

Speaker encourages conversations about racism, promotes student activism

BY LEK SIU
STAFF WRITER

There's an elephant in the room, and its name is racism.

"It is painful and difficult (to talk about)," said Visiting Instructor of Justice and Policy

Luellen Curry. "People want to ignore it and sweep it away. White people don't want to talk about racism because they are afraid that they are going to say something wrong and be accused of being racist."

On Nov. 6, Luellen Curry, a faculty member from Wake Forest University School of Law,

came to Guilford College to speak on racism, justice and the legal system.

The presentation was organized by Karen Tinsley, associate professor of psychology and chair of both Interdisciplinary Studies and African American Studies.

Curry wanted audience members to feel comfortable talking about race. She encouraged them to go out into the community and discuss this sensitive and complex issue.

"We need to do this because that is the only way we will start to resolve this conflict," said Curry.

The main point of the event was to offer the community a space to learn how to deal with the serious issues of racism and the legal system. Tinsley also wanted the community to have the chance to continue discussing the Trayvon Martin case in depth.

"I wanted people to be aware of the issues of racism and the legal system, to not just sweep the case of Trayvon Martin under the rug," said Tinsley. "Having an open positive forum about race, violence and its legal implications from an interdisciplinary perspective will lead to finding creative ways of different disciplines (understanding) the issues."

Curry addressed these issues with regard to the recent Trayvon Martin case and how George Zimmerman may have gotten away with murder.

"Race has to be part of the content," said Curry. "Zimmerman himself admitted that it was race-related. The judge didn't consider racial profiling as part of the trial. This innocent young man did not do anything wrong. He was walking home, and then he ended up dead."

After the event, many walked away with positive attitudes towards discussing racism and how to make a change.

"I thought the event was interesting," said senior Mary Heisey. "It was nice to see Guilford professors understand the need to look at these issues with an interdisciplinary approach."

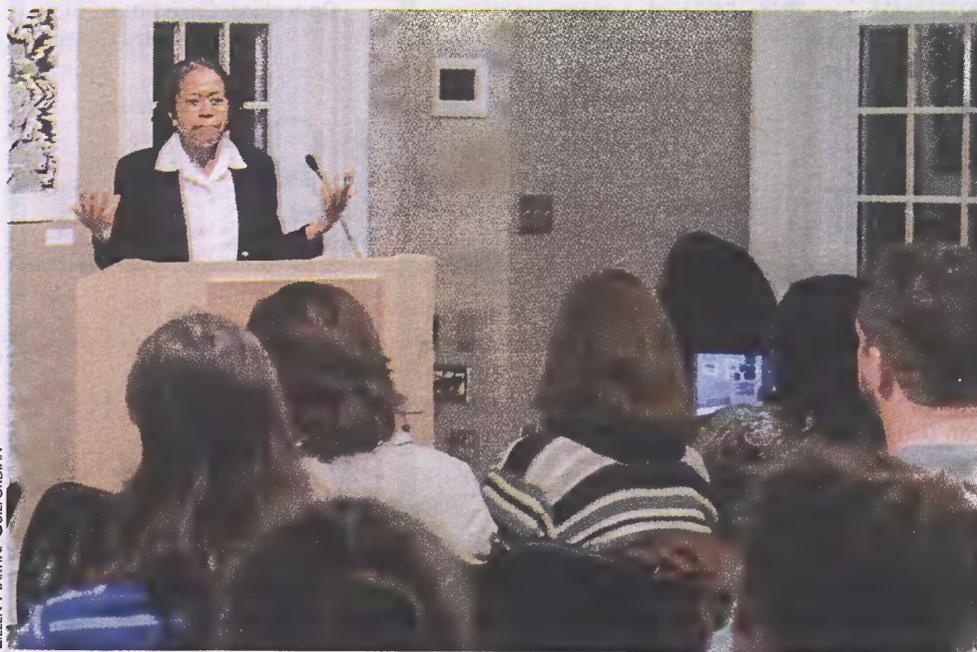
Sophomore Kelli Uresti left feeling eager to continue the conversation.

"(Curry) definitely made me think, 'What am I doing to help this?'" said Uresti. "I hope to be an agent of change to our community ... it inspired me to get active in pursuing equality."

Although the presentation is over the conversation about race is not.

"Guilford is a great place that has its core values and rich history of the Underground Railroad," said senior Jonathan Yatsky.

"If we are truly going to change racism in the world, we ... must be willing to change our ways of thinking to embrace one another for our differences and come from a place of understanding. Then we can truly accept other cultures."



Luellen Curry spoke about issues of racism and the legal system, like the Trayvon Martin case.

Quaker Educational Leadership Symposium is a success

BY BRENT EISENBARTH
STAFF WRITER

What does leadership look like in Quaker education?

From Nov. 8-10, representatives from Quaker schools across the country grappled with this question during the Quaker Educational Leadership Symposium.

Hosted by the Friends Center at Guilford College, the Alumni Relations Office and New Garden Friends School, the symposium, "Mission-Driven in a Data-Driven World," consisted of different events that all discussed leadership in Quaker education.

Considering that New Garden Friends School is getting a new head for the first time in a quarter century and Guilford's own search for a new president is on the radar, the symposium's timing was especially relevant.

"It seemed like a propitious time to evaluate ... leadership required to maintain Quaker education," said Max Carter, director of the Friends Center and campus ministry coordinator.

The weekend events ranged from presentations to panels, from fellowships to pot lucks and from breakfasts to suppers — all focusing on the key question.

"My objective is to listen to and consider ... what Quaker leadership means in the context of the world we live in," said Renee Prillaman, assistant principal of teaching and learning at Carolina

Friends School.

On Friday night, Margaret Benefiel, Ph.D. and author of "The Soul of a Leader," shared the experiences of upholding two seemingly contradictory identities: being a leader and being a Quaker. Specifically, she discussed this in relation to analytical research data and the introspective elements of Quakerism.

The Saturday night panel of current and former heads of Quaker schools was another highlight. Members deliberated many tough questions, including the role of consensus in decision-making, finances in times of crises and how to implement equal gender and racial recruitment.

But what does a Quaker education mean exactly?

"A Quaker education is transformational and ... holistic," said Carter. "It's not just the transformation from a mind ... to a critical thinker ... but it's also a transformation spiritually and emotionally ... (in)to persons who can attempt anything, because they know they have a community that accepts them, mentors them and supports them."

First-years Sadie Hunter and Phoebe Hogue-Rodley shared their own insights about Quakerism in higher education.

"As a Quaker, for me, learning is spiritual," said Hunter.

Hogue-Rodley added, "I was drawn to Guilford by the idea of an intentional community ... with

shared values."

"Intentional community" is appropriate in describing the event considering how it unified Quaker educational communities from around the country, brought Guilford closer to the New Garden Friends School and drew in graduates.

"We wanted to create the space for alumni to come back and talk about their experiences ... and

also remind the alumni that they are stakeholders, and (we) value their participation," said Assistant Director of Alumni Relations Miriam Biber '02, who was on the event's planning committee.

Current President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar discussed the importance of a leader's interaction with the surrounding community in an interview with The Guilfordian.

"(The incoming president should take) the first six months to listen; don't try to issue a vision before you know the place, and involve people when you make decisions," Chabotar told The Guilfordian.

If it takes a village to raise a child, then perhaps it takes a whole school — faculty, alumni, staff and students — to make a college president.

GUILFORD ALUMNI SPEAKERS:

- Ari Betof '02 (head of New Garden Friends School)
- Stephen Dotson '06 (former middle school youth director for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting)
- Gary Farlow '77 (clerk of the Friends Association for Higher Education)
- Evelyn Jadin '07 (Guilford College campus ministry associate)
- Ben Lancaster '07 (Assistant Director of New Garden Friends School)
- Alex Levering Kern '95 (director of Northeastern University Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service)
- Rain Newcomb '98 (professor at Western Carolina University)
- Christina Repoley '02 (founding executive director of Quaker Voluntary Service)

OTHER FACILITATORS & SPEAKERS AT THE EVENT:

- Dwight Wilson (former head of the Detroit Friends School)
- Margaret Benefiel (CEO of Executive Soul)
- Douglas Bennett (former president of Earlham College)
- Kent Chabotar (current president of Guilford College)
- Margaret Fraser (clerk of the New Association of Friends)
- Irene McHenry (retiring executive director of Friends Council on Education)
- William R. Rogers (former president of Guilford College)
- Deborah Saunders (former director of admission for Pendle Hill)
- Bruce Stewart (former Provost of Guilford College and retired head of Sidwell Friends School)