

## NEWS

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## Symposium celebrates black culture

BY NICOLE ZELNIKER  
FEATURES EDITOR

On Feb. 27, the Multicultural Education Department, Africana CHANGE and Brothers and Sisters in Blackness hosted the second annual All Black Everything symposium.

"We wanted to have a day to celebrate black culture, to take time to explore blackness worldwide," said Director for Educational Initiatives and Partnerships Jada Drew '07.

After a short snow delay, the conference began at 10:30 a.m. with keynote speaker Sudie Nallo, professor at University of South Carolina College of Social Work. Nallo spoke about economically sustaining people who identify as black in America.

"We (in the black community) have a 20.5 percent underemployment rate," said Nallo.

According to ThinkProgress, simply raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 could bring over three million people of color over the poverty line.

"Because whites are more likely to get better paying jobs, blacks are more likely to be stuck with minimum wage jobs," said Raleigh native and Historic Thousands on Jones Street march participant Heather Travar in an email interview.

"So when our government says the minimum wage doesn't need to be raised, it's sending a message loud and clear, as far as I'm concerned."

Nallo also spoke about the role of education in the black community.

"Education, in no way, (is) your golden ticket, (but) it is a factor," said Nallo.

Conference participants split up into workshops immediately after Nallo's opening remarks.

Other speakers included Guilford College students and staff such as Barbara Lawrence, associate professor of justice and policy studies and director of the Guilford Higher Education Major in Prison Initiative, senior Khadija Carr and senior Chelsea Yarborough.



Community members participated in the "Who Is Black" panel discussion as part of the All Black Everything symposium on Feb. 27 in King Hall.

Speakers also came from outside the Guilford community. One such speaker was Cameroon native Karl Bedzigui.

"We live in these differences every day, but refuse to admit that it's part of our narrative," said Bedzigui. "Blackness is a legacy of suffering."

In his session, "The Other Other: African in America," Bedzigui spoke about identifying as a black African.

"I'm not exotic," said Bedzigui. "I'm not cute. Black is all I got."

One panel featured Bedzigui, his sister and Guilford College junior Teresa Bedzigui, LGBTQA Coordinator Parker Hurley, senior CJ Green and Center for Principled Problem Solving Project and Communications Manager Delilah White.

Panelists discussed what "blackness" meant to them.

"Even here on this campus, I am told I'm not black enough," said White. "It's something that doesn't go away."

Growing up in a mixed-race household, Hurley had a confusing relationship with being black.

"We couldn't have black baby dolls, (but) people would fall over themselves about our hair," said Hurley.

Hurley also spoke to privilege within the black community.

"As a light-skinned person, I do have privilege," said Hurley.

Green shared a similar experience.

"I was confused as a kid (because my family) is a melting pot," said Green. "(But I

realized) the color black has so much to it. It's all the colors in one."

This event became especially relevant as it was the day after the anniversary of Trayvon Martin's death, which was ignored by many in favor of arguing over the colors of a dress posted on Tumblr.

"The fact that a dress got more attention than Trayvon Martin on the day he was murdered three years ago is sickening," said Twitter user Amie Laster.

For Guilford as a whole, this symposium was a time for us to explore the culture of all blackness and bring attention to people like Martin as well as issues such as the economy in the black community.

"(We) are worth it," said Bedzigui. "(We) deserve everything."

## Core value of diversity currently not represented in faculty

BY BEATRIZ CALDAS  
STAFF WRITER

Guilford College's website dedicates an entire page to the explanation of the school's core values and missions. One of them represents the College's desire to become an institution characterized by equality and other aspects of multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion.

Unfortunately, these goals may not have been accomplished yet.

"We have succeeded in being diverse in numbers of community members who are of various races, religions, sexual orientation and countries," said Director for Educational Initiatives and Partnerships Jada Drew '07. "However, we need to put more effort in becoming equitable and inclusive. This is the next step."

Although diversity as a core value was implemented 10 years ago, there seems to be a lack of it among faculty.

"In fall 2014, there were 94 full-time, tenured faculty members," said African American Studies Professor, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean Adrienne Israel. "Of the 94, there were six African-American, five Latino, five Asian or Asian-American, and one from Middle East."

"So, it's a total of 17 percent compared to 83 percent of white faculty members."

Israel also stated that some of the Latino or Middle Eastern faculty are considered white, reducing the percentage of people of color.

"There's not enough faculty of color here," said junior Yashua

Clemons. "I've only had one black professor since I've been here, and this is my third year. I'd like to see more."

For some, having a multicultural faculty goes beyond just achieving a goal.

"(Diversity) helps the educational environment tremendously," said Israel. "When we bring in foreign national faculty, for example, the students have to be taught how to learn differently, or how to adjust to a teacher who's not typical or what they consider typical."

Guilford created a diversity plan in October 2014 to evaluate its accomplishments and list what areas needed additional work to create a multicultural, racism-free environment.

One of the goals written into the plan was to "increase the diversity of faculty and staff at all levels based on race, sex, ethnicity, sexual identity and international origin" by 2015.

The diversity plan also includes plans of action. Judicial board training and implementing plans for faculty and staff recruitment are part of the solution strategy.

However, the College's recent budget problem could be affecting the decision of hiring a diverse faculty.

"The budget problem contributes to the factors," said Assistant Director for Multicultural Education and Latino Community Coordinator Irving Zavaleta Jimenez '08. "When you are trying to be more intentional, it means more time, more energy, more funds. But if at the same time you're dealing with this situation, then it can be a burden."

Solutions are already being discussed and studied.

"I'm part of the Multicultural Leadership Scholars Program, and one of my projects this year is 'the Rooney rule,'" said Clemons. "We're trying to increase the amount of faculty of color on campus as there seems to be a big disparity (which) has been here for a while."

This project is based on the National Football League's rule with the same name that requires teams to interview minority candidates for head coaching and senior football operation jobs.

According to Clemons, the school has to interview at least two people of color throughout the process of hiring, but there's no guarantee that one of these people will be hired.

"We face many challenges in recruiting and hiring, from offering ample salaries and a welcoming,

supportive environment to developing alternative professional networks that can identify and invite qualified candidates with diverse backgrounds," said Chair and Professor of Economics Bob Williams.

The Faculty Handbook states that "the Search Committee shall submit to the Dean's Office a short list, (6-10 files) of candidates," and "if the list ... does not include a candidate who would promote the College's goal of hiring diverse role models for our students, the committee must request permission of the Academic Dean to invite any candidates to campus."

"This is a statement that the faculty approved," said Israel. "They're supposed to do all these things to secure candidates from diverse backgrounds. They say that they attempted to, but that there aren't many people in the field or that the candidates they had did not fit the criteria they were looking for."

Another issue rests on retaining faculty members of color once they are hired.

"Guilford College historically accepted its first black professor in the art department in the early '70s," said Drew. "That professor

was a tenure professor in the art department. Since he's left, there hasn't been any other black tenure faculty in that same department."

The lack of minority representation on campus can be detrimental for students who feel the need to have someone they can relate to.

"One key point is trying to get diverse faculty in campus life," said senior David Wheaton, who is also part of the MLSP. "Guilford is pretty diverse when it comes to the student population, but unfortunately, sometimes there are no African-American faculty for African-American students and there are no Latino faculty for Latino students."

To Israel the solution for this situation is not a matter of money or hiring practices, it is a matter of embracement.

"There's not one Guilford College, there's not one group that speaks for Guilford," said Israel. "You can have a large variety of people on campus — students, faculty, staff administration — you can be here fiscally, but the question is: Are you included? Is it inclusive?"

"We need to make an effort so everybody here feels like they're home."

"We're trying to increase the amount of faculty of color on campus as there seems to be a big disparity (which) has been here for a while."

YASHUA CLEMONS, JUNIOR