

PANORAMA

parent newsletter

March 2015



Campus Housing Provides Physical, Spiritual Safety

Manuel Gomez, '14, could feel his heart pounding in his chest.

He had been walking home alone from a late-night church meeting when everything went dark. A blackout in this part of Cuba was nothing unusual—but the footsteps behind him were.

Gomez broke into a sprint. The footsteps did the same. Fearing for his life, Gomez, a bass drummer for his Pathfinders' Club, launched his drumsticks at the shadow chasing him. The first one missed, but Gomez heard the man cry out in pain when the second one bounced off his head.

Relieved, Gomez raced ahead to hide among a small group of people shuffling to find their homes in the darkness.

Gomez had two constants growing up: fear and darkness.

After the Cuban government started scheduling daily blackouts due to a shortage of natural resources, Gomez and his family, along with countless others, were forced to spend six or seven hours—and once, 45 days—fumbling in candlelight while their food spoiled. To make matters worse, it was not uncommon for unsavory characters to use the shield of darkness to

commit crimes.

Though Gomez left the country at 17, his fears did not fully dissipate until he moved into the men's residence hall at Southern.

"The fact that I knew I wasn't going to get robbed in the middle of the night was very refreshing," Gomez said.

When Gomez became a resident as-

"The residence hall is a safe place to grow spiritually, to bounce ideas off people."

MANUEL GOMEZ, '14

sistant, and later a student dean, he had an easy time explaining to parents why their kids would be protected in the residence halls. He would describe the state-of-the-art door locks, the cautionary fire drills, and the university's constant push to make the security systems increasingly efficient.

"I really wanted parents to know that their kids were going to sleep safe at night," Gomez said. "I've met people at Southern from all over the world, and I

have never met anyone who said they felt unsafe in the dorm. Never."

Though Gomez has always been grateful for his physical safety at Southern, he values the spiritual security that life in the residence halls provides even more.


Being a Seventh-day Adventist in a communist country came with many difficulties.

"Every time you walked out the door, you knew your faith would be challenged in some way," Gomez said. "Someone was going to ask you to be more loyal to the government than you are to God."

Because of this conflict, Gomez found it difficult to make friends, and little changed when he relocated to the United States to attend public high school. It wasn't until he moved into Southern's residence hall that he found a place to express his beliefs without being chastised.

"The residence hall is definitely a safe place to grow and explore spiritually—to bounce ideas off people without being reprimanded," Gomez said. "It was safe environment for me to develop who I am as a Christian, and for me to help others develop as well."

~Myron Madden



Students relax in the lobby of Talge Hall. The safe space awards them the freedom to grow socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Timeless Teachings

“My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.”

Isaiah 32:18

Did You Know? Southern Village Prepares Students for Life on Their Own

The first time Jailyn King, senior psychology major, stepped into her Southern Village apartment, she was immediately impressed by the modern feel and home-like atmosphere.

Each apartment has eight separate units with four students in each unit. Every apartment is furnished and complete with a living room, kitchen, laundry room, two bathrooms, and two bedrooms.

“It’s like we have our own community,” King said. “The grass is cut nicely and the buildings are well maintained. Also, almost everyone living here is an upperclassman; we’re all in the same stage in life.”

King noted that the new living situation tremendously improved her ability to keep

up with regular household responsibilities.

“It’s the stepping-stone between living in the residence hall and living out in the real world,” King explained. “It prepares us for what’s out there by providing security as well as freedom instead of being completely on our own.”

Southern Village helps students transition into adulthood by taking them to the next step of independent living.

“It’s a true apartment experience: you deal with roommates, purchase and cook your own meals, entertain, and clean,” said John Willis, Southern Village dean.

Although there are added responsibilities, there are also more freedoms. Students are required to either sign in or get checked in by a resident assistant each night, but there is no dean in the Southern Village buildings like there are in the residence halls.

Students ages 21 and older earn the privilege of living in Southern Village by completing 80 credit hours and maintain-

ing a reputable personal record in the residence hall.

“This is a unique experience because the dean and resident relationship is based on trust,” Willis said. “We trust that because of their previous experiences in the residence hall, they will do well here. We trust that they are ready for this, that they respect the boundaries, and that they will know when to ask for help.”

~Eloise Ravell



Village students are free to entertain friends in the same stage of life.

Q&A Ask the Deans



Lisa Hall,
dean of women



John Willis,
Southern
Village dean

How do you get involved in the lives of our students socially?

Hall: As deans, we have the opportunity to interact socially through our Girls’ Club programs. We try to have at least one event every month. In January we had a roller skating event (see

photo page), in February we had a few events hosted by the deans and a deans versus women volleyball tournament, and at the end of the year we will have an awards night for a variety of contests held throughout the year.

Willis: At the beginning of the school year, my two older daughters baked cookies each week, and our whole family would deliver them to students. This was a great opportunity to meet each of the residents and introduce them to my family. We also enjoy opening our home to students on Friday nights so they can enjoy a casual, home environment.

What about on a personal level? How do you help our students with day-to-day problems?

Hall: When an RA mentions that someone is having difficulties, the door

for more one-on-one interaction opens. Some residents come to us when they are feeling down, and we spend time talking with them. Even under “negative” circumstances, such as night check violations, worship issues, or more serious conduct situations, we have the opportunity to create positive interaction. As the dean of women, I handle conduct issues and often build close relationships with residents as a result. I love it when the negative becomes a positive!

Willis: As far as problem solving, the residents of Southern Village are older. When problems come up, they usually come to us for advice, and we try to give them the tools to resolve the conflict on their own. Nonetheless, we are always available to mediate if the need arises.

Staff Profile:

Darlene Turner, “The Ironing Lady”

To find Darlene Turner, it's better not to ask for her by name (as few will know of whom you speak). Instead, you can find her by the nickname coined straight from her hobby: The Ironing Lady.

Turner is a community member who volunteers to iron dress pants and shirts for the men living in Talge Hall. She enjoys what she does, which is what makes her ministry so perfect.

“I love ironing,” Turner said. “It’s relaxing to me, believe it or not.”

In 2008, Turner began praying for volunteer work. When her grandson started attending Southern, she found the opportunity she was looking for.

“I wanted to make sure that he had a nice, pressed shirt for Sabbath,” Turner said. “So I thought, ‘Well, I’ll see if they’ve ever had anyone iron before.’”

Turner spoke with the deans, who agreed to let her set up shop in one of the conference rooms. At first, business was slow, and Turner would stand in the hall asking the

young men if they had clothes that needed ironing. But as word got around, things began to pick up. Now, on a busy day, Turner can get clothes from more than 30 “customers.”

“I stay until I’m done, which is sometimes 6 or 7 p.m.,” Turner said. “But that doesn’t happen too often.”

Many young men stop by to visit with her, and she enjoys the interaction. For some of the men, she has become a grandmother away from home.

“The first time I brought clothes for ironing, we ended up talking for an hour and a half,” said Douglas Abbott, junior nursing major. “The next time, I came just because I wanted to talk. She is an awesome friend, gives good advice, and her ironing saves me time.”

While Turner’s work is solely on a volunteer basis, she is happy with the relationships she has formed, and knowing that the men will look nice come Sabbath is an added bonus.



Darlene Turner presses a dress shirt for one of the men in Talge Hall. Turner has been ironing clothes for the men of Talge for six years as both a hobby and an act of service.

“God knew what I liked to do, so it is all working out,” Turner said. “God answered my prayer.”

Anyone in the Collegedale area interested in volunteering on campus can learn more by calling 423.236.2618 or emailing volunteer@southern.edu.

~ Julia Bonney

Student Life: Brotherhood and Sisterhood

As the warm glow of vespers fades away on another Friday evening, a group of men keep the spiritual fire alive by gathering to discuss important issues relevant to their lives.

Brotherhood is a Bible study group that consists of men looking for a place to be real about their daily battle with sin. The leaders of the group hope to build an atmosphere of trust and offer encouragement from both personal experience and scripture.

“We try to make it a place where guys are really open,” said Steven Sigamani, senior theology major and primary leader of Brotherhood. “We also try to interact with the younger guys, specifically take them in as big brothers.”

A counterpart group, Sisterhood, was created because of the success and impact of Brotherhood. Sisterhood offers women a place to share the struggles and temptations that assault them every day. Having

an accountability partner to depend on provides the ladies with someone who will always have her door open.

“Sisterhood isn’t just a regular Bible study that seeks to encourage personal devotion and mentorship,” said Valerie Hernandez, senior theology major and one



The men of Brotherhood link arms as they pray together.

of the leaders of the group. “We seek to be an open place for vulnerability, accountability, and friendships.”

Sisterhood and Brotherhood are different from other Bible study groups because each confronts issues unique to its specific gender.

“Because we are all women, we can reach each other on a more personal level,” said Maria Reyes, junior religious studies major. “This is a private, safe place where we can share the power God has with younger women.”

Both groups bring students closer to Christ and prepare them to take on leadership roles in the ministry down the road.

“We do Brotherhood because it’s what Jesus did,” said Marc-Anthony Pierre, a junior theology major. “Jesus spent time with his disciples because he cared more about showing them his relationship with the Father than telling them about it.”

~Steven Collins

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What makes your residence hall or Southern apartment feel like home?

“The little ‘living rooms’ on each hall helps the residence hall feel more like a home. If you have a good relationship with your RA, that can kind of feel like she’s a type of guardian. Mostly, it’s just your friends that are like your family, that really makes it your home.”

~Sara Evans, sophomore nursing major

“Having friends over and cooking for them, and simply spending time with people who are like family, makes Southern Village feel like home. We’re free to create memories within our own space instead of going off campus to do it.”

~Julianna Amegan, senior communications major

“I really like the physical aspect of Southern Village. I love the fact that it’s an actual apartment with a living and dining area and even a kitchen. We can decorate how we like and create our own home environment. It’s a peaceful place for us to unwind because of the atmosphere that my three housemates and I created.”

~Jailyn King, senior psychology major

“Even though the RAs and deans are very busy, I know if I need someone to talk to, they are there for me. Hearing the RAs tell stories about their lives and how God has helped them is inspirational.”

~Amanda Cook, junior mathematics major

MARCH

19 Chamber Orchestra Kremlin

Originating in Russia in 1991, the orchestra, under direction of Misha Rachlevsky, is composed of some of Russia’s finest young string players.

21 Talent Show

22 Symphony Orchestra Concert

27 Star Watch

Faculty and staff bring powerful telescopes to the science building parking lot as students and community members come out at night to view the heavens.

28 Asian Night

Put on by the Asian Club, this much-anticipated cultural night highlights various Asian countries and cultures through food, music, entertainment, and more.

APRIL

4 SonRise

This interactive Easter pageant transforms the campus into Jerusalem so students, parents, and community members can witness the betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

5 Senior Recognition Banquet

A dinner for graduating seniors during which departmental awards are presented to students with outstanding achievements.

26 SA Strawberry Festival

Special end-of-the-year documentary featuring the school year’s best memories.



Tristan Knowles, senior accounting major, takes a break from studying for midterms by starting a game of pool.

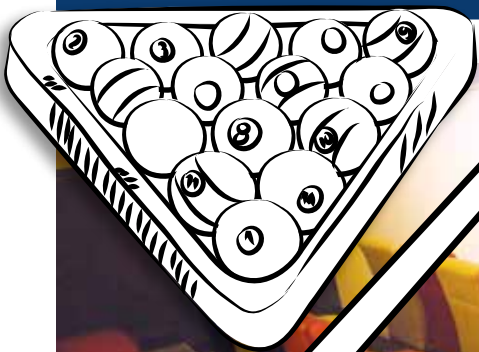


Joseph Suffriti, sophomore community wellness management major, and Julian Ancion, freshman computer systems administration major, enjoy a pingpong match.

TALGE HALL RECREATION ROOM

When the pressures of college life overwhelm the men of Talge, they can retreat into Southern's very own man cave. The Recreation Room, located deep in the heart of Talge, offers them an exclusive lounge to shoot some pool, play a round of pingpong, or watch sports.

PHOTOS BY MYRON MADDEN



The men of Talge are invited to watch a movie or just lounge in the Recreation Room's spacious home theater. Though there is usually plenty of leg room, it can get pretty crowded during the Super Bowl and the NCAA Basketball Tournament!



Mark Comberiate, senior film production major, and Georgia Standish, senior broadcast journalism major, spend date night at the skating rink.

GIRL'S CLUB SKATE NIGHT

The annual skating party is one of the many events planned for the ladies of Thatcher and Thatcher South. This highly anticipated night of fun, hosted by the student deans, gives the ladies a chance to get to know new people and have a bit of fun. The residents invited friends, dressed in Disney-themed costumes, and skated the night away!

PHOTOS BY DANIELLE SCHAFER



Some students got into the spirit of the event by dressing up in colorful tutus.



Devin Grey, freshman health science major, and Alexandria Martin, freshman nursing major, dress as John Smith and Pocahontas for the Disney costume contest.