long run if our coaches or other people forced us to try things that we would not have tried on our own otherwise," said Thomson.

One discussion point on how to improve in this area was Serendipity. Many teams have had games during Serendipity weekend, making some athletes unable to attend the campus event.

"There has been a lot of discussion about integrating the Serendipity events so athletes can attend," said Baum.

In the end, it comes down to how the issue is discussed and acted upon by members of the Guilford community.

"I believe we continue to perpetuate these differences among students by referring to 'divides,'" said Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow in an e-mail interview. "Continued discussion of a 'divide' will only exacerbate differences among our students. Creating a false dichotomy of 'us versus them' is easier than truly dealing with difference."

"It is a two-way street where athletes can try to find activities where non-athletes are going, and then non-athletes can come out and support (athletes)," said first-year sports management major Skyelar Ettin, a member of the men's basketball team. "Once you develop that bond, you are going to want to support the other."



DARYN LANE/GUILFORDIAN

Executive Director of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics **Amy Perko** discusses how to incorporate sports in the college community in Bryan Jr. Auditorium on March 3.

## CTCL

### CTCL writer visits Guilford for new edition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CTCL Executive Director Marty O'Connell in an e-mail interview. "The 40 current member-colleges support the website, resources for students and counselors, and enable the message of a 'student-centered' search process that leads to the chance to develop life-long learners."

Both the book and the organization have impacted admissions at Guilford, attracting students who seem particularly interested in the institution, according to Assistant Director of Admissions Nancy Riemer.

"Students who seem to find us through (the book/organization) seem to be looking for a school like Guilford," said Riemer. "With those students, (Guilford) seems like a natural fit."

"I've been surprised at the number of prospective students that say they read about us in 'Colleges that Change Lives,'" said senior Daniel Hood, who works as a tour guide. "Families that have that background ask more piercing questions. They actually want instances of personal experience from tour guides rather than just basic information. It's nice to have those families."

Guilford has also become more widely known because of the book and CTCL.

"More than anything, (the book/organization) has brought Guilford into the lives of families that would not know about us any other way," said Assistant Director of Admissions Thayne Heggie. "Students not necessarily familiar with North Carolina and the rank of schools here can know what we stand for. Guilford is such a hidden gem that a lot of people don't know about."

Though there is no guarantee that Guilford will be included in the new edition, the Admissions Office staff is optimistic.

"I sure hope we make it into the new edition," said Riemer. "I certainly expect we would."

117 of the 151 survey respondents also said that Guilford has changed their lives. Hood reflected on his own experiences.

"Guilford has been life-altering for me," said Hood. "I left high school with low self-confidence and self-esteem. Now I'm in my last semester, I'm writing my senior thesis, I've applied to graduate school and I can't believe how far I've come. The atmosphere here, the professors and the solidarity among the student body combine to make this perfect storm of awesome and wonderment."

Hood's words echoed those of Pope.

"(Guilford is) a stimulating place where the teachers care, where they expect a lot and where they provide the encouragement as well as the challenge to get young people to do things they had no idea they could do," wrote Pope in "Colleges that Change Lives."

Professor and Director of Peace and Conflict Studies Vernie Davis went to Kalamazoo College, another one of the institutions featured in Pope's book.

"I went to my college because of the traits that would later lead it to be featured in 'Colleges that Change Lives,'" said Davis. "I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing today if I hadn't gone there. I wouldn't even have considered that I could be doing it. There's definitely something about (the featured) colleges that set them apart."

Vice President for Enrollment Services Randy Doss commented on how Guilford's inclusion in "Colleges that Change Lives" helps set it apart from other colleges.

"There are 4,000 four-year colleges in the United States," said Doss. "To be in a book with only 40 of them is a pretty amazing thing."

## COMMUNITY SENATE UPDATE

UPCOMING

March 23 meeting

Heat bus: current situation, problems and solutions

Social honor code

IN PROGRESS

Community senate approved governing Bylaws for Student Community Senate of Guilford College

Contact:  
senate@guilford.edu or  
Senate President  
Dana Hamdan  
hamdands@guilford.edu  
Community Senate meets every  
Wednesday from 7-8 p.m.,  
Boren lounge,  
Founders Hall

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AND INPUT