

Good Morning. For those of you who do not know me; I am Kevin Flebbe and I am the Student Body President for this school year.

Let me begin this morning by welcoming the many first year students, and welcoming back all the returning students, faculty, staff and guests.

I would like to take this time to recognize the rest of the SGA Executive Board comprised of Autumn Hamilton as Vice-President, Stephanie Hill as Secretary, and Steffanie Jimenez as Treasurer.

I would now like to recognize the rest of the Student Government Association. We look forward to making this an exciting and fulfilling year here at Catawba College.

Back during the French & Indian War, Henry Whitener – some of you may recognize the name - was settling in Newton in Catawba County.

As it was a time of war, the area was not safe and the Cherokee Indians were hostile towards the people of Newton.

However, the Catawba Indians were friendly with Henry Whitener and worked out an arrangement with him for his protection.

Henry Whitener had a large oak tree in his front yard, and the Catawba Indians painted the oak tree red to warn him when the area was dangerous.

When it was then safe for Mr. Whitener to return to his home they painted the tree white.

As you walked in this morning you received a bookmark on the front of which rests the image of a black and white oak tree

The Student Government Association has established this symbol of peace and cooperation as our Seal.

Throughout the year this symbol of the Oak tree will represent the student government in its efforts to promote the projects that we are working on so diligently.

It is our goal to make life here at Catawba as enjoyable as possible. We aim to do this through sponsoring large events such as homecoming, evaluating processes like our committees that will work to improve parking and housing selection, and establishing student resources like the free movie library we organized last year.

On the back of the bookmark you can find all of our contact information should you have any issues or ideas for improvement here at Catawba College.

That being said 2 minds are better than 1, and 30 minds are better than 2. In that same thought process 1,000 minds are a significantly more insightful than 30. The Student Government Leaders I introduced can represent you, but I encourage you to contact us, and let us know what ideas that you have for Catawba.

Our goal must be to enable everyone to make the most of their own lives with educational opportunity, a cleaner environment and a safe and enjoyable campus.

As we embark on a year with more people living on Campus than in past years we must remember to care for each other as members of the Catawba tribe.

We must respect each other and expect more out of each other.

That being said, I challenge you to get involved, not necessarily in student government but in whatever motivates you. Your contributions to life at Catawba will leave its mark.

With a college as rich in history and traditions as ours ...pride is inevitable. Yet with the times, the new leadership and growth change necessarily awaits our institution. Be a part of that change, help in molding the change so that when change occurs you have no doubt that the best is yet to come...Because undoubtedly, the best IS yet to come.