

All eyes on Marriott

Community calls for investigation of management practices

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staff writer

Opposition to Marriott food service management practices exploded this week as word of Production Manager Doug Gilmer's dismissal and accusations of racism toward cafeteria employees spread.

Rumors abounded, but by Tuesday evening the facts began to clear and action had been taken: at Guilford administration's insistence, Gilmer's employment had been extended and movement to investigate Marriott had begun.

Senior Brittany Boden believes, "Students are concerned with the treatment of the cafeteria workers more than the food, which isn't good anyway. The problems (in the cafeteria) lie in management—not in the competency of the workers."

Beth Estep, director of Marriott Food Services at Guilford, was unable to be reached for comment.

Propelled by distribution of a memo written by Boden and a subsequent student petition drive to demand that Guilford administration investigate Marriott, students filled the Leak Room late Tuesday evening to discuss the issues and organize opposition.

Lamont Williams, president of the African-American Cultural Society, invited Estep but she was not present.

The forum, sponsored by AACS, featured the testimony of Joseph Pinnix, lead cook and a Marriott employee at Guilford for ten years.

Pinnix has accused Estep of various abuses, including keeping a week's worth of pay from the workers by changing their pay schedule.

He articulated the situation of many employees, explaining, "I was that far away from being on the street with a wife and four kids when she changed the pay. I live check by check, week to week, and when I don't get a check, I don't eat."

Pinnix refers to Marriott management style as "management by

intimidation" and that there is no room for compassion for employees. "This is a Quaker institution that values people," he exclaims. "For this to be happening here, I do not believe it."

He faults the Guilford administration for focusing only on the issue of Gilmer's employment while failing to communicate with

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other Marriott employees. He asked, "How come the administration has not talked to us?"

Provost Dan Poteet claims that until this week's negotiations with Marriott, legal issues have prevented them from contacting the workers.

He insists, "'The workers are members of our community. . . All people who live or work or have anything to do with the Guilford campus need to participate in and be protected by the ideals of the college."

As of Monday, administrators had negotiated a three-part deal with Marriott:

- Gilmer's employment will be extended and at Guilford's insistence, Marriott has brought people in who are African-American and from the South who will train. "I don't know if this is right or wrong but that's where we are," Poteet admits.

- A neutral committee will be formed, he says, to provide Marriott employees "informal and safe" means of communication with Guilford administration.

- Finally, Marriott has agreed to let the college examine the last two years of their management and training both through documentation and employee interviews. Instructions regarding the investigation consider matters of race.

"We need to get to the bottom of these issues and face them squarely," President Don McNemar demands.

Poteet says that if the investigation determines management practices are, indeed, as Pinnix and others have described, then the college will react.

Meanwhile, Community Senate is considering pulling all student activities fees which may go toward Marriott until they know more about the situation. Senate Treasurer Molly Martin specifies this sum would involve approximately \$27,000.

Adrienne "Shorty" Gray echoed the sentiments of many at the forum who wanted assurance that Gilmer, as well as Pinnix and other workers who speak out, will not lose their jobs.

She demanded, "I want to know what I can do to make sure he (Gilmer) doesn't go."

Poteet replied, "Doug is safe. The workers are safe." However, he admitted he didn't have the authority to make an absolute guarantee.

Many ideas to show student support for Marriott employees were thrown around during the forum.

Williams emphasized the opportunities to appraise family members of the situation during Family Weekend. It was suggested that event planners find alternative caterers to Marriott.

Senior Kelly Davis, who has been concerned about treatment of the workers for some time, suggested that students give up one of their meals as a fundraiser. This has been done before to raise funds for work trips. The money collected would go toward reimbursing workers for pay lost when the pay schedule was changed.

"I want us to be a community where all people are respected. We are working hard to achieve that," said McNemar. "Race issues are important. . . we are seeing part of that in the cafeteria. We aren't going as fast as you (students) want but there is movement."

the week in **Campus Ministries**

Daily: Unprogrammed worship, 8:05-8:20am. Hut.

Friday, September 20
Noon: Brown Bag lunch discussion with Gandian peace activist Bhabagrahi Misra. Hut.
Sunday, September 22
9:15 am: College Meeting for Worship, Sarah Wall '97, speaker. Moon Room.
10:30 am: Silent Meeting. Archdale Hall lawn.
7:00 pm: Catholic Mass. Gallery.
7:30 pm: IV co-ed Bible Study. Hut.
Monday, September 23
7:30 pm: GCRO meeting. Hut.
9:00 pm: Seekers Session on Quakerism, led by Max Carter. Hut.
9:30 pm: Seekers Session, "Views on Jesus," led by Mary Henry Hawes. Mary Hobbs lobby.
Tuesday, September 24
5:15 pm: Episcopal Eucharist. Moon Room.
7:30 pm: IV women's Bible study. Hut.
8:30 pm: New Generation Ministries meeting. Boren.
Wednesday, September 25
Noon: Campus ministers' lunch. Cafeteria.
5:30 pm: Midweek Meeting for Worship. Hut.
7:30 pm: Quaker Concerns meeting. Hut.
8:30 pm: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship meeting. Boren.
Thursday, September 26
5:00 pm: Fall break work trips informational meeting. Hut.
Friday, September 27
Noon: Brown bag lunch discussion of the AFSC summer work camps in Mexico. Hut.
5:00 pm: QLSP retreat at East Bend Friends Meeting. Leave from the Hut.
8:30 pm: FYS film, "The Gospel According to Jesus." Gallery.

CALLING PHOTOGRAPHERS...

The Quaker (yearbook) needs photographers. Shooting assignments only—all processing is done professionally.

If you're interested: Meetings are held every Thursday at 8pm in the Publications Suite (upstairs Founders Hall).

If you have a schedule conflict, call Mariah Sawyer @ x2609 or Dana Clark @ x3562 for info.

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