

Alumni speaks to college live from space

SGA appoints diversity panel

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Alani admits that there is a divide among students. "You have a lot of self-segregation among different groups," he said.

"I think that the issues of diversity become more pronounced, more visible now that there are more minorities. If there are only ten college students on campus, it wouldn't be weird if they all hung out together, but when you see large blocks of different groups of students who look different, who maybe talk different or are from different places, always hanging out together, you kind of have lines drawn within the campus community which I think needs to be changed."

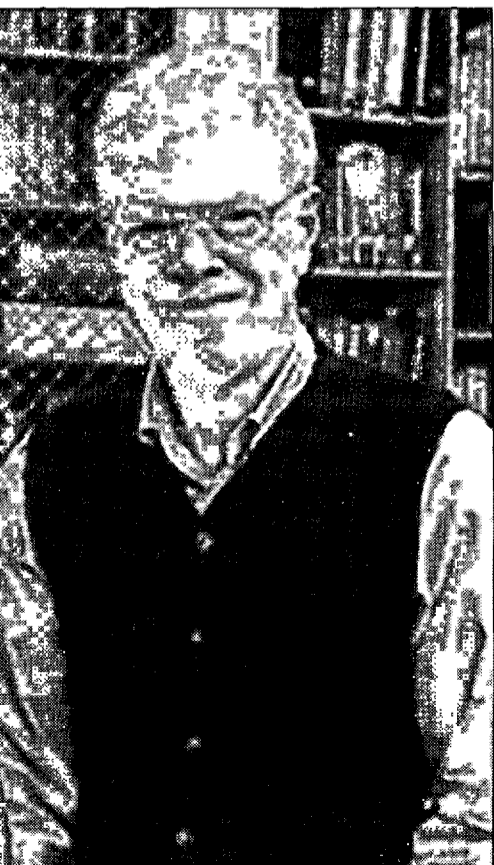
Apart from SGA, Alani also discussed the student initiative for faculty diversity, which he is also involved in. This group of students was a part of the hiring process of five new faculty members for the fall semester.

Their goal was to ensure that the faculty sufficiently reflects the student body. This does not translate into giving minority candidates an advantage. Rather, "we made sure that they looked at a diverse pool of applicants," Alani said.

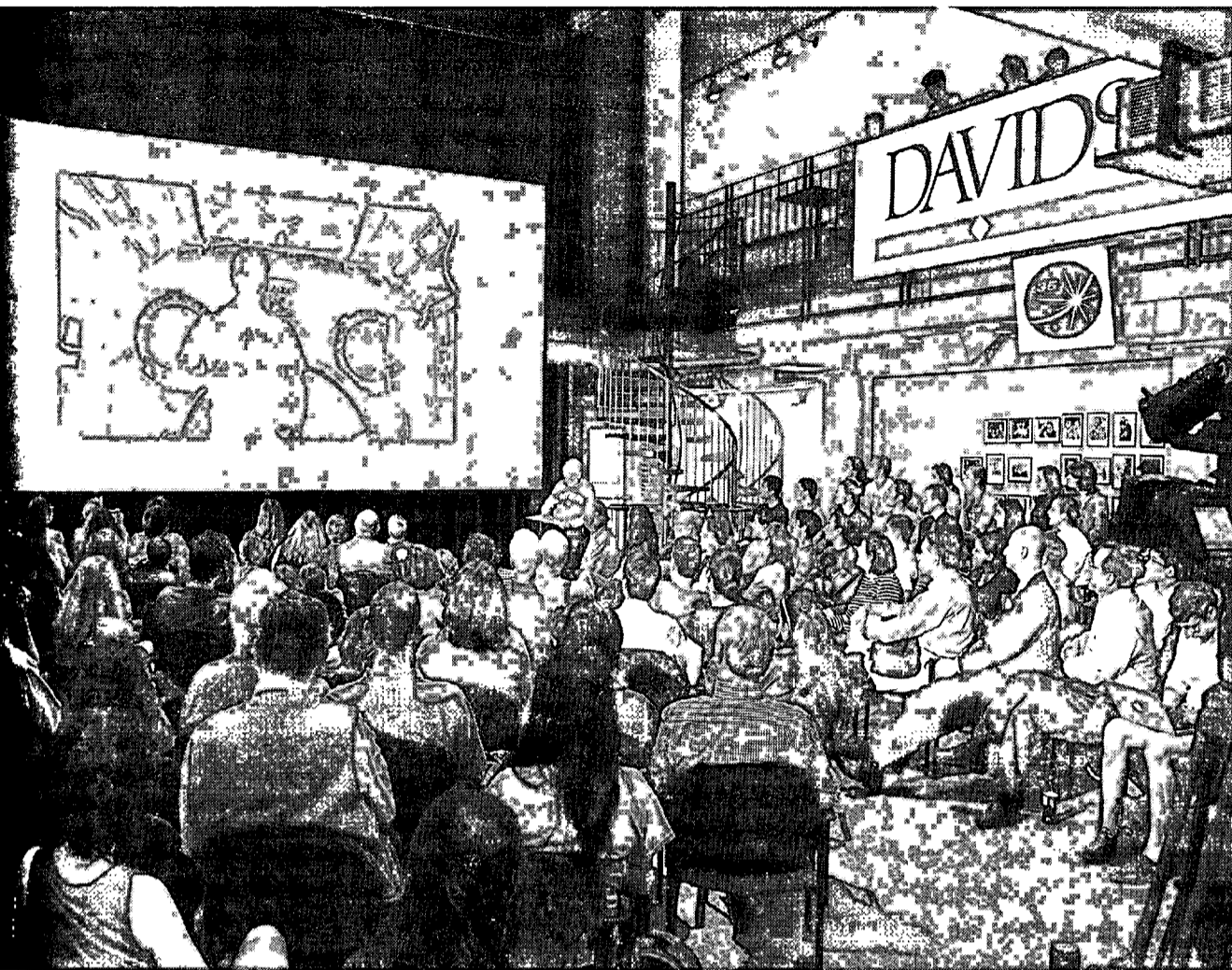
"All of the ones we recommended were selected," he added. "I want to stress to you that it wasn't like we wanted to hire a black or Asian candidate - we actually hired mostly white candidates - and it was about who can best represent and best understand the needs of Davidson students."

"It doesn't really matter to us who that person is in terms of their background as long as they can do that - being a minority does not make you qualified for that position necessarily."

The team of diversity coordinating senators is in charge of spending the allocated funds to achieve these goals in promoting the minority and cultural organizations. The four senators will begin discussion soon about the most effective way to spend the funds.



Levering will retire after this semester. He has taught at Davidson for the past 27 years. Courtesy Photo



Science members attend a downlink with astronaut Tom Marshburn '82 broadcasting live from the International Space Station in 500 Room on Friday. Photo courtesy of Bill Giduz

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of hazelnuts. "It's almost impossible to do these out by doing it the way you do on earth, by putting your hand in the bag," he said. "My hand is so big compared to the hazelnuts, I impart so much energy to them, that they just start flying around the inside of the bag and into the space station."

Marshburn graduated from Davidson in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics. In response to an emailed question, Marshburn described the impor-

portance of liberal arts education to space exploration. "Space flight is unique among exploration because it requires such a technical expertise, and an increase in the educational base of an entire nation... it really has changed the way the world works when we employ humans as part of our technical accomplishments," he said. "And a liberal arts education is absolutely essential for that. And I would argue it's essential for our survival as well."

Marshburn said he did not feel lonely after months living in a space the volume of "a five-bedroom house" for four months with the same people. "The view outside the window helps a lot," he said.

What he has experienced, Marshburn said, was a change in his perception of time and memory for events.

The video stream ended at 4:35 p.m. after the allotted 30 minutes. "We were always told we had one half-hour of air time, never anymore than that. That signal cut off at exactly 4:35." Jim Nash, Technical Director of the Union, said. "We think it's a fly-over thing, that they are probably out of sight for us now."

According to John Syme, Senior Writer in the Office of College Communications, the office is working with NASA to schedule a second downlink session with Marshburn possibly next week.

Levering teaches last courses, to retire at end of semester

History professor looks forward to retirement after fruitful teaching career

Staff Writer

After a long and successful teaching career of 42 years, Ralph Levering, Vail Professor of History, is preparing to transition into a well-earned retirement. Levering spent 17 of those years teaching at David-

son. A native of Mount Airy, N.C., he obtained his B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before attending Princeton University to earn his M.A. and Ph.D. in American History. Prior to coming to Davidson in 1986, Levering taught for 15 years at George Mason University, Western Maryland College and Pennsylvania College. However, he is adamant that of all the places he's taught, he considers Davidson the most.

Levering's scholarly interests lie in the area of US foreign policy, particularly the transition to public opinion and the news media. His research has taken him to several presidential libraries, including those

of Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, as well as enabled him to work in the National Archives and the Library of Congress.

According to Levering, "the most fun I've had in my research career has been doing interviews." He has had the opportunity to interview many well-known individuals, including Secretary of State Dean Rusk '31, President Kennedy's National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy and The New York Times journalist Tom Wicker.

Levering still fondly recalls his first interview for his doctoral dissertation, when he had the opportunity to sit down with George Kennan, a diplomat and author of the containment policy employed during the Cold War. All of Levering's research efforts have manifested themselves in the forms of nine books, four of which depended upon raw history interviews.

Over the past 27 years at Davidson, Levering has seen the student body grow from 1400 students to 1700, along with a larger and more diverse array of program and course offerings.

Overall, though, the "continuities are greater than the changes." Davidson remains a place where the faculty places an emphasis on teaching and cares about the

students. Levering is the prime example of a professor who places his students first.

His most popular course was "The Vietnam Experience," which featured Vietnam Veterans as guest speakers. It was also his favorite course to teach, due to students' involvement and interest in the subject.

As a professor, Levering especially enjoys seeing students "catch fire" about a certain subject. Many students must have caught fire under Levering's guidance, for in 2006 he was awarded the Hunter-Hamilton Love of Teaching Award, an accomplishment that means more to him than all of his books.

During his retirement, Levering looks forward to dedicating more time to research. He will continue writing and plans to publish at least one more book in order to bring his total to an even ten books.

Outside of academic pursuits, Levering loves to travel and to spend time with his eight grandchildren. He and his wife will remain in Davidson and continue their involvement with the Davidson Friends Meeting. Although he is moving on to a new phase in life, Levering has no regrets. "It's been such an enjoyable career, the combination of being a teacher but also being a scholar."