

## Chick-fil-A TalkBack: Students engage in earnest dialogue

Davidsonian and SGA sponsored forum hosts student dialogue about chicken chain

John Soper

Staff Writer

Over the summer it was reported by a Huffington Post article that Davidson College was one of the first college campuses to ban Chick-fil-A, reacting to what many interpreted to be anti-gay marriage remarks made by the restaurant chain's CEO, Dan Cathy. Although the report was false and no such ban has been enacted, supporters and opposers of Chick-fil-A have returned to campus ready to share their beliefs and opinions. Because Chick-fil-A does not have a location on campus, much of the debate has surrounded the Union Board's tradition of serving the chicken chain's food at its After Midnight event.

On Sept. 3, The Davidsonian hosted a TalkBack in the Union to help the Union Board gauge the opinions of the student body. The 900 Room was packed with over 100 students ready to share their opinions, and, although the majority of students who showed up were opposed to serving Chick-fil-A at the After Midnight event, both sides were well represented. Supporters of

the restaurant pointed to free speech and Christian beliefs as grounds to not ban the restaurant's food, while opposers focused their comments on the fact that the food is funded indirectly by tuition paid by every student.

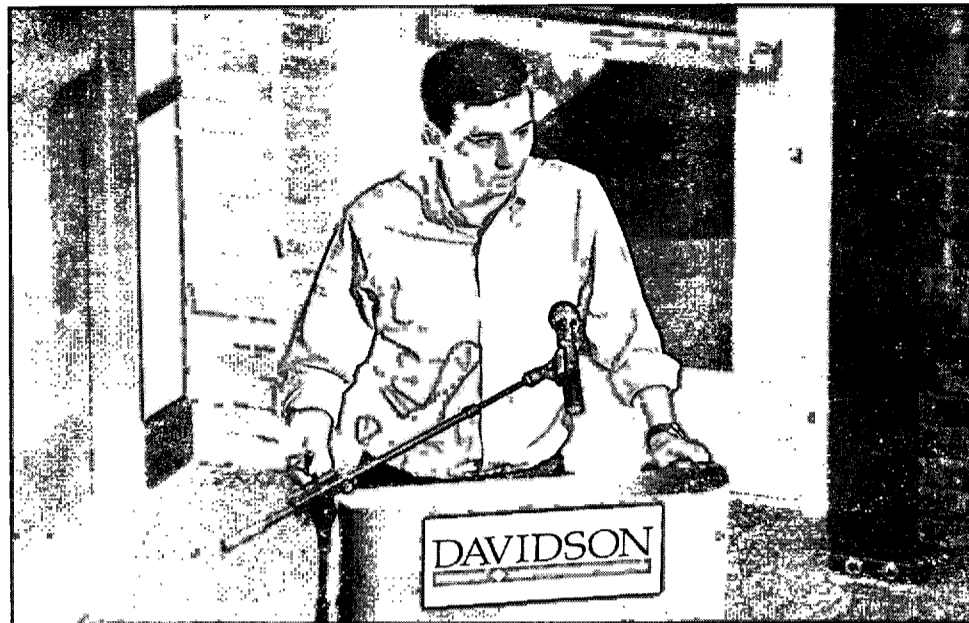
"It takes away the decision for some people not to support Chick-fil-A," claimed one student during the TalkBack.

The Union Board has yet to make a decision regarding whether or not to continue serving Chick-fil-A at After Midnight events. However, all members of the Union Board were present at the TalkBack in order to better understand the opinions of the student body. At the event, students proposed solutions to help the Union Board move forward, including the controversial suggestion of a student-wide vote.

"I know a couple of Union Board members who mentioned to me that during the TalkBack, they heard ideas and opinions that they had not previously thought of. Hopefully the various suggestions that the groups came up with will help us make a more informed decision," stated Union Board President Adriana Nassar '13.

Following the TalkBack, Union Board decided to email a poll to the student body with a list of restaurants. Students can vote for their top three choices. Union Board will make a final decision following this poll.

Nassar and Union Board Vice President Cam



Billy Hackenson '13, SGA President, reads excerpt from article to begin discussion at Chick-fil-a TalkBack. Students shared thoughts in 900 Room. Photo by Mark Sehnert

Joe '14 also released a statement regarding the TalkBack.

"First and foremost, we would like to thank everyone for sharing their respective opinions on the After Midnight Chick-fil-A deliberation at

the Monday night forum. Many important issues were brought forth and we appreciate the suggestions that were proposed to the Union Board. We will continue working toward a resolution on this issue and any further thoughts are welcomed."

## New Hall enhances sophomore experience

Sophomores, upperclassmen share opinions on the newly completed residence hall

Tom James

Staff Writer

Though some plants have yet to grow in and a few brick paths are not quite finished, Davidson's first new residence hall since 2000 is now open and home to 251 sophomores of the Class of 2015. With a comfortable lounge and a separate study area on every floor, as well as a central commons equipped with a full kitchen, a computer area and a flat screen TV, the words "palace," "hotel" and "luxury" are frequently mentioned in any conversation regarding the New Hall, which is its functioning moniker until an official one is chosen. However, while its many conveniences (including a new gym) are a perk, the goals of the New Hall go beyond providing amenities.

Four years ago, a campus planning committee constructed a master plan for facilities on campus, which called for, among other things, a new residence hall. As a result, a separate residence hall design committee was formed in October 2009 and led by Dean of Students, Tom Shandley. The committee's first question was an obvious one: who should live in the new dorm?

"We answered that question by looking at the various needs on campus," said Donny Edwards, Associate Director of Student Life. Aware that sophomore housing such as Irwin, Akers, and Knox was far removed from central campus, the Residence Life Office (RLO) "determined that we really needed a building for sophomores that was closer in. We also knew that we wanted to have a sophomore experience program and felt like a new building would strengthen that program," Edwards continued.

In order to form a close sophomore community, the plan called for doubles and singles with shared bathrooms instead of suites or apartments. RLO also turned to Davidson students for additional feedback on what amenities they wanted.

Of course, even a spacious dorm with two towers cannot accommodate everyone, as roughly half of the sophomore class is living elsewhere.

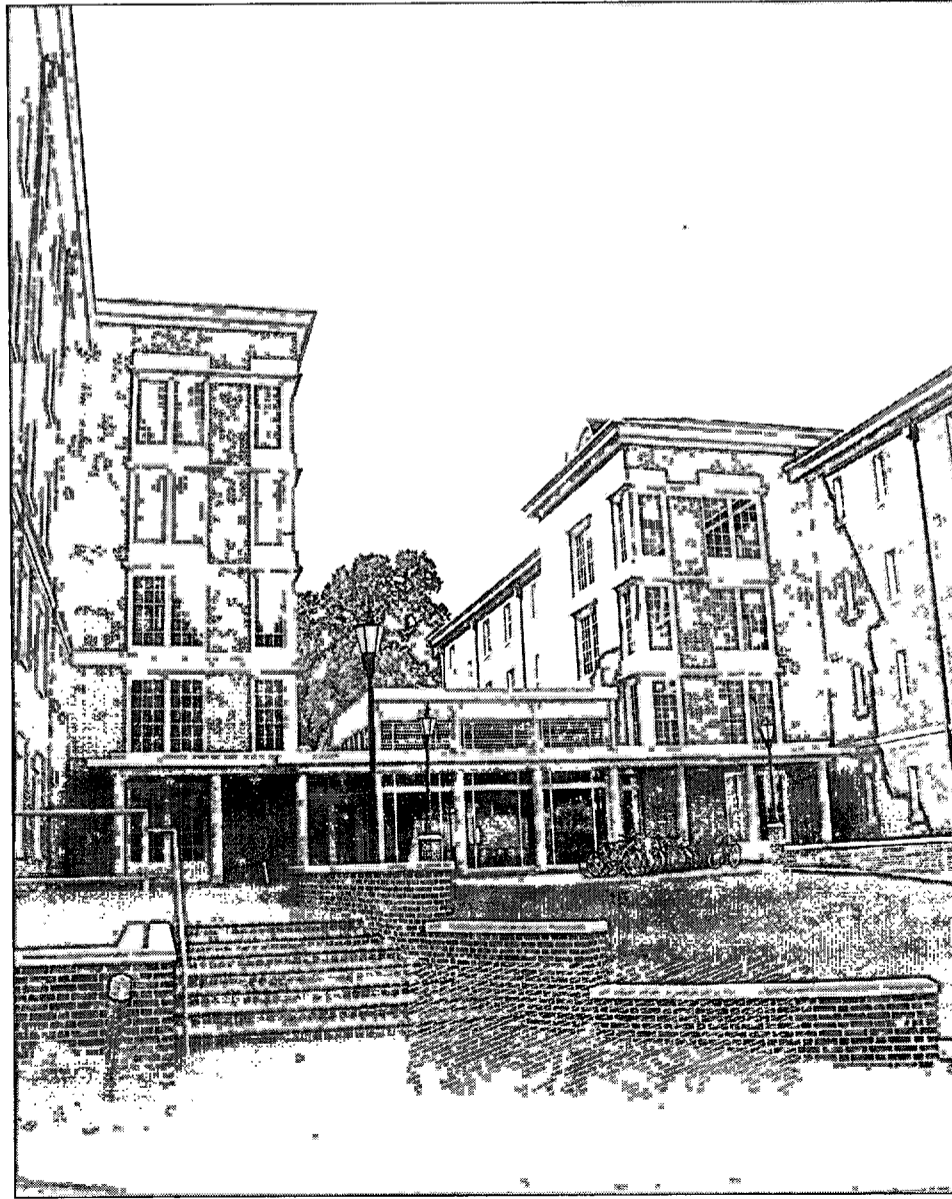
"I have no qualms with the building itself, or even the fact that I'm not in it," said Chris Peck '15, who is a resident of Little Hall, which has not been renovated in recent years. "[I] just happened to draw the short straw... This being said, the disparity between the rooms in the new dorm and those in Little is striking, especially when residents in both dorms pay the same price for housing. This begs the question

of how one achieves a unified and better sophomore experience when living situations vary on such a wide spectrum. In attempting to unify the sophomore class, the new dorm has unintentionally excluded those not fortunate enough to live there."

In addition, there are the juniors and seniors that will never have the opportunity to live in the New Hall. "I got along fine without it, but if the school feels that the new generation needs something to give them an extra push, then go for it," Jonathan Chisholm '14 said. "The campus can feel kind of divided, so I understand the reasoning behind the dorm. However, I do slightly resent the fact that my money went into building it, but I don't get to sleep there..."

Criticism aside, the combination of student involvement and careful planning seems to have paid off. There certainly do not seem to be many complaints coming from New Hall residents. "I think it's the nicest building yet," said Natalia Corredor '15, a New Hall resident, "not just because it's the newest, but because of the facilities that make living here special. It's definitely more than we need, but I am thrilled that we have it. Even if you don't live here, you can still be a part of its community."

Resident Adviser Kiana Barry '15 may have described life in the New Hall best: "It's pretty lively here, but I like that. Everyone everywhere wants a piece of the new dorm!"



New Hall houses 251 sophomores, boasting amenities like its own gym, laundry and kitchens. The dorm is divided into two towers, with a commons connecting them on the main floor. Photo by Mark Sehnert

## Cahoots revealed

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them. Students will be able to send alumni messages, make contacts and receive advice from Wildcats already in the workforce.

A year ago, Jon Eberhardt '14 and Genevieve Nielsen '14 felt the need for an easier way to foster relationships with alumni. They spent several months coming up with the concept of Cahoots Connect and enlisted the help of other Davidson students as well as Master's students in computer science at UNC Charlotte. After securing funding and developing their ideas, Eberhardt and Nielsen, along with their team, began to create a beta version of the site.

The Cahoots Connect system is divided into two layers, the professional layer and the community layer. The professional layer will allow students to read about the work alumni are doing and get in contact with them. Everyone using the system would be required to input four pieces of information: graduation year, major, location and field.

The community layer will provide a way for students and alumni to keep up with their favorite campus organizations, teams and clubs. Students can find out about club meetings and events, and alumni can keep up with organizations they were involved in while at Davidson.

The entire site follows the theme of a green subway map, which Cahoots Connect said was chosen "to enhance the idea of making new connections and exploring new opportunities on Cahoots." While the system has not yet been launched, in the coming days an email will be sent out to the student body with activation codes and alumni will also be able to join.

When asked about all the secrecy, the Cahoots team said, "Keeping Cahoots a secret was incredibly difficult, especially because we were so excited about it. However, we knew that the surprise would generate greater excitement and curiosity about Cahoots."

One supporter of the project is Davidson President, Dr. Carol Quillen. "I am excited about Cahoots for two reasons. First, community matters. With Davidson grads throughout the world changing the world, we all benefit from trustworthy ways of quickly connecting our students with potential career advisors and mentors who love giving back. Second, Cahoots demonstrates the entrepreneurial spirit of our students and how our emphasis on cultivating humane instincts, intellectual discipline and creativity inspires big ideas," she said.

The system is endorsed by the College but is independently run by students. While Nielsen and Eberhardt came up with the concept, they do not wish to be solely credited with its creation. They maintain that Cahoots Connect is a tool designed by many talented people to provide a safe and private way for students to network.