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'The Office'-ial guide to campus dormitories

By Joseph Held
Staff Writer

The hunt for housing has returned. To make the process easier, the characters of "The Office" have each been assigned their UNC residence hall equivalent.

Jim Halpert

Smirking across the lawn from McIver, Alderman is as attractive as the character it represents.

Pam Beesly

Housing the "Women Experiencing Learning and Leadership" residential learning program, McIver is this secretary's spirit — self-confident and quirky.

Toby Flenderson

SWERVE: Check out the gifs on dailytarheel.com/section/swerve

Far from the other residence halls, like Toby is annexed from the other workers, Spencer draws students to its white doors for logistical reasons. Talking to Toby is like walking all the way to the north campus package center. It is hassle, but it must be done.

Erin Hannon

Scattered throughout campus, Ram Village symbolizes this scatterbrained secretary. As a relatively new addition, these apartments give upperclassmen a new living experience.

Dwight Schrute

The last resort for accommodations, a couch in the UL is the UNC equivalent of the office oddity. No one wants to use this resource, but it gets the job done for the night.

Kevin Malone

Hinton James, a first-year residence hall, is the equivalent to this clumsy character. Still naive to the ways of UNC, its residents are pitied for their long walk to and from south campus.

Angela Martin

As oxymoronic as this character's relationship with Dwight, Manly is an all-female residence hall on north campus.

Michael Scott

With a big personality and a social atmosphere, Morrison is the residence hall best fitting this regional manager. A fun time will always win over hard work at this dorm.

Ryan Howard

While this character believes to be better than the other office workers, Craige North seeks to be the better, newer version of its southern counterpart.

Meredith Palmer

As unpleasant as "Crusty Craige," Meredith is the embodiment of this residence hall. And we all know that if Meredith were a UNC student, she'd be a regular at the Grotto.

Stanley Hudson and Phyllis Vance

Old and located across from each other, Old East and Old West symbolize this office duo.

Oscar Martinez

This character gets his work done and does not dawdle much like the students of Koury, one of the residence halls for honors housing.

Andy Bernard

An emblem of preppy style, Granville Towers share this trait in common with the Cornell graduate.

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Q&A with fire marshal Tommy Gregory

Staying safe is a priority for students, but one thing that sometimes gets forgotten is the risk of fire. Staff writer Sara Kiley Watson asked Tommy Gregory, the interim fire marshal for Chapel Hill, about how to keep off-campus houses and apartments safe.

The Daily Tar Heel: How can students be fire safe in their homes and apartments?

Tommy Gregory: They should limit the amount of combustibles they have and use candles and things such as that in a very responsible manner.

DTH: What are some major fire risks that people have in their homes?

TG: A lot of times it will be overloading circuits and things like that. In other words, especially in older homes, there

are limited outlets and people tend to overload the circuits, as well as unattended cooking, which is a big problem. Those two are the biggest two. The cooking is actually 50 percent of the causes of fires.

DTH: How many fire calls do you usually get in Chapel Hill from students or young residents?

TG: I don't know, I think we ran about 4,200 calls last year, but I wouldn't have a breakdown of how many of those were student housing versus any other call we receive.

DTH: What advice do you have for students living off-campus when it comes to keeping their homes fire safe?

TG: As far as personal safety, make sure they have working smoke detectors. There should be one in each

bedroom, and then one outside each bedroom. If there are multiple levels, like multiple floors, there should be one on each floor. Make sure those are in good repair. Also if they are more than 10 years old they should be replaced — that's the manufacturers recommendation — that they be replaced every 10 years. If they have any gas-burning appliance, or a fireplace or anything like that, they should also have a carbon monoxide detector.

Another good thing to have is a working fire extinguisher and know how to use that fire extinguisher. If they don't know, they can reach out to us, and we will be able to teach them how to use it. Campus provides, a lot of times, an opportunity to use fire extinguishers and things like that.

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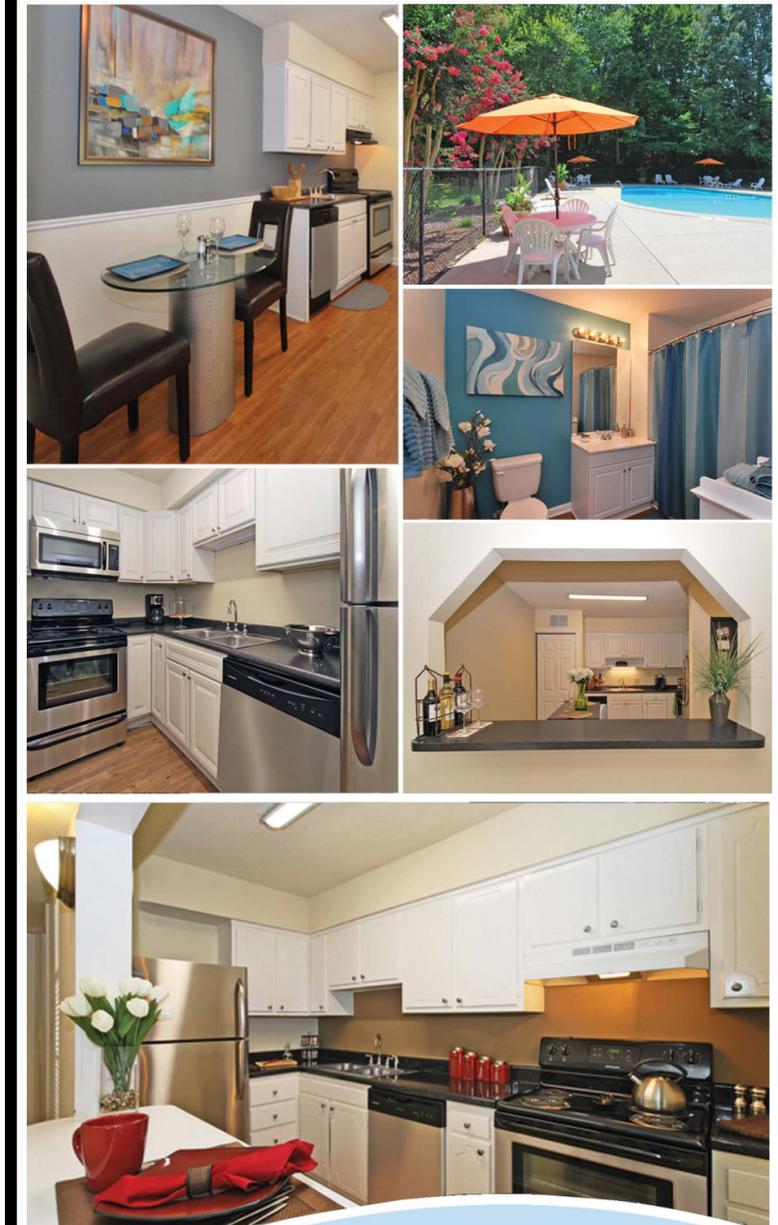
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What's the best thing about living off campus?

Compiled by Krupa Kaneria

All students fantasize about the day that they will graduate from college and move into their own place. Whether it is an apartment or a house, there is something about living in a privately owned property that makes students feel independent and cool. We wanted to know the best part of off-campus life.

Swapnil Patel

Senior



"I don't have to follow the holiday dates or more in or out by certain dates, and fire alarms — I don't have to deal with fire alarms."

Kasey Norton

Junior



"I like living off-campus in an apartment because it makes me stay on campus longer during the day because I can't go home."

Juliana Haag

Sophomore



"I just like the freedom and I like having my car and my own room and my own kitchen."

Olivia Buffington

Junior



"I feel like I get my own space and I feel like I have more of my own identity."

Tim Creedon

Senior



"It's nice."

Tips for finding off-campus housing that works for you

Compiled by staff writer Holden Williams

Now's the time of the year when students have to figure out where they will be living next school year. There are a lot of factors that go into finding a place to live, so students who have gone through the process before have shared some tips about finding the perfect off-campus place to live next year.

Cassie White

Shortbread Lofts



"Sign your lease as soon as possible. I preferred somewhere that was closer to campus, so I don't have to rely on buses."

Sonia Vasconcellos

Shortbread Lofts



"Definitely start early. Find good people to live with, because I had a roommate move out because it was a bad situation."

Wendy Ji

The Warehouse



"I picked housing off convenience and location. Something to keep in mind is the quality of the stuff too. Find people you enjoy living with."

Alex Fisher

Lux at Central Park



"I live in Lux and the shuttle is pretty clutch when it comes to getting to class. Look into roommate matching services."

Alex Kacvinsky

Off-campus house



"Talk to upperclassmen that you know ... It is nice, if you work through UNC students, you have... deeper insights of potential houses."

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DTH/GABRIELLE THOMPSON

Shortbread Lofts is a short walk from campus on Rosemary Street. Its grand opening was in 2014.

Luxury apartments growing in popularity

By Molly Horak
Staff Writer

A growing demand for off-campus student housing has led to an increase in popularity of luxury apartment complexes in Chapel Hill.

New apartment complexes and rentals have opened in the past few years, including Lux at Central Park, 140 West Franklin and Shortbread Lofts. These apartments offer new lifestyles for residents, said Chapel Hill Town Council member Michael Parker.

"I think what these apartments represent is a new type of housing in Chapel Hill, the high-rise rental apartments, which we really have not had in the past," Parker said. "I think it will be interesting to see how the market takes them up."

He said he hesitates to use the term "luxury apartments" to describe the new, more expensive housing options, because he said branding them luxury apartment prejudices people against them.

Nancy Oates, Chapel Hill

Town Council member, said the rise of high-cost apartments means changes for the town.

"We are tending to approve a lot of apartments that will rent for a higher amount than the types of jobs we have in Chapel Hill," Oates said.

The growth of new apartment buildings will have a drastic effect on the town and the University, Oates said.

"When we're building something, it is very important that we have an idea of who wants to live in what kind of housing and before we do something I really want to make sure that that is how people want to live," she said.

Shortbread Lofts, one of the most expensive luxury student housing options in Chapel Hill, has seen rising interest since opening in 2014.

Applications opened on Oct. 17 for the 2017-2018 academic year at Shortbread Lofts and all apartments were filled within five hours, said Paige Johnson, leasing and marketing manager at

Shortbread Lofts.

"Last year it took us 17 days to fill up and this year it was more high demand," Johnson said. "I think we offer the most campus-friendly amenities and we are very student-oriented — we want to make things that fit the students' preferences."

Shannon Gallagher, UNC senior, said the amenities and newness of the apartments is what drew her to live at Shortbread Lofts for the last two years.

"It's only two years old, so there are new appliances that have never really broken down for us and the location is great," she said.

Amenities such as workout rooms, study lounges, printing, coffee stations and rooftop spaces are sometimes reasons the apartments are more expensive.

"It's expensive — that's the biggest downside that it has — but you're paying for the niceness of it, the equipment and everything like that," Gallagher said.

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To be Frank(lin), you should eat here

You don't have to miss Rams omelets or Lenoir cookies.

By Terrance Howard
Staff Writer

Moving off campus is hard, especially when you can't cope with stress by gorging on dining hall cuisine.

Don't worry: to take some of that pressure off, we have surveyed and compiled a

whole host of other cheap things for when you just don't feel like grocery shopping. Moving off-campus opens up a veritable smorgasbord of new restaurants to experiment with.

Waffle House

Waffle House might not be haute cuisine, but it's a cheap alternative to most dining hall breakfast staples: omelets, hash browns and waffles (obviously). It even mimics

"Insomnia delivers as many cookies as you want to your front door."

Terrance Howard
The Daily Tar Heel staff writer

the limited vegan options!

Italian Pizzeria III

Awesome pizza at awesome prices. The two brothers who have operated the pizzeria since 1980 don't limit themselves to pizza, either.

IP3 offers up a wide variety of quality Italian dishes, and if you're still not sold, Indy Week has called it the "Best Place to Watch International Soccer."

Insomnia Cookies

Insomnia delivers as many cookies as you want to your front door. Don't pretend like you need to be sold on this.

Elmo's Diner

Elmo's does its best to master food from enchiladas to French toast, making it a sure bet to satisfy any desires you might normally turn to the dining hall for. They even have a menu of specials that changes daily, adding an element of surprise to their already huge selection.

Vimala's Curryblossom Cafe

Vimala's serves Indian cuisine at reasonable prices. It started out in 1994 as a series of donation-based dinners that Vimala held in her own home, a tradition that spawned a restaurant in 2010.

Donating to the restaurant's Food for All fund helps continue the community diners' legacy and provide food for those who can't afford it, supporting activism and cuisine with one donation.

Literally Any Fast Food Joint

Sometimes you throw health out the window and decide to do something like eat nothing but a bowl of dining hall whipped cream before taking a midterm. Not that I'm speaking from experience or anything.

There is no greater (or



DTH FILE/ALEX KORMANN

Italian Pizzeria III, located on Franklin Street, is an affordable and delicious option for dining when you don't have a meal plan.

cheaper) way to replicate that experience than to visit literally any fast food place. The lingering, inescapable sense of shame will be quickly dulled by a full stomach and a sense of wonder at how little you spent.

Remember: gluttony is only a deadly sin if it kills you.

Fast food in Chapel Hill is limited to Wendy's and McDonald's, both of which are great choices. But if you're willing and ready to drive (or Uber, we won't judge you), Cook-Out is less than a 30 minute drive away. So is Taco Bell. Please choose wisely.

Buns

It's pricey, but it's not as pricey as spending \$11 to eat

in the dining hall if you're swiping your debit card to visit your friends. Get a better version of the Lenoir cheeseburgers with excellent fries or get adventurous with beets and bean sprouts.

Linda's

Sure, you can make your own cheese fries in the dining hall. But you haven't lived until you've tried the loaded cheese fries at this bar and grill establishment. And there's no substitute for the ranch that they come with — parmesan peppercorn. Eating these at 1 a.m. is a religious experience, but eating them at normal people hours is good, too.

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Q&A with J. Tristan Routh on leases

J. Tristan Routh is a staff attorney at Carolina Student Legal Services Inc. Daily Tar Heel staff writer Brinley Lowe spoke with him about what students should look out for when signing a lease.

The Daily Tar Heel: What are some red flags students should look for when signing a lease?

J. Tristan Routh: I tend to find that the (leases) that look like they have been created in a Word Document tend to be the ones that have been written by landlords who write their own leases. And if they write their own leases, that means they may or may not have had them reviewed by an attorney...There is not one thing about a lease you should be concerned about. There are tons and tons of things, so that's why I would encourage all students who are signing a lease to just come in and meet with us. It doesn't cost anything to do that.

DTH: What are the rights of tenants that you see being violated?

JTR: I would encourage all students not to go into a lease with an idea in their head that they are just automatically going to lose their (security) deposit...(Landlords) are required to hold a tenant's security deposit in a trust account or furnish what's called an insurance bond to cover the amount of the deposit. They can't just take the deposit and deposit it into their own personal banking account or checking account or savings account...Within 30 days of the lease ending, the landlord is required to send a written itemized accounting of any damages that the landlord is withholding from the tenant's security deposit...So if they're withholding \$100 for a dirty carpet and \$20 for a broken toilet seat and that kind of thing, they have to set that out specifically. They can't just say 'I've withheld a thousand dollars for damages. Here's the



DTH/TARYN REVOIR

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A tenant only has to return a rental premises to the landlord in the same condition in which they found it minus ordinary wear and tear. So, if the landlord is trying to charge them because there's a few scuffs on the wall or the carpet got worn down a little bit, that's ordinary wear and tear and the landlord shouldn't be charging for that...

The other big issues that I see tenants being taken advantage of by landlords is what we call habitability issues, quiet enjoyment issues and repair issues. (By law), a landlord is required to keep a premises in a fit and habitable condition. That means that if there is flooding or if there's mold or if there's a rat infestation the tenant is not responsible for, the landlord needs to do something about it...

Under statute, a landlord is required to keep in

good working order heating systems, air conditioning systems, electrical, plumbing, appliances — basically anything that came with the house, or the apartment or townhouse or whatever it is.

DTH: Do you think college students are particularly vulnerable to being taken advantage of by landlords?

JTR: We have some very good landlords in this county and we have some very bad landlords...I do think that a lot of times landlords think that "They're students, they probably don't care. Maybe they have a low standard of habitability," but I definitely do think that students, especially younger students, are particularly at risk of being taken advantage of. I tend to see a lot of times landlords don't take students seriously until they get a lawyer

involved.

DTH: Is there any other advice

you would give to students looking for off-campus housing?

"The other piece of advice is don't let landlords walk all over you."

J. Tristan Routh
Attorney

JTR: One thing that I cannot stress enough is that when you move into a house, you should do a thorough move-in inspection, meaning go through that house with a fine-tooth comb before you move in your stuff...

Document the heck out of it, OK, because that way at the end of the lease, if your landlord says, 'you put this hole in the wall' and that hole in the wall was in there before you moved in, you got a picture that you took the day you moved in that says that hole was there when you got possession of it.

...The other piece of advice is don't let landlords walk all over you. Be assertive. Stand up for yourself. Don't be worried about them retaliating against you. It's blatantly illegal for a landlord to retaliate just because you're asserting your right as a tenant.

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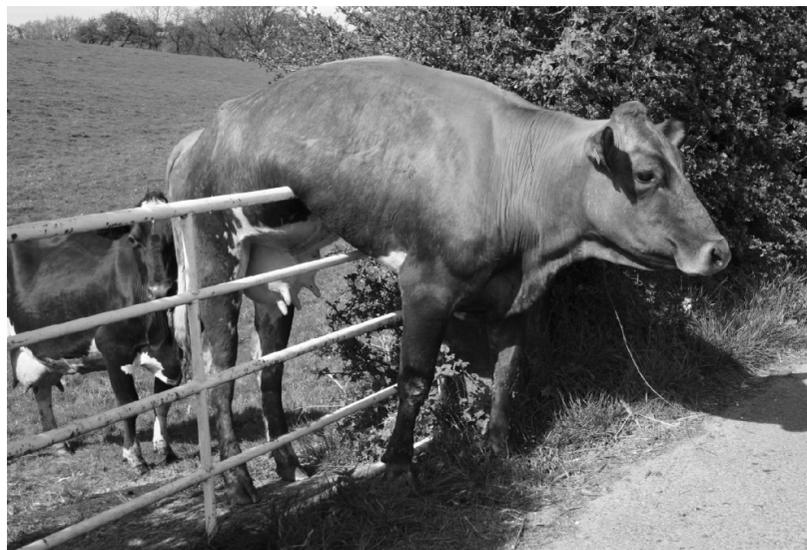
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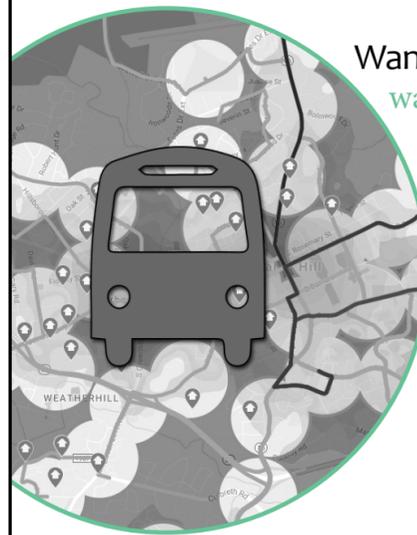


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What is the best part of on-campus housing?

Compiled by staff writer Ashley Cruz

Most students live on campus when they first arrive at UNC, and the various styles of dorms available across campus can make a big difference in students' lives. Daily Tar Heel staff writer Ashley Cruz asked students what they liked best about on-campus housing.

Katie Smith

Senior



"I lived in Morrison my freshman year, and that was really nice because there were a lot of freshmen when I was there..."

Angela Tettey

Senior



"You run into people that you don't really run into. There is a different environment than like being in classes."

Claire Koenig

Senior



"... It was helpful to have a base where I can meet people in the halls ... it was like super close to all of my classes."

Sean Hicks

Senior



"I think it is a good community and it is good when you are a freshman... but as time goes on, it is a little restrictive in general."

Jamie Rose

Sophomore



"I think the main thing is convenience to classes and everything on campus. I only stayed in Ehringhaus, and I enjoyed it."

Lindsey Luxon

Graduate Student



"I lived on campus all four years of undergrad, and I really enjoyed it because I liked the convenience to classes..."

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Student smokers find support outside of housing

By Nic Rardin
Staff Writer

Students who smoke and live in residence halls have to face an ultimatum: hike up to the quad or keep their cigarettes in the pack.

"There's a no-smoking boundary in all University facilities," Residence Hall Association President Taylor Bates said. "That's a University-wide policy."

Bates said smoking tobacco is banned inside and within 100 feet of all residence halls and University buildings. He said RHA doesn't have any resources or programs for students who smoke or are trying to quit, other than the Substance-Free Environments Residential Learning Program.

"It's a program that requires you to live in that housing facility," Bates said. "Sometimes they do put on programs open to the broader campus community, but

usually it's open only to the residents."

Students who do smoke gather in some unofficial areas around campus, namely the flagpole in Polk Place.

"Honestly I don't find it that big an inconvenience," one student smoker, Josh Martin, said. "All of my classes are right here, so it's whatever."

Martin said for the most part he isn't bothered by the fact that campus is non-smoking.

"If anything I'm kind of glad they kind of force us together," he said. "Because as you can see we have a very tight community. We even have people that don't smoke come out and hang out with us, and people who quit smoking still come hang out with us."

Martin said he regularly shows up at the flagpole before class to unwind and talk with friends.

He said he didn't have

much to complain about, but wished there was a better way to stay out of the rain.

"Generally I'd say the worst thing about it is bad weather," he said. "We're forced to either go under the overhang at Greenlaw or huddle up under the trees which are even closer to the walkway, and people get irritated by

that."

He said he and some of the other smokers have come up with a solution to their precipitation problem.

"I wish the school was more open-minded about it and would give us a gazebo out here," Martin said.

Molly Moore said she smokes and appreciates the

fact that she can only do it at the flagpole.

"I actually prefer the fact that the campus is non-smoking because I am attempting to quit," she said. "It's nice to not have smoke everywhere. It's a little more inconvenient if you want to grab a quick cigarette, but that kind of helps."

Moore said she enjoys the

community spirit amongst the smokers but doesn't enjoy the feeling of segregation.

"It definitely puts a little bit more of a stigma on smoking, but that just seems to be the kind of environment we are in," she said.

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Communities help residents connect

Compiled by staff writers
Ellie Little and Meredith
Katibah

Residential Learning Programs are communities in dorms for students who want a specific atmosphere and focus in their housing.

WELL: Women's Studies

The Women Experiencing Learning and Leadership community in Melver Residence Hall embraces all gender identities. Sophomore Madison Draughn, who lives in WELL, said there are a lot of activities available. The overall mission of the community is to help women pursue learning. "It helps a lot with leadership and stuff because you have to go and help the community because otherwise I would never go out and do things on my own because I am too timid about it," Draughn said.

Sustainability Community

The Sustainability community in Morrison Residence Hall attracts individuals that are passionate about the environment. "It's pretty chill, there are a lot of people here, so you run into different people all the time, like it's rare that I ... go without seeing a new face," first-year Danielle Cook said. Residents attend weekly meetings to catch up. "Last week, we went to the botanical gardens down the street, and that was really cool and they had a sustainably designed facility and we walked around the garden," Cook said.

Transfer United

The Transfer United community in Carmichael Residence Hall caters to transfer students. "It's just trying to foster friendship amongst transfers to help them ease their way into life at UNC," sophomore Geoffrey Dodd said. The program only accepts transfer students. "I think it's just good if you want to go to an event real quick; there are people you can just hit up in the GroupMe, and they will go with you, so you don't have to go by yourself and you don't have to plan ahead," Dodd said.

Balance Community

Balance: Exploring the Eight Dimensions of Wellness in Joyner Residence Hall hopes to help students build a healthy lifestyle. "Just trying to make sure that we were all living a holistic lifestyle and we were taking care of ourselves, which I think is really important," senior Gabrielle Smith said. Balance provides substance-free living. "I originally chose to live there because it was a substance-free LLC, and I knew coming into college that was the kind of environment I wanted to live in..." junior Hannah Carter said.

Pride Place

Pride Place is an LGBTQ community in Cobb Residence Hall that aims to be a safe space. Junior and co-founder Nupur Jain said she does not identify as a member of the LGBTQ community and has never lived in Pride Place, but she helped create it last year. "I helped create it because it's important for allies to help in creating these kinds of spaces, because I was the only ally on the team and my voice is important to help bridge the gap between the actual community and the administration," Jain said.

Global Scholars

Next year, the Global Scholars House community in Craige North Residence Hall will include already-existing Spanish and Chinese houses and add an Arabic house. The new structure of the program will be a community for those planning on studying abroad or studying global studies or a language. First-year Leah Simon lives in the Spanish community. "I get excited by speaking in Spanish, it's something new and different. Even if it's just about random things, it's enjoyable," Simon said.

Service and Leadership

The Service and Leadership community in Hinton James Residence Hall is a program that is split into three different committees: service, educational and fun. First-year Bianca Wu, a business and public health double major, is a member of the service committee. She said she was drawn to the RLP to find people who shared similar interests. "They all enjoy serving and people want to lead and take action, so I think it's a really good opportunity for first-years to get involved in," Wu said.

What's New?

The Blue Print community in Carmichael Residence Hall will take advantage of the Be A Maker (BeAM) space in Carmichael, which will have 3D printers, sewing machines and other materials available for all students. In Aycock and Graham Residence Halls, the Chancellor's Science Scholars will live together. First Gens in Hinton James will be a space for first-generation college students. The National Pan-Hellenic Council will have a designated space for its chapter meetings in Ram Village 1.

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