

Justice for Lennon Lacy still evasive, Guilford students join together in support of family

BY NOELLE LANE & NICOLE ZELNIKER
GUEST WRITER & SENIOR WRITER

Seventeen-year-old Lennon Lacy was beginning his college search. He was on the football team. He had dreams of going to college.

That is why his mother Claudia Lacy thought it strange that the police claimed Lennon took his own life.

On Aug. 29, Lennon was found dead in a trailer park.

"His graduation would have been coming up next year," said Claudia. "I see what his life could have been, and I'm stuck with a lot of unanswered questions."

According to Claudia, much about Lennon's death does not add up.

"He was taken," said Claudia. "I know I would have sensed if he had been depressed. Lennon would never have given his life like that."

A neighbor reported that they saw Lennon hanging and called the police, but by the time the police arrived, the body had been taken down.

"The woman said that somebody killed themselves," said Claudia. "I didn't know who it was."

Though the police report he was depressed, Lennon was not emotionally distant, according to family and friends.

"It's strange to me, they say he was depressed," said family friend Portia Shipman. "He was getting ready to start the next day."

Aug. 29 would have been Lennon's first time playing as the football team's starter.

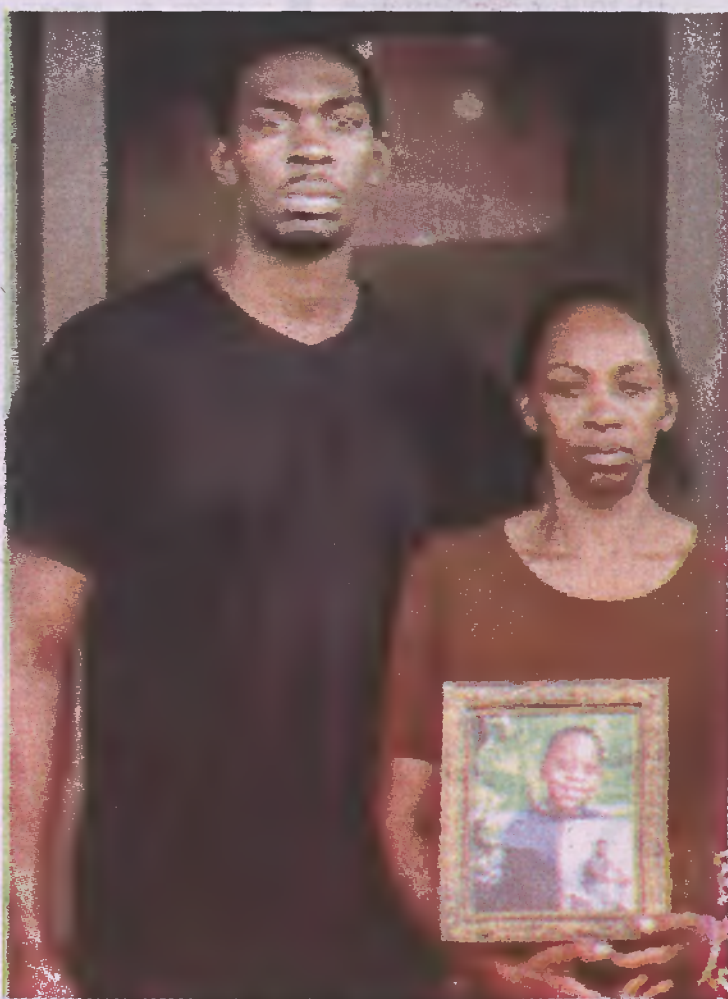
"I talked to him a week before," said brother Pierre Lacy. "He was so excited, he lifted me up over his head. I'm 220 pounds and 6 foot 4. He picked me up because he wanted to show me how much stronger he got."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is backing the investigation of the case and hoping that this is not the lynching it seems to be.

"In 2014, we would hope that it was not a lynching, (but) they're asking the (family) to accept the fact that their son might have walked out of his home the night before his big football game," said National NAACP Chair of the Legislative Political Action Committee William Barber in an official statement.

At Guilford, students are raising funds to support the family.

"He's just Lennon, but what happened to him is bigger," said Claudia. "College kids are getting



Pierre (L.) and Claudia Lacy (R.) hold photos of Lennon Lacy outside of their home in Bladenboro.

involved to look for closure."

The one thing the family asks of the Guilford community is to keep asking questions.

"Get (Lennon's story) out into the public as much as possible," said Claudia. "Things should not be hidden. They should be known."

On Dec. 1, Shipman came to Guilford to speak with a group of students during Community Senate.

"It makes it more real," said sophomore Mara Stern. "It's really easy for people to think that something's important, but to see someone that was actually affected empowers people to do something."

Students plan to join the family in Bladenboro for a protest on Dec. 6. Each student is being asked to bring a children's book for the community.

"Lennon's brother is going to start the first youth program in Bladenboro," said Portia. "He wants to do it in honor of Lennon."

Ultimately, Claudia, Pierre and the rest of the family just want to know what happened to Lennon.

"I would accept anything, if you can explain it to me," said Claudia. "I would accept the fact that my son took his own life if you can explain it to me."

GSO and WS fight homelessness, starting with military veterans

BY CARLTON SKINNER
STAFF WRITER

"Military service, particularly during wartime, can leave lasting mental and physical scars that make it very difficult to reintegrate into civilian society," said Ross Kintzer, a three-time veteran of the war in Iraq.

"There is absolutely a correlation between homelessness and military service. When you lose your capacity to function normally, even in a safe environment, you are losing a lot."

Kintzer suffers from debilitating post-traumatic stress disorder, which he developed while fighting overseas. According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, 50,000 veterans have no home.

Eight percent of the homeless population in both Greensboro and Winston-Salem are veterans, according to counts done by each city last January. Now, both cities are pooling their resources in an effort to combat, and eventually end, veteran homelessness by 2015.

"We are in the final stages of a major funding effort to purchase land and buildings that should allow us to complete our mission of not only ending veteran homelessness, but also chronic homelessness in general," said Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines in an email interview.

The cities were among the 69 cities selected to participate in Zero: 2016, a collaborative effort in communities across the United States to end chronic homelessness by 2016. It is led by Community Solutions, a nonprofit organization based in New York. While homeless veterans are the effort's initial focus, the ultimate goal of the partnership between cities is to combat homelessness as a whole.

"We work with homeless individuals with the objective of getting them into permanent housing as rapidly as possible," said Mayor Joines. "So far, this has included making available, as well as building, over 600 housing units."

The cities hope to share data and strategies for dealing with homelessness in a coordinated way. Community Solutions will work

with each city to help them improve their methods of data gathering, while sharing solutions for facing the problem, between cities throughout the nation.

The mayors of both cities understand that a full-scale elimination of the problem is not possible, but say their cities hope to quickly establish programs that will give homeless veterans the resources they need to cope with being homeless.

Other cities in the U.S. have had great success in implementing programs that are focused on not only providing people living on the street shelter, but also resources for their survival. In Portland, Oregon, the city has implemented a plan called "A Key Not a Card" as part of their 10 year plan to end homelessness. The program enables agencies working with the homeless to set up those who qualify with permanent housing for up to two years while they secure lasting employment or public benefits.

Elsewhere, in Memphis, Tennessee, two Rhodes College students started a newspaper called The Bridge. The paper gives a voice to members of the community — personal accounts of experiences of homelessness are printed alongside supplemental material from staff writers. People experiencing homelessness are interviewed and trained to sell the paper in the city, providing them with an income.

By providing lasting resources and training, those employed by The Bridge are empowered and encouraged to take control of their lives.

"I'd say almost half of the homeless in the country are homeless as a result of unemployment," said James Shields, director of the Bonner Center for Community Service. "So, I think it is important to try to empower people, but I think part of that empowerment involves taking a look at our government's policies regarding the homeless. It's important for Greensboro and Winston-Salem to attempt to provide a solution to the problem, and not just be a Band-Aid."

POSTER

Campaign encourages healthy, consensual relationships

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other "My Strength" messages included in the campaign aim to combat date rape and other forms of sexual violence.

"This is the year 2014," said sophomore Darion Bayles. "With all the resources we have we should be able to show each other love, regardless of race or sexuality."

According to sophomore campaign leader Molly Anne Marcotte, rather than taking a blind eye to sexual violence and refuting those who come forward with experiences of inappropriate behavior, it is important to embrace each other with love and support.

"First, in every (sexual) situation you are in, not only asking for consent, but also listening and respecting that person's boundaries after they give it is necessary," said Marcotte.

"Second, help others feel as though these are accessible options that are not so stigmatic.

"Third, if someone does come forward about an experience they had, support and listen to what they need instead of blaming them for what happened."

Campaigns such as these encourage students and faculty to consider how we can improve Guilford's policies.

Guilford College President Jane Fernandes recently approved updates to the Policy on Harassment and Intimidation for Guilford employees.

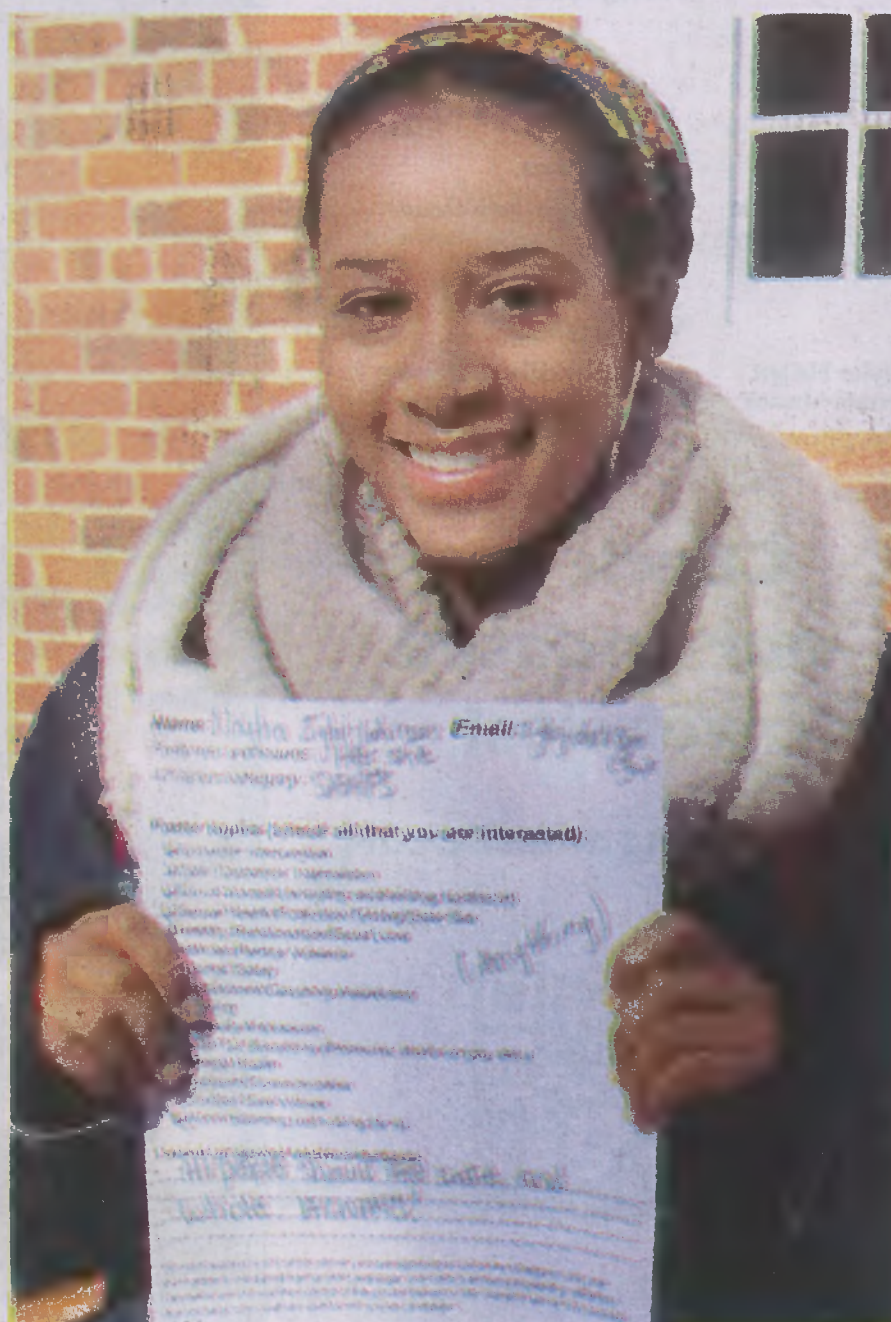
According to Section 3.2 of the Staff Handbook, "sexual harassment of job applicants, employees or students at Guilford College is defined as unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature."

The revised policies intend to more clearly address unacceptable behavior.

Found in Section 3.2 are several updates, including specific instances of inappropriate conduct, third-party situations, types of harassment and details on consensual relationships among teaching staff and students.



Community members hold the posters and forms for the campaign explaining why they stand up against violence.



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