

Still life together just online

Taylor students find ways to bring community online

By LEAH RYG

Community.

Taylor is known for community. It's in its DNA. What happens when a virus takes over the world and Taylor students have no choice but to pack up and move away from campus and away from the community that we all hold so close? Sounds like a messed-up dream.

It was no dream. It was the reality that faced students in the middle of March.

We have all been making adjustments after being isolated from our normal. This strange time is putting the Taylor community to the test. However, the Life Together Covenant does not define Taylor's community by geographic location.

"The Taylor community consists of those who, in furtherance of our mission, are living together in intentional, voluntary fellowship, aware that we are called to live our lives before a watching world. Although primarily centered on the Upland campus, this community is not defined by geography, but rather by active engagement in the Taylor educational mission."

Our community is not meant to disappear as we drive away from campus. How can Taylor's community stand strong in this time of adversity?

Sophomore Rose White has sought for ways to answer that question. Heartbroken as she returned home for the year, she was determined to not let this season be a time without community.

Since her favorite part about Taylor is the people, she wanted to continue to invest in her wing and the friendships she has made.

"It was so hard to see my wing, 2WO, split up," White said. "We were all pretty discouraged and I was trying to think of a way to encourage my wing as well as the rest of campus to still stay connected and have fun together despite the circumstances. I suggested in our GroupMe that we make a dance video. I put them together in iMovie and sent it into TU Quarantine."

TU Quarantine is an Instagram page that is helping people stay updated with each other over this time. It's easy to stay connected with close friends over this time, but part of what is unique about the culture of Taylor is doing life together with all of campus.

This account seeks to fill that gap.

"It was kind of silly, but my wing had a lot of fun with it," White said.

Dancing together is one way this wing has stayed connected. Other wings have found ways to have large video chat calls. Wings have been trying to replicate the late night hallway conversations.

Sophomore Courtney Katterhenry said, "We (Third East Olson) are trying to do weekly Zoom calls so that we can still see each other's faces even though we may not be a room away from each other anymore!"

It is important to see what Taylor is doing to help the community thrive. White said having a face-to-face community stripped away has made it hard but, this time has shown us how much the Taylor staff cares for its students.

Taylor administration, professors and staff have worked hard to accommodate and make the change to online learning. They have never wavered in their care and concern for the people in this community. This shows the quality of individuals who have poured into us every day.

Taylor has always been known for its community on campus. Thanks to social media, FaceTime and good old-fashioned phone calls, Taylor students have shown that this community doesn't end with a closed door. They have shown that the Taylor community is not divided by geography.

This time can teach us how to reach out, adapt and grow stronger together.

"I hope that we can grow in God's word with each other and continue to lift each other up in this time of uncertainty and unknowns," Katterhenry said.

At this unprecedented time, look for the good. A time like this has never happened before, so look for ways to be present, grow, learn new things, serve others and stay connected.

Follow @TU_quarantine on Instagram to stay connected with the community.

https://www.instagram.com/tu_quarantine/

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