

OPINION

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Reflecting on the State of the Union Address

A LOOK INTO OBAMA'S "MIDDLE CLASS ECONOMICS" AND REGAINING SUPPORT



BY WILLIAM BURTON
STAFF WRITER

On Jan. 20, President Barack Obama gave the annual State of the Union Address. During this speech the president laid out his plan for the United States. He did an excellent job in delivering his agenda for America and effectively utilized economic statistics to show the progress that America has made under his administration.

"(Progress) begins with the economy," said Obama in his speech.

The president gave a lot of statistics supporting his idea that middle-class economics work. One example was that the unemployment rate was lower than the unemployment rate before recession.

"Our economy is growing and creating jobs at the fastest pace since

1999," said Obama.

The fact that he was able to support his idea about middle-class economics shows people that he is not simply saying what people want to hear. President Obama gave the people of the United States solid facts that not only support his agenda but gave them hope that things are getting better.

While he succeeded in showing what he has done during the State of the Union address, he has not been very successful in doing that during his time as president. This is partly the reason why Democrats were defeated during the midterm elections.

There were even politicians that distanced themselves from him during their campaigns. In the race between Kay Hagan and Thom Tillis, Hagan distanced herself from Obama in a 2014 ad. She claimed that she would stand up to the president.

The president presented a lot of proposals for the United States, which included a free community college education. Professor of Economics Robert Williams believes free community college will benefit the economy. However, he thinks that there should be some sort of stipulation, such as having good grades.

If Americans want to remain competitive in the world, education beyond high school is very important. Some people may wonder how the government is going to pay for this. That is where tax reform comes in.

"The wealthy are not paying their fair share of taxes because of loopholes in the tax laws," said Robert Duncan, assistant professor of political science.

Williams agrees.

"The loopholes in the tax code benefit the wealthy," said Williams.

Fixing those loopholes will benefit the United States and help pay for things such as free community college and ensure that the people who earn the most money pay the most taxes.

"It's not a spending problem that the United States has," said Duncan. "The problem lies within these loopholes. The president makes it very clear that they hurt our country, and they need to be closed."

Another way that the president reached out to the American people was to share a story about a typical American family. He used a story about an American citizen named Rebecca to connect with people who have fallen on hard times.

He said Rebecca waited tables, and her husband worked in construction. When the recession hit, her husband's business dried up, and he had to take jobs that would keep him on the road a lot. Rebecca took out student loans and retrained for a new career by enrolling in a community college.

Their sacrifices paid off. They ended up buying their first home. Rebecca got a new job and her husband is back working in construction.

The recession was hard on a lot of people, and the president wanted to give Americans someone they could relate to.

This connection with the average person worked well because sometimes politicians go to Washington and forget about the people that elected them. By using Rebecca's story to connect with people, President Obama showed the people that he has not forgotten about them.

The topics that he brought up during the State of the Union address were what America needed to hear, but he also addressed big issues and gave real solutions.

Guilford's new logo does not represent us

The changing of the logo in front of the school made a huge difference. When I saw the Guilford tree, I thought of a tree with value.

"(The new logo is) not Guilford," said first-year JR Hudgins. "Guilford is understated and simple."



BY LESLY VASQUEZ
STAFF WRITER

There are times when change is good, and sometimes it is perfect timing for change. This was not the right time or change for Guilford.

"The new logo does not have as readily an identifiable Guilford brand as the tree," said Friends Center Director and Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies Max Carter.

Removing the tree was an obtuse idea. I believe that once people get used to something new,

it becomes a thing of the past. But something this historic is different.

Guilford College is a place where everyone can come together and be a part of something extraordinary. In certain experiences, one comes to Guilford because

everything seems like a close gathering.

Interestingly, the tree was actually real. The logo was an image of the exact tree that stood beside New Garden Hall. Our sixth president sketched it for the logo.

When the tree came down in 1996, it was 119 years old. What a loss that was. Carter officiated at its memorial service.

The new logo is not as meaningful as the old logo. It takes away from our history.

People were married under the actual tree. Imagine how those who were once getting married or engaged under that tree will now feel.

The tree logo used to intrigue people, and it made them feel welcomed. Of course, we still have the branding around the school. Now, when you look at the new logo and see a new text format and a white background, you think that Guilford is moving towards change. But something important is missing.

"We want the tree back," said first-year Aron Correa.

The creators of the new logo took away the meaning of what Guilford really is. Some people may agree that changes are good, but Guilford is full of traditions. Some of us would like to keep them.



STAFF EDITORIAL

Beyond Black History Month

Feb. 1, 1960. Four brave first-years from A&T University walked into F.W. Woolworth's and demanded to be served at its whites-only food counter. They would sit, wait and return every day until they were treated fairly. And thus began the widespread sit-in tactic of the civil rights movement right here in Greensboro.

February is an eventful month on campus, due to much work on behalf of the Multicultural Education Department.

Friday, Jan. 6, is the Understanding Racism workshop, a full day event that all community members have something to learn from and offer to. If you have not signed up, we strongly recommend attending the next one.

On Wednesday, Feb. 11, there will be a faculty research presentation, and on the evening of Friday, Feb. 13, a poetry contest

entitled The Element will take place in the Community Center.

The events continue throughout the rest of the month, not only on campus but in the larger Greensboro community as well.

The Beloved Community Center, located on Arlington Street downtown, is having a letter writing campaign in which they hope to flood Greensboro City Hall members with letters from community members expressing why we believe All Black Lives Matter.

This weekend there is a national conference happening in Atlanta to discuss police brutality and mass incarceration. People all over the country will be traveling to Atlanta to plan the next steps to continue resisting police abuse.

2015 is expected to be a major turning point for the movement against institutional oppression,

and Guilford must be part of it. As members of an institution which proclaims to be anti-racist in nature, we all have a duty to be part of movement in some way.

Black History Month is a solid foundation for raising awareness of the oppression of black lives, but we must not limit this discussion to the shortest month of the year.

Given Guilford's social justice orientation, we should participate actively and broadly in MED and other organizations' events not only during Black History Month, but for the entire year. After February ends, we must continue to bring awareness in our community to the past and current oppression of black people.

The issues surrounding Black History Month are not exclusively historical; these issues will continue unless we make our voices heard and act for justice.

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