

Meredith alumna returns to recruit new students

JACKIE BULLOCK
Staff Writer

According to Blair Briggs, she once was too shy to talk to anyone. Coming to Meredith changed that. Before becoming a Processing Assistant in the Office of Admissions, Briggs was a Meredith student, graduating this May with a degree in Business Management. She is from a "three stop light town" in Caswell County and says she went from being a shy freshman who would not talk to anyone to being president of the Meredith Entertainment Association (MEA) during her senior year. She also gave tours and led meetings. "Relatively" speaking, Briggs has company in being a Meredith alumna – two aunts, two cousins, and a second cousin preceded her;

her younger sister, Beth, is a senior at Meredith and plays on the volleyball team.

Briggs started in the Office of Admissions this June. As a Processing Assistant, she processes the applications of prospective students. She also supervises eight current students who make telephone calls to prospective students. Briggs was a student worker in the Admissions Office since August 2001, where she was a telecounselor and gave campus tours. She says of her co workers in the Admissions Office that "we are definitely a team. Everyone's job is important to help bring in the next class."

One of Briggs' favorite memories as a student is the traditional production of Alice in Wonderland. She said that it was fun to see the

faculty and staff outside of class being relaxed and that it is nice they would care enough to take the time to do this for students. She also said that she appreciated it more as a senior than she would have as a freshman because she had the opportunity to build relationships.

As a student, Briggs says that she fell in love with the campus as soon as she got to Meredith and was never homesick. She said that she learned to be very independent and that the environment at Meredith encourages it. She had goals in mind when she came to Meredith and says, "Meredith helped me to achieve them and work toward them. Meredith does a great job in educating women to strive for the best that they can be."

Joseph Nye addresses Meredith community Monday

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In an effort to increase awareness among the Meredith community, and to advocate civic engagement, several convocations have occurred this month for the October Convocations series, including presenters on the women's movement, reproductive rights, anti-Semitism, and 'soft power'. Last Monday, October 25, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. spoke to Meredith College about the phased he coined, "soft power", and the struggle against terrorism.

Joseph Nye is a University Distinguished Service Professor at Harvard University, and the author of several articles and books, including *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (2004). Nye received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University, did postgraduate work at Oxford University on a Rhodes scholarship, and earned a Ph.D. in political science at Harvard University. Nye is an expert in the field of in-

ternational security and politics and has served several positions on the National Security Council Group and National Intelligent Council. In the past, he served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, where he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal with an Oak Leaf Cluster. Currently, Nye is a professor of International Relations at Harvard, and is working on another book.

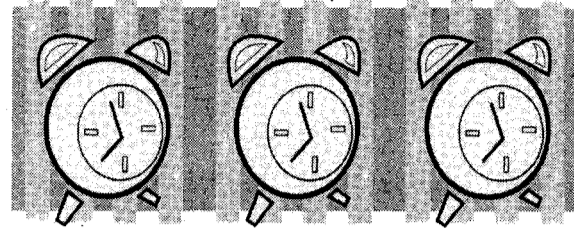
Nye addressed the Meredith community to explain and teach the ways in which soft power can help international politics and the United States' relationship with other countries. Nye coined the term "soft power" in the late eighties; he defines soft power as the ability to get what we want through attraction rather than coercion of payments. He stated that the mentality was that, "That the United States was so strong; that we can do what we want and others have no choice in it." Now, that is no longer the convention.

Nye explained how the attacks that occurred on September 11 are "like a flash of lightning in a summer evening, when you are out hiking and you let it get too dark and all of a sudden you see before you a strange and difficult landscape, and then it goes dark again – and now you have to pick your way through that landscape. And that's where we Americans are, we are trying to find our way around the world today." Nye further said that the two great changes of the twentieth century were illuminated on September 11; globalization and the information revolution. It was not until September 11 that we saw these changes, although they have been around for thirty years. Nye sees globalization, in the latter part of the twentieth century, increasing more rapidly than before; and also the information revolution, all having huge changes – the price of exchanging information through computing, as decreased immensely. Before,

you needed a great deal of money to gain access, now someone could walk into an Internet café and access the Internet for very little.

Nye talked about the Bush administration, and President Bush's policies that affect international relationships. He explained, "President Bush was elected in the year 2000 on a policy which he said that we are going to avoid nation building, and we are going to focus just on the great powers. By September 2002, his new national security strategy says we have more to fear from failed states than we do from great powers, and we need the help of great powers, like China, to help us deal with this." Nye agrees with Bush's goals to reorganize our foreign policy, but he feels that the President was less successful in the means of implementing these goals. He feels that the administration put more emphasis on our military, or our hard power, and neglected our soft power. A power is simply the ability to get oth-

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ers to do the things we want. There are three ways this can be done: threaten someone, pay someone, or attract others to do things. Lastly, attraction is soft power. Nye feels that there has been a tremendous push to focus on the country's hard power, when the administration really needs to focus on the country's soft power. There has been a decline on America's soft power, or our ability to attract others, including countries in Europe and countries that are a part of the Muslim world.

Nye's convocation was welcomed by Dr. Rosalind R. Reichard, the Senior Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and introduced by Caitlin Spicola, Class of 2007. A reception immediately followed the presentation.. Later on that day, at 2:00 p.m., he met with several students and faculty to address specific questions on soft power, and how our country can implement this particular power of ours.