

## Chick-fil-A's sponsorship violates core values, should end

LONG TIME SPORTS SPONSOR CHICK-FIL-A'S RECENT STATEMENTS ARE FOUND PROBLEMATIC

I chose to attend Guilford because of those seven flags. You know, the ones that mark our core values and the principles we, as an institution, claim to embody.



BY CATE SCHURZ  
WORLD & NATION EDITOR

I was hooked on equality, diversity, integrity and the rest with just one stroll down the campus front path. I was told those banners meant something. I was told they were something greater than words, that they were a way of life. Hell, the website even says, "This is a college with a strong identity, ethical commitments and a vision for the future."

Like many others, I was saddened this summer to learn of Chick-fil-A's outrageous contributions to organizations like Exodus International, working to "cure" LGBT people one at a time or to the Family Research Council, which spent \$25,000 lobbying the U.S. Congress to allow Uganda's "Kill the Gays" law. I turned to my family and said, "Guilford students will never continue supporting the Chick-fil-A near campus after this news."

But little did I know, Guilford has been supporting Chick-fil-A and, as a result, its skewed values, for the past 10 years.

On Aug. 23, the Guilford Beacon released a statement explaining that Chick-fil-A has supported our institution "with small cash gifts and products. The last paid sponsorship was in the 2010-11 academic year for \$750." The school also returns Chick-fil-A's support by hanging the company's banner on campus and holding events with the company.

Now, I feel betrayed by Guilford College. I was led to believe that our core value of 'integrity' was worth something, that

'community' outweighed the importance of funding and publicity and that 'equality' and 'diversity' are, in practice, synonymous.

If you've ever had the core values echoed in your ear, you may be feeling betrayed by Guilford, too. As public knowledge, it has been no secret to Guilford that Chick-fil-A donates exorbitant sums to groups that actively fight for the degradation of human rights. Yet, all the while, Guilford has twisted our Quaker name with that of a bigoted corporation.

Tell me, Guilford, since Chick-fil-A has proven to be so integral to our athletic, academic and financial communities, where are their core value flags? Should we start raising banners with slurs about gays' inability to successfully raise children? Or perhaps we should adopt the Chick-fil-A cow as our second mascot and allow him to hand out anti-gay literature at sporting events.

Well, I'm not having it.

The Guilford administration has buried the truth long enough and I will no longer stand by and witness Guilford's efforts to support a company that does not support my own peers.

"If one believes that Chick-fil-A represents a devaluing of others, then there is a responsibility to 'speak truth' to that concern," says Max Carter, director of the Friends Center and campus ministry coordinator.

My truth?

It is hypocritical of Guilford to be in cahoots with a company that donates millions to organizations with missions to criminalize homosexuality or legislate death as the penalty for loving the person of your choice. I am disappointed in my educational institution, my administration and those who have worked to fund athletics and various programs on campus without integrity.

**"I will...do my best to offer impartial leadership to the group while paying very close attention to the Quaker Testimonies that guide our Core Values and to the sentiments of our community with regard to issues of gay marriage and gay rights."**

Aaron Fetrow, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

But with this disappointment comes forgiveness. Our community now has an opportunity to right our wrongs and reclaim our dedication to each other's rights.

The administration has thoughtfully created a method of discussion and a means to confront the issues posed by this sponsorship. Student Senate President Tim Leisman '13 told the community on Wednesday that this issue "must be resolved by homecoming" and that the committee "will consider (Chick-fil-A's) activism while being sensitive to certain topics."

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow's email response mirrored this sentiment. When asked about his role in the upcoming process he said, "I will ... do my best to offer impartial leadership to the group while paying very careful attention to the Quaker Testimonies that guide our Core Values and to the sentiments of our community with regard to issues of gay marriage and gay rights."

Various corners of campus are in opposition to the athletic program's sponsorship deal with Chick-fil-A.

A Guilford alum, former athlete and now a Guilford administrative worker said in confidence, "I think the core values need to outweigh this sponsorship. I never really saw the effects of Chick-fil-A's support as a baseball player, but I don't think their values align with ours at all."

His sentiments speak to my own.

This article is not an attack, but rather a call to action. If you are a student and you are outraged or confused by the actions of our beloved college, then I challenge you to speak your truth.

This is not an issue about the rights of corporations, nor is this a discussion about a CEO's right to voice his opinion or a company's right to spend its money as it chooses.

Now, this is about us.

This is about Guilford and values and being honest and true to ourselves. This is about maintaining the message that brought so many students like me to Guilford College. Respect for all students, in all circumstances, should be held above all else.

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Anonymous Guilford Alum

### This Week's

## STAFF EDITORIAL

# You owe it to yourself to get involved

It is the start of a new year at Guilford. Some of us are experiencing everything for the first time. Others, with familiarity. No matter your age, no matter your established roots, this is a fresh start. A blank canvas. So many opportunities are placed in front of us, and now is the perfect time to pick up the metaphorical brush and paint yourself in the image of your choosing.

Our school is faced with a serious budget crisis. Federal and state funding have been taken away, staff have been let go and hours of operation have been cut. We're seeing this firsthand.

Yet despite these shortcomings, Guilford is unwavering in its decision to provide any and all financial aid to eligible students. The College continues to provide incredible opportunities to its student body, which is a Godsend in this economy.

Take a look at the Grill. While we can complain about a lack of meal variety on Saturdays, students should also keep in mind that a budget cut in cafeteria alternatives means that this school is not cutting funds elsewhere.

Our clubs, activities and programs remain intact, and are stronger (budget-wise) this year than in previous years.

Guilford has added a January term, and as a result has increased study abroad opportunities.

The Bryan Series continues to bring in some of the most influential men and women from across the globe.

We as students can give back to Guilford by taking advantage of the amazing opportunities provided to us.

Take courses that have nothing to do with your major. Explore the J-Term possibilities. Establish lasting relationships with peers and professors. Expand your worldview by studying abroad. Join clubs, attend school-sponsored programs. Learn new things. Find new passions.

This is a unique time in your life where your full-time job is to experiment, explore, learn and grow. So do your job and have fun with it.

REFLECTING GUILFORD COLLEGE'S CORE QUAKER VALUES, THE TOPICS AND CONTENT OF STAFF EDITORIALS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH CONSENSUS OF ALL 15 EDITORS.

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