

Verdier: Liberia provides U.S. with rubber

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Verdier recalled the interesting history between the United States and Liberia in his argument that the U.S. government should use its power to put more pressure on the Liberian government to bring Taylor to justice.

Not only did Liberia fashion its constitution, flag and government based on the United States, but the capital city, Monrovia, pays homage to former U.S. President James Monroe, Verdier said. The country was founded by ex-slaves from the United States, Congo and Caribbean.

Verdier emphasized that the whole world, not just Liberia, must be involved in this issue. "How long will we have to go this alone?" he asked. "Where is the consciousness of this great democracy?"

The road toward a fair democracy in Liberia has been violent, but as the October elections near, Verdier said he is hopeful that "a new day will dawn in Liberia."

The violence started on April 14, 1979, a day Liberians recall as Black Saturday, when the government brutally crushed a civilian riot.

In 1986, then-president Samuel Doe was reappointed in an election that Verdier said was one of the most unfair and corrupt elections in history.

"Ten times more votes were cast than the number of people qualified to vote," Verdier said.

On Dec. 24, 1989, Taylor took

over Liberia with plans to bring peace and democracy. The result was 14 years of civil war, mass killings, government corruption and human rights and environmental violations, Verdier said.

During this time more than 200,000 Liberians were killed and half a million were displaced to other areas in West Africa, he said.

The government benefited from exploitation of the rich natural resources of the country; for example, with most Liberians living without access to water and electricity, Taylor bought himself a \$360,000 bulletproof Hummer, Verdier said.

Because of a long-standing concession between Firestone Tire and Rubber Company and the Liberian government, Liberia is now home to the largest rubber plantation in the world, Verdier said. The raw materials are extracted and waste dumped into the Farmington River, while everything is processed overseas, leaving the people with no benefits and the Farmington River severely polluted.

Green Advocates, a Liberian group Verdier is a member of, was formed in 2001 by Verdier's colleague Alfred L. Brownell to challenge the corruption caused by profiting from natural resource exploitation, represent the community victimized by government abuses and exercise the rule of law, Verdier said.

E-LAW has been instrumental in helping Green Advocates, the only public interest environmental law organization in Liberia, to draft a

comprehensive environmental policy for sustainable management of the environment and natural resources and give the country one of the best environmental law statutes in the world, Verdier said.

Maggie Keenan, communications director at E-LAW, said the group is important in combating "brain drain" by providing support to those who decide to stay in their countries.

"E-LAW has been our window to the rest of the world in these dark days," Verdier said.

Despite relative peace under a two-year transitional government, Verdier is still concerned about the stability of the country. There are ex-militia and ex-combatants with arms living; hunting; and mining gold, diamonds and timber in Sapo National Park, Liberia's only national park.

"Where is all the money going?" Verdier asked. He fears the money is being used to build a new army and buy arms.

Verdier said the most Green Advocates can do is heighten public awareness. Green Advocates has already approached the United Nations with its concerns, but nothing substantial has been done, Verdier said.

Despite some of his disappointment caused by the lack of worldwide support, Verdier said he is "going back home with a renewed sense of conviction that we are not alone."

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Candidates: The VPFA will be announced within two weeks

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the profile states. "This will involve creatively managing enrollment and tuition levels, ensuring efficient operations of the campus and shaping and realizing a vision for how the UO can best take advantage of operational innovations, capital projects and real estate opportunities."

The Emerald interviewed the four finalists: Cleve McDaniel, Laura E. Hubbard, Lynne C. Schaefer and Frances L. Dyke.

Cleve McDaniel

McDaniel serves as the vice president for the Educational Consulting Foundation, a higher-education consulting firm. As the vice president, he has consulted with many campuses in "budgeting and organizational restructuring efforts," according to his resumé.

Previously, McDaniel worked as the vice chancellor for administration and finance at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and held a variety of administrative positions at two other institutions.

McDaniel said he misses the "ambient campus environment" and that he hopes to get back to it soon.

He said he applied for the position because he believed it was a good match for his skills and experience.

"The University of Oregon is unique in its degree of collaboration," he said of the administration. "That is my style. I really emphasize collaboration and honest and open discussions. Collaboration is the key, and that's how I

approach my management."

As for the administrative integration, McDaniel said he would focus on making "it efficient and effective."

"One of the first things I'd do is to meet with key people across campus, and with that I'd build a plan of action," he said. He added that he has worked to build new administrative units at other campuses before.

McDaniel said he has worked extensively with other universities to develop new funding strategies and this experience lends itself well to the new position.

In pursuing private funding sources, McDaniel said it's important to remain conscious of the University's mission.

"We need to do things that maintain our culture, maintain our integrity, maintain our vision as an institution," he said.

McDaniel said he would focus on increasing the Oregon endowment to create more scholarships and increase accessibility.

Laura E. Hubbard

Hubbard is the assistant vice president for administration at the University of Idaho in Moscow. She has held a variety of positions at the University of Idaho, including serving as the interim vice president for finance and administration two years ago.

Previously, she worked in a variety of administrative roles at Washington State University.

Hubbard said her administrative style is a good match for the position because of the "flexible" nature of the University mission.

"My approach is that I don't care where the boxes fall on the organization chart as much as do we understand what we're trying to do," she said. "It's a culture I'm used to working with and am very comfortable working in."

Hubbard said "finding new funding strategies" will be among the VPFA's most pertinent challenges.

"They will have to look at how to fund the University's needs now and into the future," she said. "They'll be looking at diversifying the funding portfolio the University has."

However, Hubbard added that in finding new funding sources, the University will have to remain vigilant in not compromising its mission.

"How you're being funded is going to affect who you feel accountable to," she said. "Ultimately, the University needs to decide where it wants to be and where it wants to go. ... Then the funding that the University pursues needs to line up with that direction."

Hubbard said in looking at cutting programs, the administration should

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