

Recent hate crime sparks outrage, discussion of change

BY NICOLE BARNARD
STAFF WRITER

Most of us like to think our campus is a safe zone where people of different backgrounds are accepted and supported. Although hateful acts are committed across the globe, it can sometimes feel like our Guilford College bubble is immune.

Guilford got a reality check on Nov. 23, however, when sophomore Walid Musarsaa found a note on his door calling him a "damn terrorist."

Musarsaa, who is from Palestine, has not found this to be the first incident at Guilford.

"There's been repetitive hate crimes against Arabs on campus for quite some time," said Musarsaa. "(That) Saturday night, someone knocked on my window and I went to open the door. I found (the) note on the ground."

On Nov. 25, Senate held a forum to discuss the incident.

"The forum was a great step toward a healthier community, but if only part of the community is involved in the healing process, we are not fulfilling our end of the

bargain," said senior Ruth deButts. "This is a community issue that needs community action."

Meanwhile, the administration has also been responding.

"The Bias Response Team at Guilford will meet to discuss this incident," said Hall Director and Student Success Mentor Brian Daniel. "The team will provide support to those affected. If the suspect(s) is identified, the case will be brought to the Department of Judicial Affairs."

The Bias Response Team is a group of staff members that address incidents of hate that are serious and threatening.

"Clearly, it's serious," said Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow. "But was it threatening? There was no serious threat, but it was serious language and certainly offensive speech."

"We will, (regardless of) the Bias

Response Team, do some kind of programming in the residence halls about why someone would do this, how do we respond, etc."

Many are outraged at this blatant display of hate on campus.

"As a Jewish student, I'm pro-Israel, but ... no matter what my political orientation is and how I feel about the situation in Israel, I

stronger stance on condemning racism against certain groups on campus and ... do more in regards to the Arab community."

Director of Diversity Training and Development Jorge Zeballos agrees.

"I believe we should have educational events ... to minimize these incidents," said Zeballos. "As far as this event, we should try to find out who did it and try to work with them to change their attitude."

Many agree that the College's involvement is critical.

"It is important for our administration,

faculty and staff to be trained how to handle (and) prevent violent and traumatic events such as this," said deButts. "Students should feel supported through appropriate actions taken by the administration."

"There needs to be a more noticeable stance against such instances and a stronger search to

find the perpetrator. Prevention through education and experience should be the first step to rid the school of this violence."

Some want more transparency on the handling of these incidents.

"It's really unclear as to what happens to students when they do violate a policy," said senior Faris El-Ali. "We don't really know how these students are taken care of, whether the constitutions and sanctions are upheld or whether or not they're asked to go through some rehabilitation."

One heavy question lingers: why would someone do this in the first place?

"Someone might do this because (of) lack of understanding," said Daniel. "Guilford, as with most institutions of higher education, is a microcosm of today's society. Sometimes students at Guilford get so used to the accepting atmosphere that they forget that bias still exists."

"Is Guilford more progressive than most institutions of higher education in America? Yes. I think this incident is a reminder that bias and hate still exist even in places we may deem safe and accepting."

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Ruth deButts, senior

would never support or condone writing such terrible things about someone," said junior Josh Weil.

Musarsaa hopes this individual incident will foster a larger change.

"I would like to see Guilford invest more in Middle Eastern studies," said Mursarsaa. "I would also like to see Guilford take a

BRYAN SERIES

Titanic's discoverer inspires students

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

once," said sophomore attendee Lucas Perez-Leahy.

Despite the easygoing atmosphere Ballard created in the auditorium, his presentation sparked some questions.

"He sees the ocean as some great resource," said first-year attendee Jade Glore. "That surprised me, because he had this great respect for nature and he talked about underwater like it was this wonderful place but he kind of wants to destroy it."

According to the Guilford College Bryan Series Facebook page, a poll of over 400 subscribers named the event as the second most popular since they began surveying in 2009.

Ballard's talk inspired young people to challenge themselves in whatever field they choose.

"Life knocks you down, and passion gets you back up," said Ballard.

In 1989, Ballard founded the JASON Project, a program designed to excite and engage middle school students in science and technology. Ballard began the JASON Project in response to the thousands of letters he received from students following his discovery of Titanic, and he is still involved in the project today.

"It was impressive that someone his age is still so focused on the education of young people," said Perez-Leahy.

The best explanation for Ballard's consistent vigor is his passion for exploration.

"I like to say that my greatest discovery is the one I'm about to make," said Ballard.

New APSA report draft released

COMMITTEE COMPLETES REVISIONS IN RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

BY BRYAN DOOLEY
SENIOR WRITER

Since the community forum on Sept. 27, the Administrative Program and Services Assessment committee has been quietly revising its report, a report that began two and a half years ago when the APSA process was commissioned by President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar to examine the College's services.

According to a statement from the APSA committee, it has received over 80 pieces of feedback and revised the second draft to address these concerns.

"We followed up with the committee by making our voice known through their means of communication, the response email," said senior Daniel Raeder. "We also issued an open letter to the community, including the committee, that was published in The Guilfordian."

"We have not gotten any direct response from the committee or anyone involved in the process, but (sophomore) John Madden did meet with members of the committee personally."

One such committee member was Assistant Academic Dean Erin Dell.

"I've talked with (Dell), very casually, a few times about what their process is and what the progress of the report is as of now," said Madden in an email interview. "I believe that they do want to hold up the

concerns of the community, and hopefully they will try and do that while still making the necessary budget cuts."

Chabotar addressed the necessity of these budget cuts in an email interview.

"No college or university can afford not to look at its current operations and programs to make them as efficient and relevant as possible," said Chabotar. "Average student debt for independent school graduates is now \$29,000 at graduation. The economy suffers from about the highest structural unemployment in decades. Financial aid is rising, a huge price for our traditional enrollment and diversity. Our excellent CCE program is struggling."

"The College did the Academic Program Prioritization Study (which examined academic departments and programs) to focus scarce resources on the academic programs with the highest enrollment potential and quality. I commissioned APSA to do the same on the administrative side. Without even more than the \$88 million we've raised since 2002, we cannot keep doing all we are doing and survive long term."

Junior Ines Sanchez de Lozada, among others, felt excluded from the process.

"There was a lack of communication with the overall community about this committee existing in the first place," said Lozada.

"Another issue is how little diversity there is in the committee ... I would like to see more transparency, communication and an intentional conversation with the community about our economic situation, our values and priorities."

Sophomore Alexandra Barbour

Scan the QR code

To read a letter from President Kent Chabotar about APSA, or to find a link to the full draft of the report, scan this QR code.



explained in an email interview why it felt necessary to write the open letter.

"The school lost \$2.5 million in state funding, and that's not something that can be ignored, so we tried our best not to make the committee or the proposal itself an enemy," said Barbour. "We really just wanted our concerns to be heard and to show the committee how passionate we are about certain programs facing big cuts or position eliminations."

The second draft, released on Nov. 22, reflected changes made in response to feedback. Chabotar invited feedback on this second draft until Dec. 6.

According to Chabotar, the final draft should be issued before spring semester.

"Guilford is constantly changing," said Chabotar. "It is different in 2013 than it was in 2003 or 1993 or 1843. Many excellent suggestions and concerns were expressed about the report. The (draft released on Nov. 22 was) different in scope and content, with revisions that will satisfy many, but not everyone, in our community. You made a difference. You were heard."