

Whitt/Kieffer firm hired to help presidential search

BY BRYAN DOOLEY
SENIOR WRITER & DIVERSITY COORDINATOR

Matchmaker, matchmaker, make me a match.

Surprisingly, this line from the famous musical "Fiddler on the Roof" aptly describes the current stage of Guilford College's presidential search.

The Board of Trustees has now selected the Whitt/Kieffer executive search firm to support the search process.

"Our key consultant is Katherine 'Kate' Haley, Ph.D., who was president of Gettysburg College and Whittier College prior to becoming a search consultant," said Carole Bruce, vice chair of the presidential search committee. "Kate will partner with Lucy Leske, the head of Whitt/Kieffer's higher education team."

According to its website, Whitt/Kieffer was established 40 years ago and is the only executive search firm of the top 10 executive search firms that focuses on organizations that help people — such as nonprofits, hospitals and educational institutions.

Haley and Leske visited campus on Oct. 8, 10 and 11 and held an open forum in order to gauge students' perspectives, hopes and dreams for the new president.

During the meeting, Haley shared her personal background and insight on presidential searches.

"I have participated in about 26 presidential searches and have been president of two colleges, one of which is Whittier, a Quaker college," said Haley. "While I am not Quaker, you could say I have respect for the intellectual tradition and thought process of Quakerism."

According to Bruce, executive search firms receive as compensation a percentage of the final negotiated salary awarded to the candidate who is finally selected. She was not at liberty to say what that percentage would be for the Guilford search, but the standard range in the industry is between 25-33 percent.

Now that Guilford's presidential search committee has

formed and received its charge, Whitt/Kieffer awaits a job description for the potential candidate.

"Once a detailed job description is approved by both the search committee and the Board of Trustees, the firm uses it to filter and match the best candidates to that description," said Haley. "We take two to three months to recruit and personally interview candidates based on that description."

The search firm's interview process normally includes interviewing seven to 10 candidates in a confidential

"...(W)e would like someone who 'gets' our core values. I would not rule out a non-Quaker, but I would hope that our choices reflect some background or experience with the Quaker tradition."

Kami Rowan, associate professor of music and presidential search committee member

location and then narrowing the list down to three possible candidates. The Board of Trustees has the fiduciary responsibility to then select the president from the three remaining contenders.

In the last presidential search there were seven semifinalists and subsequently three finalists. Of the three, two withdrew from the search.

Whitt/Kieffer shares Guilford's core value of diversity — according to its website, 43 percent of its placements in 2012

were women and minorities.

"I think it's excellent that the search firm embodies that as part of their mission," said senior Lyes Benarbane, traditional student representative on the presidential search committee. "More administrative higher education positions should be open to all sorts of minorities: racial, gender and sexual."

Suzanne Ingram, staff representative on the presidential search committee, also expressed interest in a diverse candidate pool.

"Part of the presidential search committee charge that we received is to look into the possibility of diverse candidates," Ingram said. "We are certainly open to going in that direction."

Throughout this process, conversation continues about whether or not Guilford needs a Quaker president.

"I think it is important for the new president to thoroughly understand and have some experience with Quakerism," said Kami Rowan, associate professor of music and presidential search committee member. "This school is rooted in the foundations of that philosophy, and I think we all agree that we would like someone who 'gets' our core values. I would not rule out a non-Quaker, but I would hope that our choices reflect some background or experience with the Quaker tradition."

During the forum, Haley addressed the challenges of finding a Quaker president.

"Unfortunately, the world of Quakers in higher education is small," Haley said. "We understand that a Quaker would be preferred, but the pool of Quakers is limited."

Professor of English Jim Hood, a former faculty representative on the current presidential search committee, summarized committee members' general sentiments on hiring Whitt/Kieffer.

"I'm very glad we are working with the group that assisted Earlham in finding their new president and to have Katherine Haley as our lead consultant," said Hood in an email interview.

Chairman Joseph M. Bryan Jr. updates community about Board of Trustees

BY VICTOR LOPEZ
SENIOR WRITER

Just as an Indian summer arrived at Guilford College, the Board of Trustees met for their annual meeting the weekend of Oct. 11.

The board committees met and discussed topics relevant to current Guilford issues and reported to the full board for what are called "action items."

Most trustees have established themselves in the business and academic communities. They all serve the board without pay and donate to the College.

There were only a few action items taken at the October board meeting, according to Ty Buckner, associate vice president of communications and marketing.

"Most of the action items were passing the budget ... and looking at the new website that the College will roll out soon," said Buckner.

Even with few action items to discuss, The Guilfordian sat down with the chairman of the board following its last meeting on Oct. 12.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees Joseph M. Bryan Jr. '60 has donated over \$9 million to the College throughout the years. In the interview, Bryan Jr. answered several questions.

Q: How long have you served on the Board of Trustees?

A: I have been on the board for over 40 years. In two years, I plan on stepping down.

Q: Was there any talk about the sexual assault policy at the College?

A: I know that Student Affairs brought up the policy. We are not unlike many colleges and universities in the nation who have sexual assault policies. It is my understanding that we are following campus policy with these matters.

Q: Do you ever think there will be a way that board

members will make a space to meet with students, to get to know folks that go to Guilford?

A: I know that Lionel Johnson, chair of the student affairs subcommittee, informed the board that we should create a panel where board members would actually meet students and get to know them personally.

Q: What does it take to become a member of the Board of Trustees?

A: I heard it said somewhere that in order to be on a board, think three W's: wisdom, wealth and work. As for this board, it does not necessarily mean that they give a lot of money, but certainly that the members can go out and get money for the College

We have a good mixture for those who get and give. All members of the board put in the work. This is not a board that rubber-stamps everything; we put in countless hours of our time, which requires patience. The BoT is a voluntary commitment.

Q: Is the board aware of APSA, or the Administrative Program and Services Assessment report? Is the board aware that students and faculty crowded into an auditorium to address the committee's report?

A: Kent (Chabotar) made the board aware of the report. He said there were some things he liked about the report and other things he did not. Right now this is not a board issue, but we have been made aware of the report. I expect that once the report has been completed that the board will be made aware.

Q: Is there any update on the presidential search?

A: Yesterday, we met with a representative from the search firm. We are looking for a candidate that can embrace Quaker principles, but they do not have to be Quaker. They do not have to have an advanced academic degree either. All options are open and it is too soon in the process to know exactly what we will find in our candidate.

Joseph M. Bryan Jr.



COURTESY OF EXCELLENCE.GUILFORD.EDU

- Graduated Guilford in 1960
- Served on Board of Trustees since '73
- Established the Bryan Series
- Donates to various institutions across Greensboro
- Private investor and civic leader

Q: The last time we met, you said that there were financial challenges facing higher education. What kind of challenges does Guilford face financially?

A: The board is focused on enrollment; the drop in Pell grants and state-based (aid) being lost means some are not able to attend college. Guilford tries to be culturally diverse and it costs the institution by giving financial aid to these students with such great need. We hope to find more full-paying students to help offset that continuing discount rate. This is not unique to Guilford; it is happening in colleges and universities all over the country.