



Nobel prize for peace recipient Elie Wiesel addresses Meredith tonight

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Staff Writer

Nobel Prize for Peace recipient, Elie Wiesel will speak on campus today. The speech is part of Meredith's convocation series and the Summer Reading Program.

Many students have asked, "How did Meredith College get such a prominent speaker like Dr. Elie Wiesel?" The process all started a year ago, with just a "wouldn't it be neat" conversation between Friends of the Library Board member Pat Stumpf and John Kincheloe from Media Services

Stumpf wrote to Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, author, and Nobel Laureate, while Kincheloe talked to various people, including Sam Carothers, campus minister; Lisa Fredenburgh, Interim Director of Convocations, and others who have an influence on convocation speakers. Through their diligence and determination, Wiesel is here today.

Stumpf, a local batik artist, first picked up a book by Wiesel in 1999.

"*All Rivers Run to the Sea* is one of the books I have read and re-read," Stumpf said. "That first time, I got to page 104, about one-fifth of the way

through the book, and my heart ached. I felt compelled to sit down and write to Mr. Wiesel to tell him how sorry I was and that what happened to him should not happen to any child. Not only that, but I also wanted him to know that another Christian woman genuinely cared."

That day, Stumpf began a correspondence that she has kept up over the past four years.

"He replied to me, as I am sure he would do to anyone that wrote to him, and I have tried not to take advantage of his friendliness," Stumpf said. "I wrote to him twice a year, sometimes three, and each time I asked if he would be interested in coming to Raleigh."

The idea got off the ground three years later, when the conversation took place between Stumpf and Kincheloe. After that con-



Dr. Elie Wiesel will address the Meredith community tonight.

Photo courtesy of Boston University website.

versation, according to Stumpf, Kincheloe did a great job of picking out people who could make it happen.

From Carothers to Fredenburgh, the Raleigh-Cary Jewish Federation, to the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust and finally to the Lillian Parker Wallace Lecture Fund, the idea bounced around, gaining momentum and support

at every turn.

"The funds are set up to bring in people of international influence, and Wiesel certainly has that," Fredenburgh said. "We also wanted to create a liaison between Meredith and the Jewish community."

A small exploratory planning group including members of the Convocation Committee, Carothers, Friends of the Library board members, the head of the Raleigh-Cary Jewish Federation and of the N.C.

Council on the Holocaust, and five Rabbis from the local

Jewish community, formed in the beginning to deter-

mine the likelihood of Dr. Wiesel's visit. After his initial acceptance, the group continued to meet once a month throughout the summer.

"Sometimes we talked about him; sometimes we just talked about life," Fredenburgh said concerning the group's monthly meetings. "It was really a joy to meet with these men and women."

Fredenburgh asserted that the function of convocations is to raise the intellectual climate at Meredith.

"It is important that people think widely," Fredenburgh explained. "So when students are sitting together at lunch, we'd like that instead of chatting about what their plans are for the weekend, for students to examine the merit of Mr. Wiesel's convocation points, basically, get down to the nitty-gritty."

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