

## Mendoza voices human rights concerns for Guatemala

By LAURA CRAVER  
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, October 27, Guatemalan Justo Mendoza spoke in the Morrison Room about Mayan culture in Guatemala, human rights abuses, and CONIC, the National Indigenous and Peasant Coordination. For Mendoza, Davidson College was another stop on his month long tour of the United States, where he has been drawing attention to human rights abuses and social justice issues in Guatemala.

Contrary to what the Guatemalan government may report, Mendoza does not believe the peace accords signed in 1996 to end the Guatemala's 36 year civil war have ended the human rights abuses in the region. He points to the controversial murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera in April, 1998. Gerardi, a leader of the human rights campaign in Guatemala, was bludgeoned to death two days after he oversaw the release of a report accusing the military of rampant human rights abuses against the leftist guerrilla forces during the civil war. According to Mendoza, the lack of a conclusive investigation into Gerardi's murder is a clue to the current situation in Guatemala and is a threat to the peace process in the area. "We have to tell the truth to all the people," said Mendoza through interpreter Professor Kemp, "but a lot of people don't want to hear the truth." In Mendoza's eyes the peace accords are not being enforced properly, and there has been no end to human rights abuses such as murders and kidnappings, that existed prior to the signing.

Mendoza's life in Northwest Guatemala has not been untouched by the guerilla warfare that has existed in Guatemala since 1960. With only two years of formal education, Mendoza left school to work on the coffee and sugar plantations that employ Guatemalan peasants. After losing his father and older brother during the military's scorched earth counter insurgency campaigns, Mendoza spent over 6 years in hiding. In 1992, he helped found CONIC, which is presently made up of 6 Mayan ethnic groups as well as the Ladinos of the population. The principle objective of CONIC is to organize native peoples and "peasants to struggle to seek solutions to our economic, social, political and cultural needs." CONIC also seeks to recover and preserve Mayan history, culture and spirituality. CONIC has developed into an organization that lists respect for human rights, the achievement of "real peace with social justice," self-determination for the Mayan People, the protection of the earth for the people, and the equal treatment of women among many other demands.

Despite opposition and death threats, CONIC has achieved several successes in its short life. In accordance with the goals of the organization and without the help of the Guatemalan government, CONIC has been able to regain land for the commu-

community, build a small school, employ a teacher, undertake road building projects, and provide drinkable water for the community. CONIC has also begun a program of organic agriculture that will benefit the communities. CONIC strives for the protection of "Mother Earth" so that she will "produce for everyone's benefit." "The environment and its protection," said Mendoza, "is part of rescuing our Mayan culture."

Following his speech, Mendoza fielded questions from the audience. When asked who he feared the most, the army or the guerrillas, Mendoza responded that the guerrillas were fighting for a cause, to change the status of poor people. On the other hand, the army defended the rich, and Mendoza was more familiar with the army's torturing methods. Mendoza also answered questions about the guerrillas political goals, including the implementation of democracy and the enforcement of the peace accords. For Mendoza, the greatest world-wide problem that hinders peace and conformity. Speaking about the infamous School of the Americas, Mendoza said, "it should not exist."

Justo Mendoza's discussion was sponsored by Amnesty International, the Spanish Department, and Dean Rusk.

**Gerardi, a leader of the human rights campaign in Guatemala, was bludgeoned to death two days after he oversaw the release of a report accusing the military of rampant human rights abuses against the leftist guerrilla forces during the civil war.**

## Student investors group receives endowment of \$200,000

By ASHLEY E. KING  
News Editor

Starting as the idea of two Davidson College sophomores last spring, the Davidson investment group has grown into an organization of 32 members which the college board of trustees has recently decided to give an endowment of \$200,000. "It's a group with the goal of educating students about investing through real world experience," said Peter Clark '01. The founders and managers of the group, both Clark and his partner David Johnston '01 are excited about bringing Davidson College a taste of Wall Street.

Collaborating for the past half year to bring their conception of a college investment group into being, Clark and Johnston have finally realized their aspirations. Beginning by speaking with Robert Norfleet of the College Office of Finance, they presented their preliminary ideas to the Board of Trustees at the end of the semester last year. Since the trustees liked their plan, Clark and Johnston then worked together to formulate a more formal proposal which the trustees approved this fall.

Armed with \$200,000, the investment group has endeavored both to attract new members and to organize its current members. Posting fliers in Chambers and sending out e-mails, the group has interested some potential investors, and they have organized themselves in a structured fashion.

"We have divided the universe of stocks into five sectors," Clark explained. For each of these five sectors, there is a corresponding group of members of the investment group who will study them. Each of these groups, according to Clark, "is responsible for proposing ideas, researching them, and providing a portion of the folio. Once they come up with a stock they like, they propose it to the club as a whole for

voting."

Through this democratic process, the investment group decides which stocks to include in their portfolio and which stocks to leave out. Comprised of eight people, an executive committee also ascertains the allocation of money to each of the sectors. Six of the members of the executive board are students while the other two, Burtin Hudson and Clark Ross, act as adult advisors for the beginning investors.

After they have invested the money, Clark and Johnston know that if their group does not succeed, the college is entitled to take back the money it has given them. Explaining that they will be treated as any other investor to whom the school decides to give its money, Johnston said, "We're governed by all the rules of the traditional private sector." Both Clark and Johnston hope, however, that any profits the investment group makes will remain in its account for later investments.

In the future, Clark and Johnston explained that they are going to attempt to bring different college alumni and other investors to the college to deliver speeches about investing carefully and successfully in the business world. They also wish to expand the number of students involved in their group. "Membership is open to all students," said Johnston, urging anyone who is interested to contact either him or Clark.

Emphasizing the uniqueness of this group on Davidson's campus, Clark said in closing, "To our knowledge, this is one of the first clubs of this sort in the country for a purely liberal arts school. It shows how the trustees are putting a lot of trust and responsibility in the students in general."

Through this unusual opportunity, the students of Davidson College can attempt to understand the inner workings of the stock market.

## Davidson Professor Helps Tell History of African-American Moravians

RACHEL COCKRILL  
College Relations

Janet Shannon, associate professor and chair of the Sociology department at Davidson College, is working with a colleague from Northeastern University to develop an interpretive program which depicts the history of African-Americans in Old Salem.

The living history exhibit she is creating with Robert L. Hall, associate professor and chair of African-American Studies at Northeastern, will focus on Afro-Moravians and will consider slavery, religion, and community. St. Phillips Moravian Church in Old Salem is the only Afro-American Moravian Church in the United States, and its history is an example of a unique aspect of race relations in the pre-Civil War South.

Although African-Americans were Moravians before the 1820s, it was not until 1822 that a separate place of worship was considered for the black community, free and slave. Prior to the building of the original log church, the Afro-Moravian community had no alternative but to worship with the whites at the Home Moravian Church. However, with the strong support of the Female Mission Society, a log structure was completed in 1822 for the congregation referred to as the "colored congregation" and later the "Negro congregation." (That log building has been long destroyed, but Shannon says Old Salem plans to reconstruct it.)

During the years before Emancipation, a large portion of the slaves in Winston-Salem lived at Happy Hill, a plantation directly across Salem Creek from the log church. The log church quickly became a focal point of the African-American community, not only as a place of worship for Afro-Moravians, but also as a meeting place for non-Moravian blacks.

With the approach of the Civil War in 1861, the log structure was replaced with a new brick sanctuary just yards away, a structure which was built partially over the old church's cemetery (an area now being excavated). It was not until 1913, almost a century after the congregation formed, that the Afro-Moravian church in Winston-Salem adopted the name "St. Phillips."

The area of Happy Hill continues to be an African-American community, but St. Phillips has moved to Bon Aire Avenue, many blocks away from its original location on South Church Street in Old Salem.

Shannon is not just looking at the history of St. Phillips' various structures, but is studying the significance of this special church within the community of Winston-Salem, past and present. She said the church continues to meet the needs of the African-American community in Winston-Salem.

Colleagues since the summer of 1986, Shannon and Hall gathered much of their information from the 150-year-old minutes of the Female Mission Society, as well as archaeological evidence, municipal records and the records of the church itself. Shannon says she and Hall have completed a large portion of their task, but the opening date of their exhibition has not yet been determined.

## Davidson in Washington Summer 1999

An informational meeting for the Davidson in Washington Program will be held on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12 at 4:00 p.m. in Chambers 228. Students interested in learning more about the program should attend. Applications for the program will be available at the meeting. If you have questions about the program, or are unable to attend the informational meeting, please contact Professor Kazee of the Department of Political Science by phone (ext. 2282) or email (tokazee@davidson.edu).

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