

Even from South Africa, Wildcat basketball worth cheering for McKillop, team embody important values, epitomize school as a whole

GRAHAMSTOWN, South Africa — I'm enjoying my Junior Year Abroad immensely. But as the 1997-98 Davidson basketball season gets underway, and I must search the Internet for coverage, I feel a definite void.

With each win that Davidson posts, I am of course elated. But at the same time, I am frustrated that I can't be there

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Stephen Cafalu

to see it. It is at these moments, when I'm checking results on the Wildcat basketball home page, that I truly feel the weight of each and every one of those thousands of miles that separate me from campus.

I write this article to ask you, the Davidson College community, to fill my seat in Belk Arena this season.

An extraordinary era in Wildcat basketball history is upon us right now. Davidson is the pride of the Southern Conference and deserves national recognition. Like the College itself, the basketball program is small but mighty, and marked by a huge sense of ambition.

The team taking the floor this year is a special team with a very special coach. Combining integrity with a tradition of success, Bob McKillop is in a

class by himself. We should all be grateful to Coach McKillop for opting to remain at the helm here as long as he has. A coach of his caliber most certainly has offers from basketball programs around the nation.

I've heard the voices of the dissenters, those who have chosen to withhold their support from the basketball program. And though their arguments make me nauseous, objectivity requires that I address them nonetheless.

They say Davidson isn't just about basketball, and of course they are absolutely right.

By all means, support drama, music, and art department events. Support Habitat for Humanity and other service projects. Write for the Davidsonian, Libertas, or Hobart Park.

But please, please set aside time to take in the Wildcats' home basketball contests. Each and every vocal Wildcat fan is a tremendous asset to the program. The impact of vociferous crowd support cannot be underestimated.

If it were up to me, I would close down E.H. Little's fine library during all home games. The library, my friends, will always be there for you; the 1997-98 Davidson basketball season will not.

If you've been to enough Wildcat basketball games and wholeheartedly followed the team, then you'll know that a very tangible school spirit, a school pride, is felt in Belk Arena when the Wildcats are out on the floor.

The camaraderie shared amongst

Davidson supporters in Belk Arena should for all intents and purposes translate into greater success for all of them in the classroom. And here's why: The most successful students on campus possess an enlightened perspective on the whole college experience and, through it, are able to avoid burnout.

They understand that college isn't just about studying night and day. Here's the clincher, though: Great students really love their school. Because they love their school, these students wish to present it to the best of their ability, to give all of themselves to it, and thus lend the title "Davidson scholar" great dignity and meaning.

"The basketball team's credo — 'Trust. Commitment. Care.' — applies campus-wide and involves each and every one of you."

Few things have lent me more love for my school than the Wildcat basketball program. The program so much epitomizes the school as a whole. It is small, often overlooked and underestimated, and yet never relinquishes its tenacious underdog spirit.

Go to Belk Arena, then, take in a game, lend a supporting voice to your team and your school, and I promise that when you return to your books, you will do so with greater clarity and greater

perspective, if not a greater love for learning. The spirit felt in Belk Arena should remind you why you chose Davidson. The basketball team's credo — "Trust. Commitment. Care." — applies campus-wide and involves each and every one of you.

First-year students, please take heed, and don't make the same mistake I made — I wasn't there to support my team at the Southern Conference tournament in my freshman year.

Here's a small guidebook on what it takes to be a Wildcat Superfan:

•A Wildcat Superfan attends all home games (getting there before tip-off), and makes several road trips to

the game.

•A Wildcat Superfan listens to away games on the radio and refers to broadcaster Frank Santore as "Dad" in close conversation.

•As a Wildcat Superfan, you digest the Davidsonian basketball pages thoroughly, and scan other papers and magazines for Wildcat clippings as well. You follow the rankings and standings.

•You idolize the players, even though they don't hold themselves aloof.

•Most importantly, though, when the Southern Conference tournament in Greensboro arrives at the end of February, you pack a car with a group of your friends, drive there, and cheer Davidson onto glory.

Call me a fanatic, or a misguided youth caught up in America's glorification of sport. Call me crazy for preferring to return home for the Southern Conference tournament instead of the Christmas holidays.

Call me anything you want, but please fill my seat. From thousands of miles away, this article is the best I can do right now to support the team.

Write to me at g97c1002@leopard.ru.ac.za and tell me about your favorite moments this season.

Let me hear those voices in Belk Arena echo all the way over here to South Africa.

I'll be listening.

watch the team play.

•By game's end, a Wildcat Superfan's throat burns from yelling so much.

•A Wildcat Superfan's heart pounds with each possession for the last 20 minutes of each regular season contest and all 40 minutes in postseason games.

•A Wildcat Superfan rises to his or her feet at critical moments of the contest and stay there until the very end of

Staff is library's best resource Helpfulness reaches beyond call of duty

Inter-library loan, microfiche, microfilm, and the Internet. I used to be library illiterate. After nearly four years at Davidson, however, I have been forced to delve into the various resources at Davidson's E. H. Little Library and learn what information is out there and how to access it.

This semester, I, the library illiterate, faced the unthinkable — History 480. While research is a way of life for a history major, the senior research paper is quite a different issue. Many thousands of words of original research need to be engineered from a billion different sources, both secondary and primary, to produce a marvelous addition to history archives that every history major can call his or her own.

Despite my know-enough-to-get-by knowledge of the library, fear was at my side, and I had to achieve an understanding of the library above and beyond my usual capacities.

During the first weeks of the semester, the anxious (not enthusiastic) History 480 students got re-oriented to

Little Library. A small staff from the library designed a special program for us, explaining things about history journals, CD-ROMs, Internet resources, and inter-library loan. I learned that I only knew the ABCs of library lingo and had a long way to go: The staff reassured us that they were there to help us and welcomed us to approach them with questions and concerns. They were true to their word.

While the library itself is a feared

and often detested institution at Davidson, the library staff is the most reassuring, helpful, enthusiastic and outgoing group of people for which a library illiterate could hope.

Each time I am at the library for my history paper, I feel like I have some new anxiety to sob over with the staff. Each time I leave with a relaxed smile on my face. I can't help it — they are so

nice!

Whether I have a question about how to do a certain Internet search or am hunting down a withered government book from the 1800s, the staff has

Staff acts as guiding light in once-library illiterate student's trek through History 480.

been there for me with answers.

After my first bout with inter-library loan, I received a personal phone call regarding my requests. Some of the resources I asked for were available at Little Library. I was told to call another staff member to find out how to access them.

Within minutes, however, another person called me. She told me she knew I needed a certain document and should call a third person. Within another few

minutes, the third person called me with more information about the book I needed. Not only did they save me a trip up the hill, but heck, they were looking for me! My project became their endeavor.

Another time, my roommate, a prominent member of the inter-library loan staff, came home with a photocopy of a document that I used for my paper. Someone had been flipping through an old book and saw an article pertaining to my paper topic: This wonderful staff member remembered that the article pertained to my topic, photocopied it, copied all the bibliographic information, and sent it home with my roommate, hoping it might be of use to me!

I cannot say "thank you" enough. To name each staff member and every incident of helpfulness would surely leave someone out, so I won't try. Regardless, with the final draft of my History 480 paper looming ahead, I cannot ignore the incredible support the library staff has given me. The library illiterate has found a haven.

So, with the utmost sincerity, I would like to extend my thanks to the illustrious staff at E. H. Little Library. Despite the bad rap the library itself may carry, the people who work there make up for the green carpet and daunting stacks.

I hope this article provides hope for other closet library illiterates and encourages them to approach the library staff with their questions. They are the library's best resource.

STUDENT OPINION

Renu M. Bhatt

Davidson divided

Jehan Shamsid-Deen asked Buster Burk an extremely important question at the SGA meeting the other night: What do you mean by diversity?

The question is extremely valuable to ask at Davidson and is frustratingly unanswerable right now.

The Priorities Planning Group, which is trying to decide in which direction Davidson will be moving for the next five to 10 years, is looking at the issue of diversity along with sev-

eral other issues that are of interest to students.

Burk, SGA President, asked the SGA to offer opinions on these issues. The discussion that ensued was necessary and interesting but really led nowhere. Unfortunately, I don't think Jehan's question was ever answered.

Superficially, Davidson has done a great job of diversifying its population in recent years. The Admissions and Financial Aid offices work diligently to attract minority students to Davidson. We have programs in place to make minorities who attend Davidson feel more a part of the community. Minority students come to Davidson early for pre-orientation, which is run in part by older minority students.

At pre-orientation, minorities have a chance to meet other minorities and start building community. Minority students also have host families within the community.

This is the first year that the Residence Life Office hasn't had to artificially cluster minorities together on halls.

There is a large enough number of minority students for them to live in close proximity to other minorities.

Even Patterson Court has been

receptive to minorities. Alpha Tau Omega was a fraternity on campus in the 1960s. When they allowed a black student to join the fraternity, they lost their national charter and no longer exist at Davidson.

And Davidson's own KA, "The Order," was the first to have a black member in the nation. All of these things speak wonderfully of Davidson's efforts in the area of diversification.

There is no doubt in my mind that diversity is a wonderful thing. The collective body of knowledge increases with greater diversity. Opportunities to create cross-cultural understanding lie before us but are frequently swept under the carpet. As students, we neglect to take advantage of the diversity that is within our population.

The "black experience" at Davidson College is quite different from the "white experience," from what I understand. There is an area in the Commons in which only black students sit, converse, and eat.

At Phi-Delt's Airband party, there was a black section and a white section. We segregate ourselves, refusing to take advantage of diversity that this institution tries so desperately to create.

This is not a new topic to anyone. I wish I could suggest solutions. Awareness of the problem is important.

Dialogue in a non-threatening atmosphere is necessary. Forums are wonderful, but practically speaking, they often deepen the canyons that already divide us.

What is the value of diversity here at Davidson? We are meeting quotas but not creating an atmosphere where diversity is valued.

And what is diversity?

I realize that there is diversity in an all-white, upper-class group of young adults, but I am not satisfied with that being our notion of diversity. We shouldn't settle for being a microcosm of American society.

HAVE AN OPINION? WRITE IT DOWN.

Call David (x6731) or Kristen (x6640).