

Diversity discussion continues: recruitment key

Davidson has "a long way to go," but administrative commitment to diversity is strong

BY AMEE PATEL
Staff Writer

In his State of the College address over Family Weekend, President Vagt said, "Things go well at Davidson. This means we have good days and less good days. When the demographic numbers for this year's incoming class came out, it was a less than good day."

According to Dean of Admissions Nancy Cable, "Diversity is the top priority of both this institution and of Admissions." Indeed, much of this semester has revolved around diversity. SGA's Council on Minority Affairs has held several panel discussions on minority issues, Diversity Week gave students and staff glimpses into different cultures, and the BSC has sponsored a series of forums on topics such as "Diversity at Davidson" and "Interracial Dating."

These efforts, however, are limited to those on campus, and can have little effect on prospective students. A recent survey by Dr. Pat Sellers's Public Opinions class found that 61% of respondents feel that "the fact that Davidson's student body is primarily white deters minority students from enrolling here."

To address this problem, the admissions office is pumping up their recruitment of minorities. According to Cable, "When the applicant pool grows, it allows increased opportunity for a racially diversified class."

For the class of 2006, only 152 black students applied. Of these, 65 were accepted. And

of these 65 students, only 15 enrolled.

The campus was left asking not why the actual number of first-year black students is so low, but rather why only 15 of those accepted chose Davidson.

In a search for insight, the college has funded recruitment projects aimed specifically at black and Hispanic students. Resultantly, the school has attained the names of National Achievement Scholars, increasing potential recruits; organized minority parent-to-parent letter campaigns and held phone-a-thons to show students around the country the opportunities Davidson offers.

Another major improvement involves the increased travel of admissions officers around the country. "In the past two years, urban, inner-city, magnet high schools have been added to recruitment travel," says Cable. "Admissions officers travel to cities such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and even Charlotte. In the last eight weeks, our ten admissions officers have been to over 40 states."

Improved recruitment has increased the applicant pool for black students from 61 in the class of 1998 to 152 in the class of 2006. A

similar, though not as conspicuous, trend has surfaced among Hispanic applicants, which increased from 56 to 97 within the same time frame.

Still lacking is similar recruitment program within the Asian-American population. Cable admits that the focus on recruitment has remained on black and Hispanic students. Perhaps because of the lack of recruitment efforts

for Asian Americans, their applicant and enrollment numbers have remained unchanged for eight years. Except for the class of 1999's 112 applicants, the Asian-American applicant pool has remained at approximately 100 each year. Of the 101 applicants in the class of 2006, only ten

Asian Americans enrolled.

Cable also emphasizes the importance of preserving Davidson's academic excellence. She says, "Davidson does not have any quota for any cohort of students." Once recruitment efforts have diversified the applicant pool, Davidson neither gives preferential treatment nor relies on predetermined numbers of racial groups in admitting students.

While the admissions office has initiated new recruitment programs, the student body is not

the only source of concern. According to Cable, "The faculty is as important in increasing diversity as admissions. Here at Davidson, we need to ask ourselves if we are making each student feel welcome."

Diversity within the faculty provides potential students with a more encompassed view of the college. Clark Ross, Dean of Faculty, observes, "Having a more diverse faculty is beneficial for all students because they are all taught in an environment that better reflects the real world."

According to Ross, each department is "strongly encouraged" to broaden their pool of potential employees, from secretaries to professors. Under the recommendations of each department head, the Dean of Faculty and President make final decisions on hiring new faculty members.

Ross says, "The objective of the Dean of Faculty office is to increase faculty diversity from a demographic point of view and the number of potential faculty who are of color and women. In last ten years, we have gotten much better."

With the same optimism, Cable admits, "Davidson does have a long way to go. However, I hope the campus can understand that the depth of commitment within this institution cannot be any greater. We are dedicated to making Davidson a welcoming place to all students."

"When the demographic numbers for this year's incoming class came out, it was a less than good day."

- Bobby Vagt in the State of the College Address

PiKA brothers bowl for Leukemia and Lymphoma

BY JEFF NICK
Special Contributor

On Saturday, Oct. 19, the brothers of Pi Kappa Alpha converged on Moor Lanes to put one of their worthless talents to good use. Instead of just bowling for jollies, they devised a way to manipulate bowling into a fundraiser for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. They found people whose feeling of outrage at the disease's existence rivaled their own, and deftly convinced them to sponsor the outing, either with a lump sum or a per-pin donation.

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has a mission that is easy to identify with—they aim to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's dis-

ease and myeloma, and to improve the quality of life of afflicted patients and their families. Fired up by the cause, many brothers had career games, bowling well over their season averages and emptying the pockets of their sponsors.

Particularly helpful in making the afternoon a success were the donations made by Connor, Warner Hall and Rusk eating houses and O'Donnell's Main Street deli. Coupled with the uncanny bowling abilities of the brothers, these donations pushed the grand total to over \$1000. This money will be donated and used to hopefully aid the Society in devising a cure for blood-related cancers.

History professors partner with local high school teachers

PRESS RELEASE
College Communications

Four professors from Davidson are collaborating with Charlotte/Mecklenburg School system (CMS) history teachers to improve student achievement and appreciation of U.S. history.

Their partnership is being funded by a recent \$979,000 "Teaching American History" grant from the U.S. Department of Education. CMS received one of the largest of 114 such grants awarded to school systems in 39 states and the District of Columbia. Grants ranged from \$19,561 to \$1,000,000.

Although CMS enrollment numbers for advanced placement courses in U.S. history have steadily increased in recent years, test scores have not followed suit. Becky Finger, the CMS K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, explained that the new initiative comes as a response to teacher complaints about the difficulty of preparing students for written essay portions of the AP test.

When CMS received its grant, Finger contacted Professor Sally McMillen, chair of the Davidson history department, about establishing a partnership under the grant to help train

and support CMS teachers. McMillen and three other department members, Assistant Professor Daniel Aldridge, Professor Ralph Levering, and Associate Professor John Wertheimer, accepted the offer.

The grant will fund a week-long training session at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C., next summer for about fifty CMS teachers and the Davidson faculty members. The local group will be the first trained under a new program that has been co-developed in the last year by the Smithsonian and the College Board staff.

The Smithsonian program will train both high school AP U.S. History teachers and middle school American History teachers in using artifacts, primary documents, and other resources to make history tangible for students. The grant also enables the school system to create a "vertical teaming" advising program that establishes continuity and consensus in subject matter and pedagogy from the eighth grade to the eleventh grade to the college level. Davidson's professors will observe the Smithsonian training session to prepare to serve as ongoing advisers to the CMS teachers.



Matt Whited

Phi Beta Sigma representative Charles Amerson addresses the group at Tuesday's meeting.

Frats, from page 1

ing the institution of a historically black fraternity. This time, they have the numbers.

With Shandley's encouragement, the men sought and received support from both PCC and the BSC. With strong backing, the proposition went before CCRL, who recommended its approval to the president. With President Bobby Vagt's approval, a committee formed, chaired by Robert Norfleet and including students, faculty and staff. Five historically black fraternities were invited to apply to establish a chapter at Davidson, two of which accepted the invitation.

Jason Scott '04 and Vincent Benjamin '04 are among those spearheading the movement. "It all began during our freshman year," explains Scott. "Many of the males discussed how we could become more a part of the campus and improve our Davidson experience. We also believed that the presence of a historically black fraternity would increase the diversity and cultural awareness not only on campus, but also

within the community."

"Patterson Court is an integral part of Davidson's social life," says Benjamin, "and it should reflect the growing diversity of Davidson." Indeed, the black male population on campus has doubled since the 1991 push for new fraternity.

"The lack of African-American members of Patterson Court speaks for itself," adds Benjamin. "In order for African-American males to truly feel a part of the campus, a historically black fraternity is a necessity."

The administrative stance on the prospect of chartering a historically black fraternity is positive. Jeffries commented, "We are very limited on campus when it comes to black male role models. This will expose students immediately to an international network of role models. The benefits will well beyond the college experience—this is a life-long commitment."

Scott agrees, "Historically black fraternities have the primary goal of bringing males together, reaching out to the youth and acting as role models. That is what many of the youth in not only the Davidson area, but also in the Charlotte area, need."

About thirty sharply dressed Davidson students joined faculty, staff, alumni and administrators at last night's presentation for Phi Beta Sigma. Southeastern Regional Director of Publicity Charles Amerson gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the history of the organization, outlining the ways the fraternity can benefit the school and stressing an emphasis on leadership. Among the points Amerson made was that historically black fraternities can encourage diversity in the applicant pool, that the organization is dedicated to encouraging academic success among members.

A Lenoir-Rhyne charter brother in the audience, though, encouraged Davidson students to think carefully about this decision. "Regardless of which organization you choose," he said, "make sure it's from your heart. Know you're going to make a difference."

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Chamb

By C S

Over the past few since the credits be and the Sorcerer's anticipation contin Harry Potter and counting the adver and his best friends Granger during the School of Witchcra gersets, better speci and the return of th production, Cham where The Sorcerer audience on an in roller coaster ride o ture with few, if a points.

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