

# FLAG fashion show raises \$2100 for AIDS education



Davidson students, including David Kim pictured above, support AIDS awareness by participating in the FLAG fashion show.

**By Beth Lindsey**  
Saturday night, FLAG (Friends of Lesbians and Gays) sponsored a fashion show in the 900 Room as part of an effort to promote AIDS awareness on campus. Over 90 models participated — students, faculty, alumni, and staff represented all facets of campus life.

Many people spent much time and energy throughout the past few months to promote and plan for the event. FLAG Co-Chair Hal Dougherty came up with the idea during the summer, and many people were crucial to the event, including Molly Johnson and Jan Beasley from the Union and FLAG Co-Chair Cat Grimmel. Johnson says, "It was really Hal's idea, but it sounded great, and I offered to help and here I am! It has taken a lot of coordination simply because we've done more than just had a fashion show — there were sponsorships and also prizes for the models. It was difficult enough to try to communicate with so many models all over campus."

Beasley, also a Union intern, says, "About 10 years ago, I worked as a coordinator for fashion shows for Ivey's, a department store. This is certainly quite a different experience from that but lots of fun!"

The models' attire was varied and unique. There were participants dressed as cows, in their pajamas, wearing lampshades, wearing cultural attire, and even the Wildcat mascot. Court Savage, Assistant Professor of Art, dressed in foundry ware — what he actually wears in the VAC.

Dougherty says, "We made a lot of money, and it was a big success. The campus really got together to support FLAG and it was certainly a great experience. Our purpose was really twofold. We wanted to make some money, but we also really wanted to create some solidarity of the campus for a common cause — ultimately for homo/bisexuality."

The proceeds will go to create a FLAG scholarship, to Time Out Youth (Charlotte's gay and lesbian youth support/advocacy group), and to the Metrolina AIDS Project.

The participants seemed extremely enthusiastic about the idea. Ryan Harper, representing the Development Office, says, "I'm

just glad to be a part of helping raise money to end the misunderstanding about AIDS." Francis Mitchell of the Computer Center agrees: "It looks like it's gonna be a lot of fun, and I'm really glad to be doing it!"

Sociology Professor Janet Shannon says, "I think this is a very important thing. I'm glad the students are taking the initiative, and I'm happy to support any effort in their involvement to broaden the awareness of AIDS on the Davidson campus."

From the music department, Joanna Davis likes the freedom of expression for the models participating. Says Davis, "I like the idea that it gives people a chance to be creative on an individual basis and really express themselves in their own way."

Junior Jill Dyer represented Connor House, and says, "I think it's for a great cause, and it's been so much fun. Everyone really wants one night in their life where they can epitomize their wildest dreams and fantasies, and people here are certainly doing it!"

## Davidson touched by personal connections to the NAMES Quilt

*NAMES continued from page 1*

For four years in ignorance of disease, sickness, and death." She points out that the Quilt is not only about gay men, but also includes women and children.

The panels are a variety of colors, made from anything and everything. Some are heartbreaking, while some are funny. Some are angry, and some are hopeful. Some are ornate, while some are very simple. They have been created by friends and family members, and each one captures the essence of the person named on the panel in a special way.

Some panels contain poems, some have letters. "You held me up to heaven forever," says one. Another asks, "Will you know my names when we see you in heaven?"

"It's amazing how much you come to know about each person," says one student.

"The ones that were the most personal were the most touching," says freshman Jennifer Hawkins.

Kristen Richardson says that she would cry when she could relate to a panel. "I think that you don't know in what way you will be affected — or to what degree. It turns out to be the most simple thing."

Friends showed each other their favorite panels and discussed, in whispers, the tragedy of the baby who was born with AIDS or the man who never got to say goodbye. Visitors recognized the names of those they knew.

Each visitor was given the opportunity to sign a special Davidson panel. People expressed their grief and understanding by leaving their names; the panel will now travel with the Quilt.

As visitors viewed the Quilt, volunteers took a break outside. One volunteer didn't want to return: "Everywhere you look, there are names of people who have died. It's so morbid."

"I don't think it's morbid at all," says another volunteer. "There are so many personal elements on each panel, as opposed to something like the Vietnam Memorial. You cry for another reason."

On Thursday, around 240 middle school students came to view the Quilt. "When they came in, they were acting like kids, laughing and joking," says Ross, "but suddenly they became completely silent. You could see the way that it affected them."

Davidson IB student Michelle Morgan was overwhelmed. "Each one of the panels is something to everyone. It's really touching — it shows you how many people have died."

Her friend Caitlin Boon adds, "It's amazing how much work they put in. It was probably good recovery for them."

Last spring, sophomore Sara Smith's father died of AIDS. She helped to make a panel, and it was displayed. "If the Quilt had come last spring, I would have been a mess. I was so angry. But now is the perfect time; it really helps me to grieve. It has been easier than I ever would have imagined it, and a lot of it has to do with open and

understanding people."

One sophomore sees the panel as a celebration. "I think that it is important that we see the Quilt as a commemoration of life rather than death."

Currently, there are more than 360,000 Americans with AIDS, and more than 220,000 have died. The Quilt represents only 12% of these cases.

The NAMES Project estimates that they receive 50 new panels a week. In 1996, the Quilt will be displayed in its entirety in Washington. "We intend to show it every four years there," says John-Owens, NAMES staff member and Davidson Quilt Display Coordinator. "We will never stop accepting panels."

*Staffwriter Laura Dennis contributed to this article.*

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