

## Staff Editorial

Redefining  
diversity

This past Tuesday, America experienced an unprecedented change in leadership. It finally broke from its long legacy of white leaders from the upper crust, opting instead for a minority candidate with ties to – and so far, seemingly, a deep understanding of – the lower classes. After eight years of George W. Bush's leadership, it was very obvious: we were ready for a change, and a major one.

Change takes many forms. In President Obama's case, it means choosing to work across party lines – a choice for which he has already been repeatedly lambasted. Instead of sticking to appointing cabinet members strictly from within the Democratic party, Obama has taken a more diverse approach.

Strangely, though Obama's whole campaign centered on the importance of diversity and bi-partisanship in government, the many who criticize him appear to have forgotten that. It seems that America has a similar problem to Guilford in its generally accepted definition of diversity as a one-sided phenomenon.

We must remember, both in our lives on this campus and outside of it, that true diversity is multifaceted and difficult to achieve. Diversity does not mean accepting only those viewpoints that you can tolerate; it means allowing for viewpoints of every variety, even those that you downright abhor. And unity, another emphasis in the Obama campaign, requires not only acceptance of all forms of diversity, but active work across its many branches.

Let us take a page from this administration's leadership and work with those that differ from us instead of simply writing them off as wrong or ignorant. Whether it's between races, political parties, athletes and non-athletes, or otherwise, our campus has many divides that can only be bridged through active discussion and cooperation – but that's the second step. The first step is a broader definition of diversity that allows for all sorts of difference, even those that we do not necessarily like.

The editorial board of

The Guilfordian consists of five section editors, two photo editors, a layout editor, an art director, a managing editor, and the editor-in-chief.

Reflecting Guilford College's core Quaker values, the ideas and content of Staff Editorials are chosen through consensus of all eleven editors.

## Get involved on campus



CCE SGA president, Jessica Butler, encourages all students to find a place where they can get involved and can give back to the Guilford community.

"I just think that everyone should become involved in some way. We have got to be good Guilford Quakers – woo-hoo – and support our college," said the newly appointed CCE SGA president, Jessica Butler, when asked why CCE students should get involved with the SGA.

Although Butler is passionate about her role as president, her open-mindedness was evident, especially when she didn't chastise me for my lack of involvement in the SGA during my three years at Guilford.

Although I expected a rebuke, Butler explained she believes that part of the college experience at Guilford involves giving back to the college in some way, but recognizes people have different interests and passions.

For Butler, she sees her role as the CCE SGA president as her way of giving back. She wants to use her role to help others find where they can get involved at Guilford.

Butler believes that there is a place for every student to serve that makes a difference for the college and for the students, faculty and staff.

"We should build healthy traditions that we can leave behind to help the Guilford community after we are gone," said Butler.

Last semester, Butler was part of helping to begin a new tradition for CCE students in hopes to help relieve some of the exam week stress.

During the week, the SGA provided food and drinks in Hendricks Hall. They also hired massage therapists to help alleviate some tension for the students.

"Massage therapists were there from 5 to 7 (p.m.) and didn't rest for one minute. We had someone in every chair for every minute for every day," said Butler.

This semester, Butler hopes to tackle some other issues that CCE students have brought to her attention, like the need for a longer bookstore hours. She also realizes that Saturday-only students feel disconnected since most activities occur Monday through Friday.

CCE students pay an activity fee each semester and she wants to give that mon-

ey back to the students through seminars, food, drinks, and even massage therapy.

Ideas and suggestions for how the SGA spends the student fees are always welcome. One way to get those ideas conveyed is to attend the monthly SGA meetings.

The meetings are held on Sunday afternoons when there won't be class conflicts and even children are welcome to attend. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 25 at 4 p.m. in Hendricks Hall.

She encourages all CCE students to come and find out more about the SGA at the January meeting. The board will describe their job responsibilities and opportunities for service, and, as always, take suggestions for how to better serve the CCE community.

Several SGA officers will be graduating this semester, so Butler hopes to be able to fill those positions with innovative and passionate people. Elections are held in April.

Even if you have never considered participating in the SGA, this might be a great time to find out more. Butler said, "Get involved."

She wants CCE students to be proud of being Guilford Quakers and knows that involvement, whether it is with campus government or some other activity (tutoring, mentoring, writing) helps a student feel like part of the community, enact change, and make a difference.

Guilford a good bang  
for the buck?

By Ian Young  
STAFF WRITER

According to Princeton Review's "100 Best Value Colleges of 2009," seven North Carolina colleges and universities can take the honor of providing a great bang for the buck. Unfortunately, however, Guilford College is not on the list.

The list includes schools in the area such as UNCG, UNC Chapel Hill, Elon, and Duke.

For those of us who have loans up to our necks just to be able to go to this school, you have to wonder, am I getting what I pay for?

Being one of the many who are paying fairly little now, but am already tens of thousands in debt, this ranking really makes me think about the "value" I am getting out of this college.

Personally, the main reason I came to Guilford was because of the financial aid the school gave me. I was amazed how low my tuition was after all the aid the school gave me and continues to give me every year.

"The cost is better than what I might pay at other schools, but it sucks that you have to pay so much if you need more than 18 credits a semester," said junior Isabel Kelliher. "I think Guilford is a good value for students who aren't exactly sure what they want to do when they

come to college, mostly because the school makes you take pretty diverse classes."

Junior Ryan Phelan agreed that Guilford academics were a good value, but feels that the social scene is lacking.

"The academics here are good for what you pay, but I think they could offer more social things like clubs and activities," said Phelan.

Ryan "Big Worm" Jarrell, a former student at Guilford, commented, "Yeah, the academics were OK, the class sizes were really small and intimate. I really like that, no, I mean I really like that."

I must say, I think the value of Guilford College is something that one really can't find out by studying a survey.

Once you get into the thick of it and have a few years behind your belt, you really begin to appreciate all that Guilford has to offer.

As Jarrell puts it, "I don't trust those college surveys, never did. I just had to experience it to find out if it would be good for me."

All in all, I would just say live it up now and get the best experience while you can. Because pretty soon we're all going to be working our nine-to-fives trying to pay off our loans, and there certainly aren't any Serendipity celebrations in the working world.

## Letter to the Editor

I walk beneath the flag boasting Guilford's claim to appreciation of Diversity on my way to class every day. As a part of the Diversity Plan, the school plans to boost its American Indian student population over the next few years. However, this is going to require institutional accommodation rather than the expectation of assimilation.

For the third time since my acceptance, I was fined for having "evidence of burning" in my room because of the shell that I use for smudging, our ancient way of praying using sacred medicines that come from Mother Earth and are burned to go to Creator through smoke, carrying our prayers to father sky. I understand that there are rules for the residence halls, but this is the point where Guilford needs to decide whether this diversity that they are in search of is truly a goal of the institution.

If the institution is not willing to make accommodations for students that don't come from mainstream white cultural backgrounds, then it should cease to be marketed the way it is, boasting the seven core values of Quakerism. Instead, the school should be honest with perspective students and call itself a White school, because without a doubt, white students are the only true residents on this campus.

We are supposed to smudge where we live and sleep. My ancestors have had to hide their spiritual practices for 500 years in order to survive. I refuse to do it anymore, especially at a school that I chose to attend on the basis of its institutional values. Accepting American Indian students involves more than letting us in, it involves accepting our whole selves, our spiritual and cultural selves; these cannot be separated, nor should that be the expectation.

Marshall Jeffries, senior