

# Guilford students say campus has long had racial problems

GREENSBORO (AP) — Long before last week's racist attack on a white Student Senate candidate, problems beset Guilford College, a campus founded by Quakers where pacifism is de rigeur and decisions are made by consensus.

"You set up a race problem when you bring black students here, and you say it's a supportive environment, and there is no support system," one student said Tuesday as students voted in a campus election.

Lori Fernald, 20, who is white, was getting ready to enter Founder's Hall with her friend, Khamala, 24, a black senior. While others sidestepped the question of whether Guilford had racial problems before Molly Martin was attacked last week, these two jumped in head-first.

"People have wanted to have a dialogue about race for some time

now, and no one has responded until a white woman was attacked," Fernald said.

College officials say Martin, the incumbent Student Senate president, was knocked unconscious Wednesday night. The attacker then unbuttoned her blouse and wrote the words "nigger lover" across her chest, officials said. No arrests have been made.

The attack occurred in her campus office, where students say many people — including non-students — know that she often worked late at night.

Martin won re-election Tuesday as part of a four-person ticket that includes one black person. The opposition slate, led by Sarah Morris, also had a black candidate.

Martin has not responded to requests for interviews, and the school now refuses to release her phone numbers. At a meeting

attended by about 500 students, faculty and staff last Thursday, she thanked the campus for its support.

"We're here tonight not to apologize, try to atone, get defensive, or feel guilty," she said. "We're here to act."

Students say Martin is no Tawana Brawley, the black teenager who claimed she was attacked by three white men in 1987 but whose story was rejected by a grand jury.

Nor was the attack the first sign of trouble in these elections, although it was the only physical one. An anonymous letter was circulated accusing Martin of selecting less qualified blacks over whites for student government positions. The letter-writer eventually apologized for his methods but not his beliefs.

Racist fliers also reportedly

were distributed on campus, critical of Martin. A flier could not be found Tuesday; its content was unclear.

Kelsey Ryan, 22, a senior and a Student Senate member, called the attack "a bit of a reality check." Martin may have been targeted, she said, because she's "extremely motivated. She can basically kick butt. She's the person you want to go to if you want to get something done."

Ryan Bek, 21, a junior, said students have considered Guilford — with 1,300 students, 7 percent of them black — "a safe haven, and this is kind of catapulting people into the real world."

Guilford, founded in 1837 by the Religious Society of Friends, is the nation's third-oldest coed college. While no longer formally tied to the Quakers, the school still uses consensus for decision-making and

includes students on all committees, president Don McNemar said.

Its campus of small brick buildings sits away from the hustle and bustle of Greensboro's major mall and convention center. Computer screen savers can be found at the college that read, "Faith makes us patient and prayerful."

McNemar said he believed Guilford is facing its racial problems. The half-time position of director of African-American affairs, vacant since December, will become full-time. The faculty is reviewing the college curriculum with an eye toward incorporating values, and will meet soon to discuss race issues.

Some changes were in place before Martin was attacked, while others are new or being accelerated, McNemar said.

Fernald hopes McNemar is

right but was disappointed it took an assault to underscore a problem she believes has simmered for years. She pointed to the number of black faculty — five of 87 full-time members — and the lack of a full-time minority affairs person as two signs of Guilford's lack of commitment to racial harmony.

The attack "has generated more discussion than I've seen so far on campus," she said.

Her friend, Khamala, said the attack has "made people realize there are some deep, underlying problems" whose severity was underestimated.

Quakers, McNemar said, have high principles of justice and peace.

"When you fall short of those, it's a tremendous gap in terms of your principles and practice," he said.



Naomi Jones, left, and Alderman Vivian Burke stand beside the tree representing a new beginning in East Winston-Salem.

## Liberty East observes the rebirth of a neighborhood

The redevelopment of the community formerly known as Fairchild Hills began with the cumulative efforts of the City of Winston-Salem, the Regency Group, Inc., and Liberty East Redevelopment, Inc. (LER). The result has been the beginning of a rebirth of a neighborhood, now known as "Ladeara Crest Estates."

Under the leadership of Gordon L. Blackwell, Chairman and President, The Regency Housing Group, Inc. has become a leader in the Southeast in the development of high quality affordable housing. Blackwell and Regency have long been active in the Winston-Salem community. The redevelopment of the Burke Village complex resulted in that property being awarded the prestigious 1996 North Carolina Housing Award for the best rehabilitation project in the state. Under Regency's development, Ladeara Crest Estates was only the second project in North Carolina history to be funded with tax exempt bonds and tax credits.

Liberty East Redevelopment, I.L.C. (LER), a non-profit organization, proved to be an invaluable partner in the undertaking of this project. LER is also comprised of a group of concerned citizens who,

under the guidance of Naomi Jones, President, and the tutelage of Alderman Vivian Burke, have taken an active role in improving the quality of life in the multi-dimensional and multi-cultural communities in Winston-Salem. LER was organized on April 30, 1987, and has worked diligently since that time to target the education, cultural, and social needs of the communities in which it serves, and assists in locating the resources available.

Regency & LER combined efforts with the City of Winston-Salem, First Union National Bank and North Carolina Housing Finance Agency in securing the financing of Ladeara Crest Estates. The City, led by its Director of Finance, Loris Colclough, and Dr. Monica Lett of the City of Winston-Salem was instrumental in providing a unique financing option.

With the tireless efforts of these two groups, along with the City of Winston-Salem, and the financial dedication of First Union National Bank, the hopes and dreams of a stable productive community for the tenants of Ladeara Crest Estates and its surrounding neighbors have now become a reality.

## Black History Galore

You'll get all the Black History you want at the Ethnic News Network web site. The web site at [www.ethnicnews.com](http://www.ethnicnews.com) offers lots of historical trivia and facts, plus link after link after link.

This month the web site also features information about Chinese New Year and Mardi Gras, other events occurring in February. Each month, the web site will highlight a different ethnic or cultural activity based on traditions, significant holidays, and annual celebrations occurring during that month.

The site is an educational tool for everyone and though the information may point out our differences, hopefully it will help bring people together. After all, much of what keeps us apart is what we don't know about each other. Submissions for the site are welcomed and encouraged.

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