

January and February will be devoted to African-American History

Solidarity committee wants to continue the dream here at Davidson

BY HEATH HARDAGE

When the Ku Klux Klan marched through the town of Davidson in 1984, concerned students sponsored a march to protest the presence of the Klan and its ideals.

Since then, many more efforts to combat racism have been made on campus. A more formal committee was appointed in 1989 by the Student Government Association.

The Solidarity Committee, headed by senior Doug Hicks, junior Arindam Bhat-tacharjee and



"Keep marching on," Carrie Bolton, professor of sociology at Livingstone College, told listeners at Sunday's gospel fest. Photo by Ed Matthews

sophomore Michelle Blake, issued an ambitious statement of purpose this fall: "Desiring fewer divisions in the student body, the SGA Solidarity Committee seeks to make students of all races, creeds and nationalities accepted and welcome at Davidson College."

Hicks acknowledged that racism is indeed present at Davidson.

However, he said, "The demonstration of racism is subtle. It's so subtle that a lot of students in the majority don't recognize it." He defined racism

as "a lack of understanding of one another that leads to feelings of alienation among those not in the majority group."

Hicks commented that combatting racism is not solely the responsibility of the Black Student Coalition because it affects all students. "Our goals are ambitious. Our ultimate goal is to make everyone comfortable at Davidson College."

Other goals of the committee include trying to promote communication and understanding and to increase awareness about Martin Luther King, Jr. "He's such a respected leader of the civil rights movement. We think his message can be applied to Davidson in a positive way," said Hicks.

The Solidarity Committee sponsored the "Renew the Dream" program, a celebration of the life and message of King.

A commemorative service was held Sunday evening at Davidson College Presbyterian Church. Chaplain Chuck Hasty and five other students spoke in commemoration of King and how his message applies to Davidson College.

Monday, King's birthday, included a 30-hour prayer vigil, which ended

Tuesday at noon. A sign-up sheet was posted in Chambers for the event. Hicks noted, "It's not just the black students who signed up, it's students of all races and groups."

Hicks said that the Renew the Dream program "stems from a problem, but it's looking for a solution."

The committee also supports the Cultural Arts Series/Black History Month calendar of events to be held throughout January and February.

Scheduled events now include distinguished speakers, such as Harvey Gantt, the first black mayor of Charlotte, and last Sunday's Gospel Choir Songfest which featured singers from Davidson College, as well as from local church choirs. Also scheduled is a showing of the controversial Spike Lee film, *Do The Right Thing*; WDAV radio programs honoring African-Americans; and a visit from poet Lucille Clifton, Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow.

The committee itself plans to sponsor "one big, solid event for the community and campus later in the spring," said Hicks. This event will include a guest speaker or entertainment.

Remembering King: Desegregation and integration required a change in attitudes

By MUADI MUKENGE

Segregation in America sought to make African-Americans an "invisible people," and while some whites felt that the minority could go as high as he wanted without getting too close, others preferred that he be as close as he wanted without moving too high up. These were the words of Samuel Maloney, professor of religion, as he delivered the address at last Tuesday's Eleventh Hour.

Classes at Davidson continued on Monday, the birthday of civil rights martyr Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The day did not go unnoticed, however. On an individual level, and even collectively, some Davidson students, faculty and administrators remembered King's dream and others who died striving for a more just United States of America.

Tuesday's Eleventh Hour was the last leg of the 30-hour prayer vigil sponsored by the SGA Solidarity Committee in honor of King.

According to Maloney, the nonviolent movement which King led, added to the work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People (NAACP), were responsible for spearheaded the radical legal changes of the 50's and 60's which extended equal rights to all segments of the population. One failure of the Black Power Movement and the Black Muslims as well, he added later, was that they did not change the opinion nor the agenda of the white power structure in the least.

By taking a nonviolent approach to change, "King exemplified what the church could and should do," he said.

Maloney recounted his experiences as a minister of a church in very segregated Robinson County, NC. during the 50's.

"I preached on racial themes and on justice," he said, explaining that the South's racist principles were foreign to him, a minister who grew up in California, New York and Rhode Island. Maloney helped organize a county-wide interracial ministerial association, which attracted approximately 10 whites, 10 blacks and 8 Indians.

That activity, added to his visits to black churches and colleges, earned him criticism which he stated were more humorous than harmless.

After the May 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision, which established that separate facilities were not equal and opened the way for integration, the topic of race became more volatile in white churches, some even adopting laws not to allow blacks to join their congregations.

In fact, said Maloney, as of that point, whites had to learn to live under one law for all people as opposed to two laws for two peoples. That required changing one's way of thought as well as one's actions, which was painful in some respects.

"Yet it was not as painful as having two laws was for blacks," he added.

The fact that today blacks have attained prominent positions of leadership (i.e. David Dinkins, newly-elected mayor of New York City) and have formed a middle-class, is a sign that advancements have been made in widening opportunities for minorities, stated Maloney.

Racism is not gone, he said, but in the past decade poverty has emerged as the greatest menace to well-being in this society.

"We need another King...to pressure the establishment," he concluded.



"We need another King...to pressure the establishment," said Sam Maloney, professor of religion, at Tuesday's Eleventh Hour.

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