

NO MORE SILENCE

## Project Get the Noise Out fights negative black stereotypes

By Joanna Bernstein  
STAFF WRITER

"If you look at popular media you would think that no black man holds a regular job or raises a family," said Mark Justad, Director of the Center for Principled Problem Solving (CPPS).

Justad is one of the many supporters of Guilford alumna and Americorps Student-to-Student Coordinator Jada Drew's Project: Get the Noise Out (GNO)

Project Get the Noise Out "seeks to disown the false perceptions, or the noise, about black men and black culture through a modern mode of communicating and educating, the Internet."

As a CPPS-sponsored pilot project initiative, Drew and her co-workers have been granted \$500 to use for GNO. According to CPPS, the initiatives that received grants have the potential to put our community's values to work in the real world.

Drew considered starting GNO while working on the King Campaign, a student-led group that focuses on promoting positive black role models within the community, which she co-founded with Cortina Caldwell, Brandi Johnson, and Natasha Lake, three of her friends from UNC Greensboro.

"We met all of these amazing and successful black guys when traveling to different colleges," Drew said. "We wished we could take pictures of them because displaying positive black men that are not in the entertainment industry or professional sports is important."

Drew and her friends took pictures of these men and also collected some of their original poetry and prose. Shortly afterwards some of these pieces were featured in Drew, Lake, and Johnson's recently founded Royalty Magazine.

After releasing Royalty, Drew and her teammates are working hard to launch the GNO Web site by this August.

Guilford student James Lyons provided the Web space for the site while several other students, including first-year Grady Gamble and senior Janell Henry, are working on filming local black men and advertising the site.

"The Web site is being designed with middle and high school kids in mind," Drew said. "But the site is for everyone. It's not just a black thing."

Airlie Parham, a sophomore sociology major, both understands and respects the Web site's sense of urgency and its attempt to reach out to people of different races and ethnicities.

"What's happening in the media is tragic for everyone in terms of the intentional marketing of unrealistic stereotypes of black men," Parham said. "The structural bias in our system allows these kinds of things to happen."

According to some sociologists, our culture's fixation on the conventionally successful African American as a sports or entertainment celebrity could not be any more wrong.

"I'm reminded of what sports sociologist Harry Edwards said when thinking about this whole thing," said Bob Malekoff, assistant professor of sports studies. "Edwards said that statistically one has a better chance of being hit by a meteor than they do of turning professional in athletics."

Statistics like these have fueled Drew and her fellow GNO workers to recruit black doctors, lawyers, mechanics, businessmen, etc. from all over Guilford and Northampton County to film for the Web site.

"After filming our goal is to have two launch parties for the Web site at different high schools in Guilford and Northampton County," Drew said.

"The launch parties will be set up like pep rallies. But instead of getting excited for a game, kids will be getting excited for education."

Currently, Drew plans to set up computers in each school's gymnasium and have students navigate the Web site from there. Other specifics for the launches have yet to be determined.

"Hopefully the Web site will leave African American children feeling empowered and enable them to see that they can be successful in other ways apart from sports and entertainment," said Emily Warren, sophomore peace and conflict studies major.

Drew says that, regardless of any bumps in the road that she may encounter, Project Get the Noise Out is here to stay.

"Everyone knows that campaigns die out, but by creating the Web site we're making this one sustainable," Drew said.

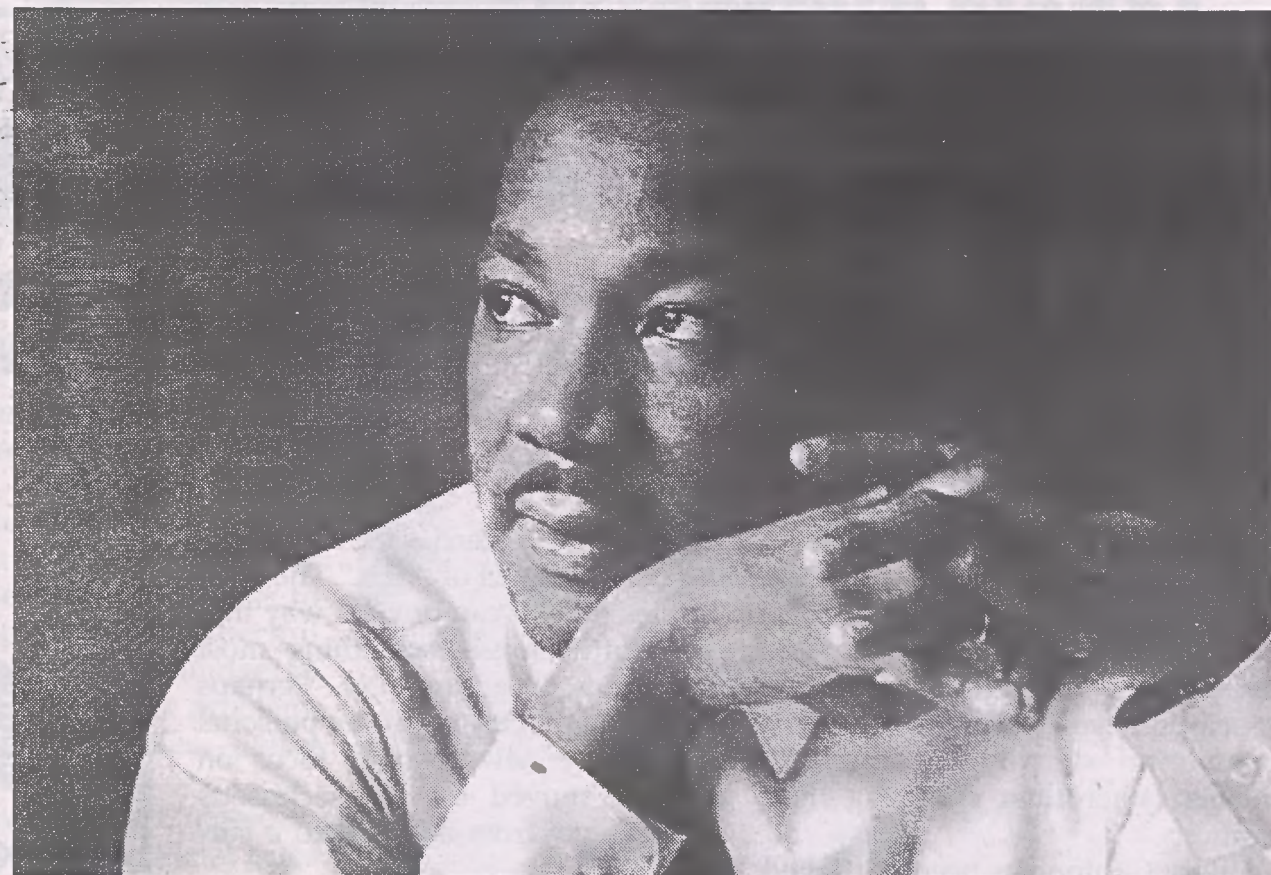


GETTHENOISEOUT.ORG

For further information visit [getthenoiseout.org](http://getthenoiseout.org).

The Web site is currently looking for a graphic designer. If interested, please e-mail [jdrew@guilford.edu](mailto:jdrew@guilford.edu)

## MLK DAY



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

step dance, Kristina Rogers presented a gospel-inspired praise dance, and Keisha Rose Little Eagle did a Native American Jingle Dress dance.

Little Eagle, a member of the Crow tribe, came from Montana to perform in an elaborate and colorful dress covered in small silver cones that shook and jingled as she danced. Shields explained that the origins of the dance came from a story of a grandfather who helped his granddaughter recover from sickness through dance. It's a dance of healing and peace for modern Crows.

"I enjoyed performing today," Little Eagle said, smiling.

Linda Bryant, an instructor for a local North African dance troupe, performed a simple and lighthearted Nubian dance. Bryant explained that the ancient Nubians lost their homelands when flooding scattered them to Egypt and Sudan. However, their traditions are still alive today.

"The Nubian people took their culture with them," Bryant said as she invited members of the audience onstage to teach them Nubian dance steps. The participants tried to keep up with Bryant, who spun and clapped in time with music by Ali Hassan Kuban, the self-proclaimed godfather of Nubian soul.

Shields explained that this year's theme focused on Dr. King's dream to unite different people through their common humanity.

"We're alike when it comes to music and dance, but we're all different at the same time," Shields said. "(Today) you'll see things you've never seen before. These (performers) are your neighbors, people in your community. That's what MLK Day is about."

Community was another important

theme of Monday's celebrations. Most of the performers were locals or had some connection to the Guilford community. They were all eager to participate in the day's commemoration.

"We're all about community service and performing," said NC Step Association performer Antoine Lily.

Between the dances and Shield's M.C.-ing, poet Josephus III read his original piece about the continuing struggle for equality and the work of Dr. King. Senior Cedric Essah read selections from his favorite poet Claude McKay, including "Enslaved," "America" and "If We Must Die." Student community co-coordinators also spoke about different activists ranging from Fredric Douglas to Cesar Chavez and even to children activists.

Sophomore Katie O'Boyle told the story of a four-year-old boy named Alex who was diagnosed with cancer and decided to start a lemonade stand to raise money for cancer research. Now Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation raises millions of dollars towards finding a cure.

"So remember," O'Boyle said to the young children in the front rows, "even if you're a kid you can make a difference, so get out there and start a lemonade stand!"

Jada Drew, Americorps Vista rep. and Guilford graduate, closed the event with an inspiring message. Drew reminded everyone young and old to remember Dr. King's dream by pursuing their own dreams.

"We should all do the work that Martin Luther King Jr. would have done if he'd lived," Drew said.

Even if you missed Monday's celebrations, James Shields reminded us that MLK Day is something communities can celebrate anytime. "It's always a good day to come together."

### Continuing MLK Day Events at Guilford

Friday, Jan. 25 - The Movie Movement presents "Get on the Bus" and Community Meal in the Greenleaf 6:30 pm-10:30 pm

Tuesday, Jan. 29 - "Remember the Titans" Coach Herman Boone to speak in Sternberger Auditorium 7:00 pm

