

Derek Harwell: in the Driver's Seat

KRIS BELMONTE
staff writer

Derek Harwell has never taken a computer class. Odd, considering that he was hired just a few months ago to be the manager of computer training here at Guilford. His story begins with an IBM and two million dollars.

At the age of 16, feeling disheartened and bitter about the public schools system in his hometown of Morrisville, NC, Derek dropped out of school. Within months he received his GED and three years later, his perseverance and diligence earned him a political science degree from Virginia Tech.

Following graduation, Derek moved around the country, working for various social organizations. While living in California, he began teaching English to a group of impoverished immigrants at the Community Action Center. From there he moved to Northern Quebec, where he poured his energy into other social advocacy groups such as Greenpeace.

It was his intense desire to teach that led him back to North Carolina, where he obtained his teach-

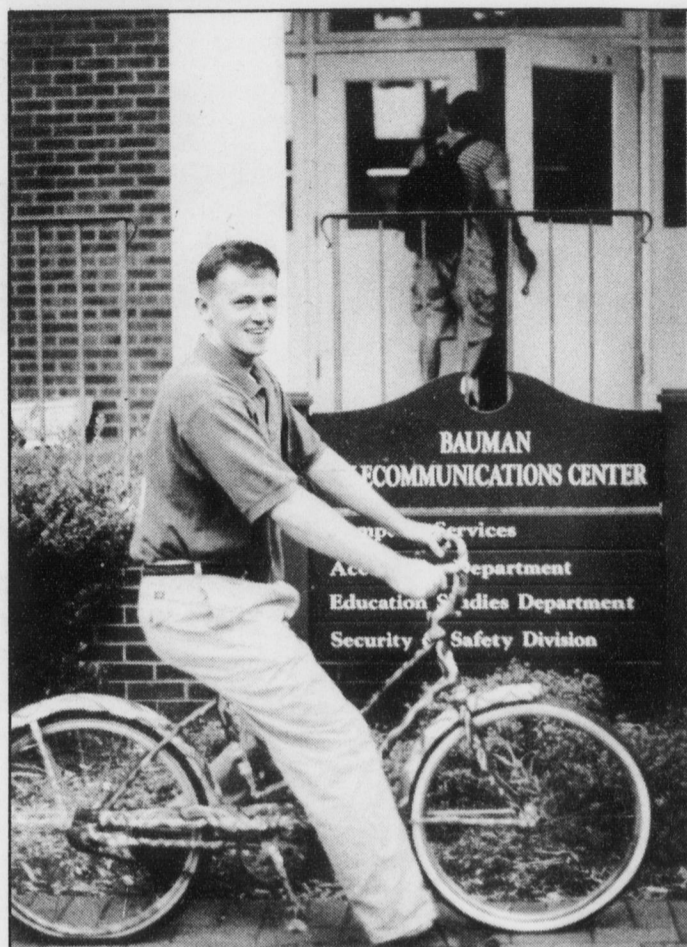
ing degree from Appalachian State University.

Soon, Derek landed a position at Southwest Guilford Middle School in Greensboro, teaching social studies and language arts.

During the time that he was at SW Middle, \$2 million dollars were invested in computers and multi-media equipment. Southwest found itself at the pinnacle of technological advancement among schools nationwide.

"Because of my terrible handwriting, I was forced to buy a computer so my students would be able to read the assignments. I knew a smidgin more about the new technology in the school because I had a computer of my own. Therefore, I was responsible for conveying my knowledge to the other teachers and administrators in the building. I was considered to be an expert, but I don't understand why, considering I never had any computer training," laughs Derek.

Amazingly enough, using the available technology, Derek was able to create a multi-cultural project for his sixth graders. The project involved each student creating his or her own home page that contained a cultural theme. The web site that was home to



Sara Johnson/The Guilfordian

Derek Harwell

these pages was created by Derek and his students as well.

Derek not only made significant contributions to his classroom, but he has also presented more than 30 workshops regionally and nationally on computers in education. Thousands of teachers across the country have heard him speak about the uses of the Internet and multimedia and digital imaging.

Now Derek is exceedingly pleased to be a part of the Guilford community. He is very ex-

cited and eager to work with students and professors as the college embarks on a new technological journey.

"In three years, I imagine Guilford will be totally different... ultimately the application process will be done entirely by computer," states Derek.

It is evident that Derek Harwell will be an instrumental figure here as Guilford enters a new realm of computer technology.

New head of info. tech arrives soon

Norm Gibbs has accepted the position of Director of Information Technology and will join the college officially on November 1.

Gibbs comes to Guilford from Carnegie Mellon University, where he has been with the Software Engineering Institute.

His previous experience includes service as chair and professor of computer science and information studies at Bowdoin, with earlier faculty and administrative appointments in mathematics, computer science and computer centers at Arizona State and William and Mary.

His undergraduate degree is in mathematics from Ursinus. His Ph.D. is in computer science, from Purdue.

He is active in information technology organizations related to undergraduate instruction and has consulted at leading liberal arts colleges.

His special expertise is in technology transfer, which is to say finding ways to make contemporary software and hardware serve the needs of users.

Gibbs' family includes his wife, Barbara, who has taught mathematics, and two daughters. One is a student at Colgate. The other is a Dartmouth graduate now in graduate school at Ohio State.

-from the Community Newsletter

Cruisin' down the info highway

COLIN McFADDEN-ROAN
staff writer

Do you feel like you are driving a '77 Datsun in the right lane of the information highway? Or maybe you are lost on the back roads and cannot even find the on-ramp. Well, cruising the 'net may not be as hard as you think.

This is especially true here at Guilford where Internet access is free (read: you already paid for it) and unlimited (read: when you have the spare time). From most computer terminals on campus, you can get on the Internet.

Essentially, the Internet is millions of computers connected internationally by modems, which utilize phone lines. It is a bit more complex, though.

To get onto the Internet, you need a server. The server allows you to get in touch with the electronic addresses of other computers, thus connecting you to the information you want.

The most often used internet opportunity on campus is e-mail. Not only can people communicate with one another on campus this way, but they can also correspond with anyone, anywhere in the world who is connected to the Internet. Over 30 million people are linked by the internet.

"E-mail is great," says first-year student Susan Stanley. "My friends and I always send each other messages, but it can get addictive."

It can be very captivating. Part of the reason it is so entrancing is the sheer volume of information available in cyberspace that anyone can access.

Discussion groups of all types, like the VAX Notes used on campus, can be found on the internet as well as news and all sorts of general information.

Difficulty may come in finding the information that you are looking for. "What I don't like about the internet is that it can be so complicated and not easy to use," comments Amanda Leinonen-DuFresne.

Internet service providers and web browsing soft-

ware are designed to combat this problem. At Guilford, there are two servers: Lynx and Netscape.

Lynx is run by the University of Kansas and uses only text. Netscape, on the other hand, is multimedia. It is connected to the World Wide Web.

The internet grew out of a "network of computers linked around the world in the military and scientific communities," notes Jesse Snipper. Because of ties between those two groups and a multitude of universities, it quickly spread to campuses around the country and around the world.

Since that time it has become commercialized. Servers like America Online, Prodigy and CompuServe now bring the internet to companies and private citizens.

Guilford has the technology to put you in the driver's seat on the information highway, but if you are still nervous, don't hesitate to go to Computer Services for a little bit of driver's education.