

## Greensboro community calls for apology from Mayor Knight

By Victor Lopez  
STAFF WRITER

Greensboro Mayor Bill Knight's failure to apologize for comments he made during last year's election has prompted leaders of Greensboro's black community to publicly call for Knight's apology at a city council meeting in March.

While campaigning for reelection last September, Knight said he believed former police chief Robert White and current police chief Tim Bellamy, both black, were hired because of their race, according to the Greensboro News & Record.

Knight added during a candidate's forum that he felt former Police Chief David Wray, who is white, was forced out of office because of his race," wrote News & Record staff reporter Ryan Seals. "Knight said the most qualified candidate should be chosen as chief, regardless of race."

In January, Bellamy announced his intent to retire, stating that the move was unrelated to the comments Knight made during the mayoral election. According to the News & Record, Bellamy later stated that Mayor Knight's comments regarding his race hurt him both personally and as a police official, indicating that the mayor's comments were a part of why he was choosing to retire.

Bellamy was appointed as interim chief in 2007 following the departure of Wray, who left amid allegations of racial profiling and improper investigations of black police officers.

Many Greensboro residents, like Rev. Clarence Shuford, president of the Pulpit Forum of Clergy, addressed council during the meeting.

"Many citizens have come to me on the issue. I realize this is a touchy issue, but for many years I remember people being labeled because of the color of their skin. I urge for this apology so we, as a community, can move forward. We want to continue to grow as a diverse city. Things like this create a divide in the city," said Shuford.

Shuford told The Guilfordian in a phone interview that the mayor's comments did not just affect the chief, but also the entire Greensboro community. "Many remember the time when they were denied jobs because they were black," said Shuford, "the mayor owes the community an apology so they can begin to heal from his words."

Other leaders such as Rev. Cardes Brown, president of the Greensboro chapter of the NAACP and pastor of New Light Missionary Baptist Church, have fruitlessly called on the city council to denounce the Mayor's comments.

Brown said clergy and community plan to take further action based on the reaction of the city council. Brown felt that by other council members remaining silent on this issue it showed their agreement with the mayor.

Rev. Nelson Johnson of Beloved Community Center and The Pulpit Forum agreed, adding, "Our mayor took the occasion to appeal to blatant racism using the chief. He insulted

those in this city who have struggled for equal rights. That was the absolutely wrong way to address race."

According to the Carolina Peacemaker, Guilford County Commissioner Melvin "Skip" Alston stood beside Brown and supporters during the press conference and expressed his support for the NAACP's actions. "The mayor's comments offended a whole segment of people. If he didn't mean it, then he should apologize. If that is still his opinion, then we should know how he feels. We want to know if this is his opinion about other African Americans in high positions," said Alston.

Neither Knight nor Bellamy was at the city council meeting. However, Bellamy's office told The Guilfordian that the chief would just like to move forward with his life and focus on his duties as chief.

According to the Carolina Peacemaker, District 2 Council member Jim Kee disagreed with the clergy's assessment of the statement. Addressing the city council, he said, "I just want to state that over the past months, citizens have come to me upset. I understand your concerns. I do disagree with the assessment made with the statement. The policy that hired the current chief will be the same policy that hires the next police chief. I realize you cannot control how other people see you, but you can control how you see other people and yourself. I want to state if we're going to progress as a city and as a people, then we need to focus on what we have in common than what separates us."

### PROTEST

## Tea Party gathers in GSO

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of radio personality Bill Atkins, drawing raucous cheers from the crowd.

The demonstration's principal focus was on economic issues, especially reducing taxes and balancing the federal budget.

"It's our money and they're not spending it wisely," said Charles Ward of Salisbury. "That's why we're so irate."

First-year Dustin Flanary, co-chair of the Guilford College Republicans, proposed an additional reason. Tea Partiers may feel they are not being paid the attention they deserve in the political arena.

"A majority of them are not big businesspeople or academics, (so) they tend to lose respect within the political community," Flanary said.

Participants ranged in age from toddlers proudly clutching balloons to veterans solemnly discussing the nation's future.

Jim Fleet, 87, spoke of federal unwillingness to place reason over rhetoric in the healthcare debate. He views the bill's passage on March 23, 2010, as a result of government ignoring the peoples' wishes.

"They're trying to say that this is the way it's always been done, but if it's always been done wrong, let's quit," said Fleet.

There was also a range in racial diversity, albeit a narrow one. The vast majority of Tea Party rally-goers tend to be white. Christopher Phillips, 44, a black Greensboro resident, countered media allegations

that the Tea Party movement is fueled by racist fervor.

MSNBC host Keith Olbermann recently alleged that the Tea Party is an all-white political faction devoted to persecuting those "not like them."

"I didn't see (racism) here today, I don't see it (while) watching TV," Phillips said.

Some protesters viewed their cause as linked with their faith.

Kim Hanner, 47, held a sign citing 2 Chronicles 7:14. This Old Testament verse states that a country whose people return to faithfulness will be divinely "healed."

Several political candidates attended the rally, such as commercial realtor Rob Brafford, who is running for North Carolina Senate. Brafford briefly coached basketball at Guilford.

"If I win, I still represent the people," said Brafford.

Associate Professor of Political Science Ken Gilmore expressed doubt about Tea Party candidates' ability to apply their ideology to real-world policies.

"It all comes down to what are you going to cut?" Gilmore said, referring to the dilemma conservatives would face when forced to trim spending from defense, Medicare, or Social Security in order to reduce the federal budget.

The Tea Party has put on many displays of political force in the past year. Exactly how they will change the political landscape remains to be seen.

## Understanding Racism workshop debuts May 12-14

By MacKenzie Perkins  
STAFF WRITER

Over the past year, the Anti-Racism training workshop has been redesigned and renamed the Understanding Racism workshop.

The newly revised program, facilitated by Julie Burke of the education department and Jorge Zeballos and Jada Drew of the multicultural education department, will be put to the test May 12-14, when the new format will be used for the first time.

Last summer, a planning committee led by Professor of Economics Bob Williams and Multicultural Education Director Holly Wilson met to discuss the revision process after budget reductions were enacted a year and a half ago. These financial restrictions coupled with concerns voiced by past participants over the lecture-based format of the previous workshops made restructuring the program imperative.

"I think that there needed to be more of an emphasis on the personal experience," said Jada Drew, workshop facilitator and Africana community coordinator. "There wasn't a lot of individual work. I think that the piece that was missing was that personal investment, and (that) understanding (of) how each individual plays a role in the system."

The revisions to the workshop aim to address the concerns over how the training has been conducted in the past.

"The process has been redesigned to create a lot of space for that kind of interaction, and I think also, that this is an opportunity to do something a bit more Guilford-focused," said Jorge Zeballos, workshop facilitator and Latino community program coordinator and international student advisor.

Williams indicated that while the lecture format has its benefits, the new program design offers more than the former.

"Trying to talk about racism and being able to discuss certain racist structures in a couple of days is not easy," said Williams. "A lecture format allows for quicker explanation of material, but it doesn't allow for people to chew on it."

The planning committee has found a way for the budget restrictions to work in their favor. In the past, different facilitators were brought in to conduct the

workshops and the participant experience varied accordingly. Much of the workshop funds were spent bringing outside facilitators to Guilford.

"We felt like we had the expertise at Guilford already to put on these workshops. Rather than spending that money bringing in external consultants, we could spend that money ... developing a group of facilitators at Guilford who could do the workshops for us," said Tom Guthrie, planning committee member and assistant professor of anthropology. "We could tailor (the workshops) more to Guilford's specific needs. It just seemed like a great opportunity."

"With a Guilford Focus" seemed to be the catchphrase of everyone involved. The revisions to the curriculum of the workshops cater to the initiatives of Guilford's strategic plan and the diversity plan.

"We do obviously want people to develop a process for understanding racism and white supremacy in a larger society context, but then we're going to spend sometime also trying to get a sense of how these issues play out here at Guilford and what is it that we would like to see that isn't in place now," said Zeballos. "How the participants see themselves having an impact engaging in the process of transforming the institution."

Everyone involved in the revision process acknowledged that the Understanding Racism workshop offers participants a different experience than a class on race might. The workshops are intensive, meeting for a total of 20 hours over the course of three days.

"A lot of our classes at Guilford focus on race and racism, but not everyone is going to take those classes," said Guthrie. "So this is an opportunity for people to have a time to meet and talk about these issues outside of a class context."

Recruitment efforts are aimed at students, faculty and staff, "allowing for a different kind of diversity than the classroom might allow," said Williams.

Zeballos emphasized the need for community participation.

"I want everyone to see how important it is for all of us to be engaged in helping the school reach that goal," said Zeballos. "We may only have time to do a couple of things, and it may seem like a minor effort, but everything contributes, as a collective if we all put a little effort into trying to make this a reality. Then we all have a better chance of making it happen."