

Staff Editorial

Diversity plan needs student involvement to succeed

For the years we are at Guilford, we are constantly reminded of the seven core values.

They are in the student handbooks we receive at orientation, are splashed across the college's Web site and literally hang over our heads as we walk across the quad.

However, hanging an embroidered flag from a lamp post often has little to do with the reality of life on a college campus.

From Guilford's former nickname, "The Plantation," to the Bryan incident in 2007, conflicts have arisen between reality and the touted values, especially community, diversity and equality. In connection with the Strategic Long Range Plan (SLRP), the Guilford community is working hard to alleviate such conflicts through the creation of a diversity plan.

Work began on the plan in 2004 in hopes of "transform(ing) Guilford College into an anti-racist multicultural institution." To meet such ends, the plan outlines specific goals and action steps to improve our community.

The official document, Connecting Communities and Embracing Diversity:

A Seven-Year Plan for Guilford College (2008-2015), has been painstakingly revised by campus offices and organizations including the Anti-Racism Team, the Board of Trustees, members of the SLRP Committee and most recently, the faculty.

However, students remain largely unaware of this significant document.

Despite several allusions within the document to the core values and "creating an academic institution where a variety of persons and perspectives are welcome," the student body is visibly absent from the diversity plan discussion.

This document and the subsequent policies that it will create will affect students greatly.

From the number of international students to the hiring of new faculty members to even the course catalog, Guilford will be changing; and it is vitally important that students make their almost 3,000 voices heard.

Soon, a new draft of the diversity plan will be posted to the Guilford Beacon. Read it. As students, we are responsible for actively seeking answers and making suggestions.

Community Senate is our link to the SLRP Committee and their work on the plan. Speak to your Senate representatives; ask them questions, tell them your concerns and offer your ideas.

We can repeatedly claim to be a community, but the title is meaningless until we all actively peruse the common goal of diversity at Guilford.

Today's Lesson: CCE friend to friend



with
Paula
Wilder

I believe that part of our success in life is defined by obtaining and fostering relationships with others. We can graduate from college, get a great job, make a lot of money, and have all the material things we need, but still not have true success.

Our personal growth and success really depend on what we learn as we interact with others, whether it is with classmates, friends, partners, spouses, or even children.

The CCE Administration believes in the importance of our personal growth as it relates to interaction with others.

Joylynn Rasmussen, CCE student success & persistence coordinator, envisioned a program that would match returning students with new students in mentoring relationships.

Rasmussen started the mentoring program fall of 2007 with just seven mentors, and this year has seen it grow to 30 mentors. The mentors are CCE students who desire to help new students succeed at Guilford.

Mentors meet with their mentees one-on-one in order to provide encouragement and help.

The mentor provides a place that the mentee can ask questions, voice concerns, or receive guidance.

The mentor program is open to all CCE students.

Nicole Cornett, a CCE junior, is working with Rasmussen this year to train and help recruit CCE students as mentors. Cornett believes the strength of the program is the mentors themselves.

"They have a true heart to help others," said Cornett. "They aren't getting paid. They give their time and knowledge because they want to see others succeed."

Cornett got involved with the program because she desires to help answer questions, listen to concerns, and just be a "shoulder to cry on" if that is what someone needs.

Senior Jennifer Agee participated in the program as a mentor because she wanted to provide support for someone. She believes that having a mentor when she first started classes would have made her transition into Guilford easier.

"It would have been nice to have a 'go to' person that I could depend on," said Agee. "I wanted to get involved (with the program) so that I could be that person for someone else."

Kimberly Hill began attending Guilford in the fall of 2007. She said, "I felt really out of

place as an adult first-year student. I had been out of school for nearly 10 years and I had a fear that I would not fit in. I really needed to talk to someone that understood."

CCE students often struggle with balancing the demands of classes, work, family, and even volunteer commitments. The mentors can't change the pressures, but as CCE students they can relate and understand the unique problems that adult students face.

Another problem faced by new students is isolation. Most CCE students rush out of class to their next responsibility. There isn't the cafeteria or the dorm room to connect with other students.

Hill recognized her isolation and decided to seek help from a mentor. She said, "I was able to communicate with someone and saw that I wasn't alone."

Agee agrees. "What better way to get off to a good start than to have guidance from someone who has been through what you are going through," she said.

By getting involved in mentoring, you can widen your success at Guilford. You'll not only complete your education with a potential for a successful job with great pay, but you'll also find success when you invest in a relationship that will serve to enlighten and to encourage you and someone else.

For more information, contact Joylynn Rasmussen at rasmussenjh@guilford.edu.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing in response to the "Obama and McCain's definitions of rich reflect their ability to relate to voters" article in the September 5, 2008 issue (Forum, page 10) of the Guilfordian. Rarely have I seen a more biased or more poorly researched article such as this. We all know that McCain will never get a fair shot at representation on the campus of Guilford College but your paper should, at the very least, attempt to present a more balanced view. The "facts" pertaining to Obama's income, as detailed in your article, are incorrect and grossly deflated while McCain's figures are magically inflated. Obama "proves his dedication" while McCain "wears \$500 shoes." Are you serious? And if you are going to quote a Democrat's opinion of McCain, shouldn't you, in the spirit of equality, at least follow up with a Republican's view of Obama? And how, exactly, does Obama's "upper middle class background" mirror his proposed tax hike policies? Sadly, I got exactly what I anticipated when I read the article. Come on Guilford, we can do better than this.

Driana Kadlecik

Temporary stores invade campuses

By Matt Boulette
STAFF WRITER

Flip flops and loungewear: the essentials of college living. At least that's the sentiment of a new trend of temporary stores rapidly encroaching on campuses across the country.

Brands such as Havaianas and Victoria's Secret's Pink are gradually establishing their presence on college campuses from the University of Arizona to the University of Alabama, promoting brand loyalty among young consumers.

Shops such as these emerge temporarily, reap monumental profits at the expense of local businesses and school shops, then dissolve back into the outlet malls from whence they came.

Sure, they generally let the schools that host them nibble on the table scraps, but often at the expense of educational and community interests.

According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, Victoria's Secret's Pink profited \$20,000 in a single day at Penn State University in the 2007-2008 school year. A division of L'Oreal boasts profits from their "ministores" on campuses similar to those of traditional stores. Sales are only expected to accelerate as stores expand to more and more colleges.

Have campus communities so thoroughly decomposed as to invite such an obvious intrusion? What precedent is being set here?

Today it's just a few t-shirts and sandals, operating in harmony with the campus bookstore and offering freedom of choice to students.

A few years from now, how permissive will we be?

Will we rent out buildings to these businesses, perhaps allow them to advertise in our libraries, perhaps subsidize our cafeterias to Taco Bell, our bookstores to Barnes and Noble?

Maybe Founders Hall should be expanded to

include room for a Hollister and an Orange Julius as well.

If these companies are allowed to expand as they intend, colleges and universities across the nation will be reduced to little more than brick-paved open air malls.

Kiosks hocking overpriced sunglasses and skin cream will suck the vitality of student culture straight from the neck.

The vampiric lust of these brands will quickly deplete the already moth-ridden pockets of students, and having grubbed every dollar possible, the temporary ventures will wave goodbye, their own pockets bulging.

Permitting temporary stores to infiltrate our campuses may seem immediately lucrative to the school, but will ultimately only serve to pierce the heart of campus unity.

I dare not deny that allowing our campuses to be commercialized brings the potential of revenue that can be devoted to student groups. The problem lies in where our lines are drawn.

The college culture has thus far been relatively insulated from the consumer culture. These shops are a blatant exploitation of our culture, opening the door for the wholesale destruction of a very rare insulation. No matter how friendly their reassurances, no matter how generous their donations, their lustrous grins will last only as long as our wallets are open.

If Guilford ever encounters the temptation to commercialize, I sincerely hope our response will be an emphatic "No." Our campus should be regarded not as just another market, nor as another opportunity to establish brand loyalty, but as a unique and separate community of learners. Our loyalties should lie with the school we attend and the community we contribute to, not with the companies that manufacture our vanities.