

# 16th Bryan Series starts with Robert Gates

BY VALERIA SOSA  
STAFF WRITER

"Well, it is a pleasure to be here with you in Greensboro," began former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates at the War Memorial Auditorium. "But I do have to tell you that it's a pleasure to be anywhere but Washington, D.C."

"The place where those who travel by road of humility encounter little heavy traffic."

"The place where so many people are lost in thought because it is unfamiliar territory."

"The only place you can see a prominent person walking down lover's lane holding his own hand."

Thus began the 16th season of the Guilford College Bryan Series, with the presentation of Gates, former director of the CIA, former president of Texas A&M University and former secretary of defense.

Audience members were unable to contain their laughter for the first few minutes of Gates' presentation.

After most of the Bryan Series attendees left the auditorium, a group of six stayed behind discussing the presentation.

"With that humor at the

beginning, he got us all on his side," said Bill O'Neil, one of the six.

Kathy Covanoiegh, another member of the group, agreed.

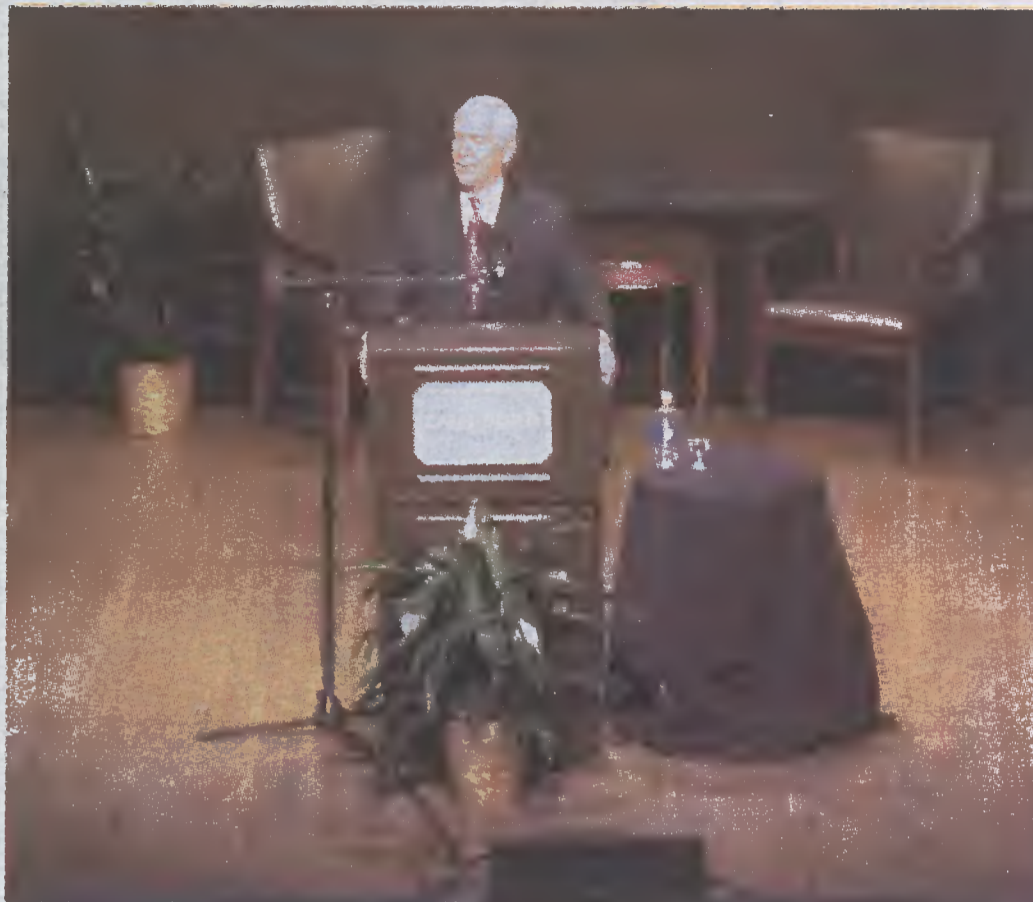
"It was just so easy to hear, with good diction, good humor," said Covanoiegh. "A very humble man."

Gates, however, quickly transitioned into more serious issues that would dominate the podium the rest of the night.

"At Texas A&M I would see thousands of young people, 18 to 24 years old walking around, backpacks and t-shirts, going to class," said Gates. "Then literally overnight, I was in Iraq, seeing thousand of kids the same age wearing full body armor and carrying assault rifles."

Soldiers, he made clear, were his priority during his tenure as secretary of defense. His greatest achievement, he said at the Bryan Series, was being called the "secretary soldier" because he cared so much for the men and women in uniform.

"He would meet every soldier who came in a plane, in a coffin," said Bill Covanoiegh, who also stayed behind after the presentation. "For every single



Robert Gates is a former secretary of defense and director of the CIA.

one. (We have) great respect for that man, and we would vote for him tomorrow."

Topics during the event ranged from the Cold War, to leadership, to the government shutdown, to the use of drones.

Jeff Tiberii, Greensboro

bureau chief for North Carolina Public Radio-WUNC, served as moderator for the Q&A session where audience members sent in questions to ask Gates.

One question asked Gates to explain his apparent disdain for Washington, D.C.

"The reason I came to hate it was that getting anything done was so damn hard and every day was a fight," said Gates. "Every day we were in war in two places, and every day I also had a war with the Congress ... with the White House and with my own department. And it just gets exhausting after a while."

Gates also mentioned how impressed he was with the questions asked by Guilford students at the private Q&A session earlier that day at the Community Center.

"The questions were almost always significantly more thoughtful than the ones I used to receive in hearings for Congress," said Gates. "For one thing, students typically know the difference between a question and a speech."

The audience, especially the students, seemed to greatly enjoy Gates' presentation.

"I liked his humor, I liked how directly he spoke about the issues our government is currently having," said junior Anthony Rea. "I liked that he didn't sugarcoat things. He actually seemed to be speaking his mind, and I appreciated it."

KIERA MCHUGH/JAY GUILFORDIAN

## SENATE UPDATE

### This Week's Developments

Ruth deButts collected feedback from students about their experiences with the General Education requirements at Guilford and also solicited suggestions for how they can be tweaked and improved for the coming years. Julia Draper and Tom Clement explained the new Student Reinvestment Scholars program. Lily Collins and John Madden brought back their experiences from Powershift, a sustainability conference focused on student activists. Community members also helped compile a list of small nuisances that could be fixed at Guilford.

### Next Week's Plans

Julia Draper and Faris El-Ali will give a presentation explaining in student-friendly language how the judicial system at Guilford works. We'll also have an update on the drive to get student art in Boren Lounge.

### Contact Us

We need to hear your voice. Have an idea? Concern? Great recipe? It is important to us.

Questions? Email: [senate@guilford.edu](mailto:senate@guilford.edu) or visit <http://guilfordsenate.wordpress.com>

Compiled by Samir Hazboun, Community Senate president

## DAC seeks community input, involvement

BY CHRISTIANNA VAN DALSEN  
STAFF WRITER

In 2004, Guilford College committed to embracing multiple cultures and fighting off racism. In 2009, the Diversity Plan was approved.

Since then, Guilford has taken great measures to stand as an inclusive community that creates a welcoming and rich environment for the disabled and for cultural minorities.

"All members of our community will feel welcome and empowered," the Diversity Plan vision statement reads.

But do they?

On Oct. 23, the Diversity Action Committee held an open forum to discuss how it can improve the diversity and life for minority and disabled students on campus. Including DAC members, the forum had only 10 attendees.

"We're trying to make this big issue more comfortable for folks, to feel like they can talk about it and that's something that we're still challenged by," said Barbara Lawrence, DAC member and assistant professor of justice and policy studies.

The meeting focused on assessing the community's awareness and reactions to Guilford's current state of inclusiveness.

"We are going to obtain one assessment tool, Diverse Learning Environments, for sophomores and juniors," said Lawrence. "Most of the nationwide surveys we give are for juniors and seniors. Rarely do we capture what happens in the middle; so it's very exciting."

The committee feels that this will be a major break in how to improve life for everyone at Guilford.

"This is exciting, because this is a way in which we are making real progress," said Assistant Academic Dean Erin Dell. "We've been working

on trying to develop a set of diversity indicators ... that we will standardize throughout the institution. We are moving in the direction of creating very concrete assessment tools that will give us very clear information about what's happening and about what we need to do."

Coordinator of Housing Operations Maria Hayden expressed the need for better prioritizing of diversity.

"I don't think as a whole institution, from the top down, in each department, it is being prioritized well to feel like, if you see something, ... you can talk to your supervisor about, 'How can we fix this? How can we address this?'" said Hayden. "Budgets and numbers and these other things seem to take more precedence."

The committee holds substantive equality in high precedence. Taking a step beyond equality, to not only allow everyone the same resources, but to allow everyone the same opportunity, taking any disabilities to heart.

"We are compliant with the (Americans with Disabilities Act) law by having stalls in the bathroom that are big enough for someone with a wheelchair to come in," said Jorge Zeballos, director of diversity training and development. "But the law doesn't necessarily say that you have to have a button on the outside of the door for that person to be able to get in."

It's never too late for community members to give suggestions about any upcoming initiatives the DAC plans to undertake.

"Membership in the subcommittee is open to anybody in the community," Zeballos said. "You don't have to be a member of the DAC to participate in subcommittee work."

"Actually, having broader participation in the subcommittee helps us broaden the feedback loop that we can create. If you're interested in any of these areas, let us know."