

Exhibit shows struggles, triumphs of first black alumni

BY SHELBY SMITH
STAFF WRITER

A path of arrows begins outside of King Hall. The arrows lead inside, where they then evolve into a timeline, where each arrow represents a significant event in Guilford's history.

Starting from its founding in 1837, the timeline progresses to Guilford's history of integration. The final arrow leads to two rooms filled with the story of Guilford's integration as told by its first black students.

On March 29, the Multicultural Education Department presented the Early Black Alumni Art and History Exhibit. As part of the yearlong commemoration of the 50th anniversary of integration at Guilford, called "Journeys into Blackness," the exhibit shared the stories of Guilford's first black students through video and written interviews, archival newspaper articles, as well as portraits and photographs.

The exhibit emphasized the fact that an understanding of its history as an integrated institution is crucial to Guilford. Many students do not realize that Guilford first integrated in 1962.

"I was surprised (by) how late Guilford integrated," said junior Anney Bolgiano. "It's so important to understand the history of the school you go to. I'm glad I came."

"It's important for an institution to remember its history," said Interim Director

for Diversity Training Jorge Zeballos. "This is our way of looking back at our history."

At this exhibit, the history did more than just hang on the wall. Some of Guilford's first black students attended the event to offer perspectives on their early Guilford experiences.

Meri-Li Douglas is one of those first students. While at Guilford, she founded the Brothers and Sisters in Blackness, the first group at Guilford that promoted unity and pride among black students at Guilford.

"(The exhibit) was amazing and professionally done," said Douglas. "It made me try to remember after blocking it out."

The event's organizers hope current students take some lessons away from the alumni's experiences.

"I hope people gain courage and hope as they look into the eyes of the early black alumni," said Africana Community Coordinator Jada Drew. "It wasn't easy back then."

The presentation of history through art was a crucial aspect to the exhibit.

"This is something different," said Drew. "It's bigger than just interviews."

"Art is a great way to deal with tough community issues," said Engaged Learning and Teaching Specialist for the Center for Principled Problem Solving Judy Harvey.

While those community issues were brought up, the ultimate goal of the event



James McCorkle '66 sees himself on a banner for the Early Black Alumni Art and History Exhibit for the first time. Both alumni and students celebrated African-American students at Guilford.

was to celebrate the trail-blazing students.

"This was to honor early African-American students," said Harvey.

Organizers like Drew and Harvey hope that the "Journeys into Blackness" series will further understanding and increase awareness of racial issues facing Guilford.

"I hope people understand it wasn't an issue of whites versus blacks," said Drew. "This is a collective history of people working together."

The exhibit is currently in the process of gaining a more permanent place on Guilford's campus.

Bryan Series: there will be no war tonight

GWEN IFILL WAS MODERATOR OF THE DISCUSSION BETWEEN REPUBLICAN JEB BUSH AND DEMOCRAT BILL BRADLEY

BY LAURA HAY
STAFF WRITER

When you see a Republican and a Democrat on stage together, you expect war. However, the Bryan Series bipartisan discussion between former U.S. Senator Bill Bradley and former Florida Governor Jeb Bush turned out to be surprisingly civil.

Guilford hosted the third Bryan Series presentation of the 2012-13 season on March 28. The event featured Bush and Bradley in a conversation focused on current political issues moderated by Gwen Ifill, PBS News Hour senior correspondent and moderator of the 2004 and 2008 Vice Presidential debates. This event replaced the original program with Caroline Kennedy, who canceled due to conflicting commitments.

The presentation was specifically designed to be a civil bipartisan discussion.

"Anyone looking for a nasty debate will be sorely disappointed," said Associate Vice President for Communications and Marketing Ty Buckner before the event.

Hot-button issues such as foreign policy, immigration, national debt and political change were all discussed. However, the primary issue addressed was the deep societal divide between Democrats and Republicans.

"We can associate with whoever we want, and we're increasingly associating ourselves with people who agree with the things that we believe in," said Bush. "And politically, we're doing the same."

Ifill agreed with Bush's comment. "From morning until night you can watch (news programs) with only the point of view you agree with," said Ifill.

Also on the table for discussion were financial contributions in politics.

"One of the things that contributes to deadlock is the role of money in Washington," said Bradley. "Courtesy of the Supreme Court, there are really no limits on the amount of money that can be spent."

Continuous humor from both sides kept the debate from becoming an angry attack on the other party. The speakers poked fun at both themselves and the difficult subject matter.

Commenting on the onstage lighting, Bradley quipped, "I am fundamentally disoriented when I can't see an audience because it makes me feel like I'm playing Atlantic City, and I should be singing."

Ifill ended the event by reading a question from the audience asking for the presenters' picks in the NCAA basketball final. This allowed the evening to end on a positive note, talking about something less serious than politics.

Those who attended the event appreciated the efforts to remain civil.

"It was very enlightening that they both said what they thought but in a respectful way," said attendee Rhonda Prior. "If people would continue to do that, we might be able to make some progress."

"I would say that we need to do more of this debate-style (program), where you have a heavyweight on one side and a heavyweight on the other," said a man who wished to be identified only as an interested Greensboro citizen. "I think it's a good format. I can see this being on television."

While the discussion was a positive one, some believe it will not make much of an impact on America's political landscape.

"At best, perhaps, the audience gets to see two different men from two different parties discussing common ground," said Associate Professor of Political Science Ken Gilmore.

Overall, the evening was a positive one, as two usually warring factions put aside their differences and addressed some of the United States' biggest political problems.

"We certainly have the capability (to improve politics in America), and if we have it, I think many of our problems will begin to change," said Bush.

CHABOTAR

Chabotar announces June 2014 retirement

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"Kent has been an excellent manager of the college," said Professor of English Jim Hood. "The things that he was brought in to fix have really gotten back on track."

"Like Kent, I really wish there was something we could do about salaries, but there's only so much money in the pot. There are things that are really a matter of emphasis rather than right or wrong."

While many people are well-equipped to lead Guilford into the future, the selection process will be an arduous one.

"The board of trustees drives the train," said Fetrow. "It's their decision ultimately, but with very close consultation with faculty and staff. Also, there will be a committee chaired by someone on the board with faculty, staff and probably a few student leaders as well."

For over a decade, Chabotar has been the face of Guilford. When obstacles are successfully navigated, he is celebrated. When problems occur, he is criticized. Regardless of anyone's personal feeling towards Chabotar, it is undeniable that he will be remembered at Guilford for many years to come.

"I have said repeatedly that the Guilford history books will be kind to Kent Chabotar," said Fetrow. "He was given a mess, to be quite frank, and he is leaving us in very good financial standing."

"(With) any president, any leadership role, even my role, it is easy to throw rocks. He has always looked at me and said about Guilford — about anywhere — to always leave it better than you found it, period."