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ECU's Campus Living faces virus threats

Residence halls continue to take safety precautions

Michelle Mazzei
TEC STAFF

For over a year now, the coronavirus has impacted East Carolina University students, faculty and staff along with Campus Living as residence halls remain at a limited capacity and students who reside on-campus live in single-occupancy rooms.

William Bullock, associate director for Campus Living and assistant director for Student Success and Conduct, said he has worked alongside Student Health Services (SHS) as well as with the Office of the Dean of Students to ensure all students, staff, faculty and other individuals remain healthy.

"The single occupancy (for residence halls) helps our coordinator staff and students feel safe," Bullock said. "They (coordinators) have been fantastic in enforcing the mask mandate and the phase covering mandates from the university and applying those directives."

In the fall of 2020, Bullock said the residence halls at ECU were at limited capacity, but not at single-occupancy as they are now in the spring of 2021. He said if COVID-19 cases remain steady and if North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper and the Centers for Disease and Control and Preventions (CDC) state it is safe to return back to normal, the residence halls will be fully open in the fall of 2021.

"As we get more information, we (Campus Living), of course, will adopt those changes," Bullock said. "We will continue with our surveillance testing programs, continue with our wastewater program. We just made our switch to allow testing at student services (SHS) and that is a big thing for us. We're very excited about the rest of the spring to ensure that all (people) are safe."

Bullock said he will continue the measures he, SHS and the Office of the Dean of Students has taken thus far and



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Campus Living will continue to work with Student Health Services to ensure the safety of students and staff among residence halls.

he will continue to update the university about COVID-19 trends.

Associate Dean of Students Lauren Thorn said COVID-19 has not only affected on-campus housing, but it also has affected the way the campus operates as the majority of academic classes have been delivered through online formats.

"I think that in the fall (2020) we didn't know what we didn't know," Thorn said. "We certainly had a lot of plans that we were testing out and trying and learning hard lessons, but as we continued on in the fall (2020), after the pivot to virtual instruction, we were able to really put things in place for the spring. I think that we found a really successful way to support our students."

ECU didn't have access to testing, surveillance methods and different technology throughout 2020 as the uni-

versity has these resources now, Thorn said, and these resources have made it easier to keep students safe and engaged on campus. She said she is proud of the university's hard work to ensure there wouldn't be a "pivot" like there was the fall of 2020 as has helped Campus Living to organize the quarantine as well as the isolation process for ECU students. Residence halls on West End and on College Hill are open for students to reside in a single room, she said, while the College Hill Suites are reserved for isolation and quarantine.

"The students that are living on-campus participate in testing on a four-week rotation, so we (ECU) do about 25% of the campus population every week and so by the end of the month or every four weeks we've tested 100% of the campus population and so that's really helped us,"

Thorn said.

Wastewater data, which is a part of ECU's COVID-19 surveillance method, is collected from residence halls on-campus, according to Thorn. She said this testing has helped decipher which halls have positive students who are asymptomatic.

Thorn said the wastewater data can help detect the virus two or three days before individuals who start to test positive through the nose pharyngeal tests.

"We (ECU) do have what we call swarm testing where we will ask an entire resident hall to test (for COVID-19) that week and as a part of this surveillance method," Thorn said.

SHS Director Lanika Wright said she and the staff at SHS have taken all

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Tips, advice offered for virtual instruction

Recommendations shared as students navigate online classes

Jennifer Sieg
TEC STAFF

For students who continue to navigate at-home virtual learning, East Carolina University faculty and staff encourage strong communication, study and organizational practices to ensure diligence within the completion of coursework.

Senior English Teaching Instructor Timm Hackett serves as one of the faculty leaders for the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences transition to the Canvas Learning Management System, and said benefits come with the system when it pertains to virtual learning.

Hackett said one of the benefits Canvas brings is the ability for faculty to track student engagement. He said Canvas is able to show when a student participates and how long they participate in a certain activity, which gives the professor an opportunity to reach out to the student directly if needed.

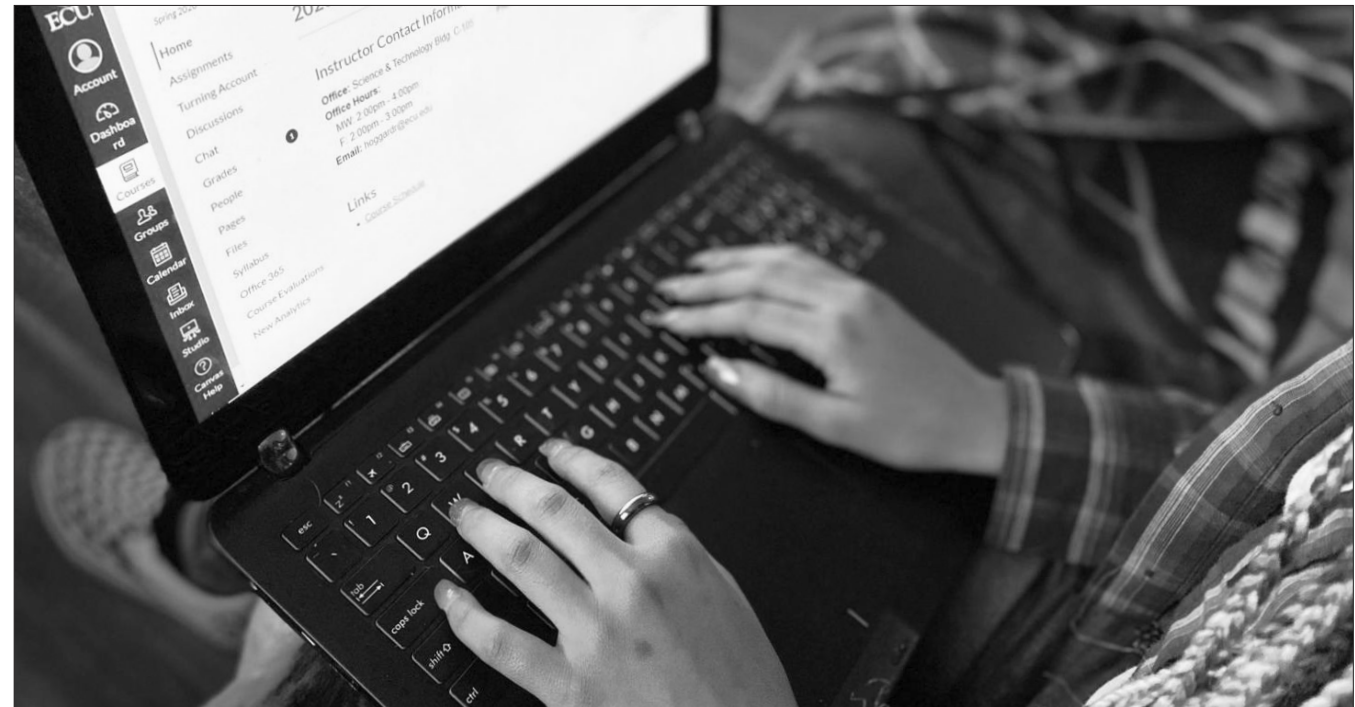


Timm Hackett
Hackett said.

The resources Canvas has to offer benefits both the teacher and the student, according to Hackett. He said if a student wants to speak directly with their professor they can log onto Canvas and schedule an appointment that fits both the instructor's and student's schedule.

School of Communication Director Linda Kean said students should be able to continue to make appointments via Microsoft Teams or another form of communication

meeting to meet with professors if they need to. “It’s real important that if students wish to do well, even in the weird times we’re living in, is to kind of apply those face to face principles to online learning,”



KACEY COURTNEY | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

An East Carolina University student logs onto Canvas, the learning management system used to instruct Pirates during remote courses.

Kean said in an effort to communicate with classmates and ensure safety, it may be beneficial to set up a GroupMe chat with the class. She said for those who are worried about potential cheating occurrences, it wouldn't hurt to make the professor aware of the chat.

“I don't think there's ever anything wrong with putting a GroupMe together, right? You shouldn't have to have permission for that,” Kean said. “But I think it's always good to let the professor know.”

In order to remain on track with online courses, especially asynchronous courses, Kean said it can be helpful to treat the asynchronous class as a synchronous class. For example, she said it might help to pretend a class is a Monday, Wednesday and Friday class like it would be if it were in-person.

Kean said to set aside a specific time for a class and to add it to a calendar can remind students that something needs to be done for a particular class around that time.

Pirate Academic Success Center (PASC) Director Elizabeth Coghill said whether a student lives on-campus or off-campus, it's important to establish a routine and manage time efficiently. She said students have to develop a schedule almost like one they had before with

in-person classes. “Each day, some students do have face-to-face classes mixed in, but the majority do not,” Coghill said. “Some might have

accountable for schedules and the study time one has set aside. She said this may be hard to do, but for those who don't have a set schedule, it's never too late to plan one.

Adjustments to courses and deadlines continue to happen throughout the semester, according to Coghill. She said to connect with faculty and other peers can make a significant difference in class performance.

“You know that the power in peer help like tutoring and study groups and working with a study skills coach and coming up with ideas,” Coghill said. “You don't have to have all the ideas yourself.”

Coghill said there's various forms of help offered all around campus, students just need to go out and seek it.

“You know that the power in peer help like tutoring and study groups and working with a study skills coach and coming up with ideas,” Coghill said. “You don't have to have all the ideas yourself.”

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the necessary COVID-19 regulations from the Greenville Health Department along with the state of North Carolina's and CDC's orders.

Wright said now that the university has access to an increase in routine testing, COVID-19 is easier to catch early among students before an infection turns into a cluster inside the residence halls. Additionally, she said because students who reside in the residence halls do not have a roommate there is a less likely chance that the virus will be spread throughout the living quarters on campus.

"By having more routine testing, the virus can be caught early before it's spread to too many people, and I really feel like that's keeping control on the number of students that are infected," Wright said. "The other thing is by not having a roommate it decreases the likelihood of that roommate automatically having to go into quarantine and having

been exposed, so I think those things together have really worked to help you know keep our numbers down."

Wright said the COVID-19 restrictions will be eased once Cooper and the CDC say it's safe to resume normalcy. She said once the restrictions are eased, ECU students can resume college life as it once was, but for right now, she urges students to follow all protocols to ensure campus safety and to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

There is a COVID-19 vaccine site for ECU students and other community members at The Croatan in Greenville where vaccines from the state are made available and the phase groups, when they are called, can get the vaccine, Wright said.

Updated information on vaccine allotments given to the university can be found on the SHS official website. Additional announcements will be sent to student email accounts.

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Greenville offers various living options

Students should consider multiple factors before they sign a lease, living agreement

Pat Polomchak
TEC STAFF

At the end of many East Carolina University students' freshman year, they will have to make an important decision about where to live as a sophomore, and while some will choose to continue living in a residence hall on campus, others may choose to rent an apartment or house in the Greenville, North Carolina area.

There are many factors that students should keep in mind before they make a decision on what living style is best for them. Director of Housing Operations Aaron Lucier said some of the most important factors when selecting a place to live are privacy, proximity to campus and budget.

"Whatever that priority is, should be driving their (students) decision making," Lucier said. "And then prioritize those priorities. When you have those, it makes decision making easier."



Aaron Lucier

Lucier said students should also consider where their friends are living, as well as convenience in relation to campus and their personal budget. He said that sometimes people forget to think about their budget, and focus on convenience and the location of their friends first.

There are challenges involved with both on and off-campus living, according to Lucier. He said living on-campus is a more structured environment, but students sacrifice some amount of privacy to do so, such as sharing bathrooms with other students on their hall.

"But at the same time, (living on campus is) highly convenient," Lucier said. "You're not getting on a bus, necessarily. You're basically in walking distance, and

the billing is all done. So there's no need to set aside money for the monthly bills."

Meanwhile, Lucier said the independence of living off campus brings with it a degree of personal responsibility. He said students have to budget money aside to be used on bills and living expenses, which isn't as much of a concern when living in the residence halls.

Lucier said students should also make sure to know the differences between the various apartments in the Greenville area, as some apartments handle bills differently than others.

"There's really two kinds of housing," Lucier said. "There's the ease of the all-in-one apartments, where the utilities are included and you're only leasing your bedroom, versus getting a house."

Lucier said the major difference between renting a house and an apartment is that many apartments in Greenville include some or all utilities in the cost of rent, while with houses students are responsible for paying rent to their landlord while also staying on top of a separate utility bill.

Lucier said that ECU plans to allow students that lived in the dorms at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, but had their time on campus cut short when ECU moved fully online for the fall 2020 semester due to COVID-19 concerns, to return and have a chance to live on campus.

"We'll get them back on campus if they want to get back," Lucier said.

According to an article on the University of the People official website, one of the biggest perks of living on campus is the security that is provided by living in a residence hall. The article said many college campuses feature doormen or security personnel that prevent people who don't live in residence halls from entering.

On the other hand, the article said living off campus brings more independence and personal space for students. The article said students who live away from campus have more control over who they interact with and when, and off campus students learn how to manage their lives on their own, away from the resources provided by life in a residence hall.



Bridget Kenny

Bridget Kenny, a freshman public health major, was one of the freshmen who was forced to leave campus after two weeks in a residence hall. Despite being a Greenville native, she said she decided to live on campus because she wanted to have a regular college experience rather than living with her family.

Kenny said she currently lives in Clement Hall, as she was one of the students who elected to move back on campus when the option became available for the spring. She said the two weeks she spent in the residence hall in the fall 2020 semester were different from what residence hall life is like now.

"There were less restrictions about, you know, how many people you can have in your room, and you could actually go to the dining hall unless the dining hall was closed," Kenny said. "It's (living in the dorms in the spring semester) just a lot stricter. We have to get tested (for COVID-19) a lot more often."

Kenny said while she has enjoyed staying on campus, especially having a room to herself due to restrictions on the residence halls, she plans to live off campus with some of her friends for the upcoming school year.

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HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN



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Air fryers allow simple meal solutions

Top four cheap, convenient countertop oven recipes to try while on a budget

Hannah Bolick
TEC STAFF

Air fryers are the perfect kitchen gadget for any college student who is looking for a quick and easy way to cook anything from the freezer that would normally be cooked in a microwave or conventional oven. The countertop oven cooks frozen french fries, chicken nuggets, pizza rolls, mozzarella sticks and other such foods in a fraction of the time it takes to cook them in the oven.

The air fryer will crisp and toast food items, while still maintaining a short cook time without the extra calories the oil from a deep fryer would add. Pizza rolls, which take around 15 minutes to fully cook in the oven, take only six minutes in the air fryer at 370 degrees. It takes a little experimentation to get cook times and temperatures right for each individual air fryer.

Similarly, the air fryer does a great job with reheating leftovers, especially of food items that were originally fried. Leftover fries, fried chicken and onion rings can be reheated in the air fryer to taste as if they were fresh. If used with a slotted tray or basket, as are present in most air fryers, much of the grease will drain off of the fried food as it is reheated.

Tempura vegetables, battered and fried vegetables like zucchini, broccoli and sweet potatoes, reheat well in the air fryer. Don't stack vegetables on top of one another in the fryer basket, rather lay them in a single layer. Heat for only six minutes at 370 degrees, then flip and cook for another three minutes, this method should work well for tempura vegetables leftover from a Japanese restaurant.

In addition to its ability to reheat frozen or leftover foods, the air fryer can also cook some fresh foods. One simple, cheap and adaptable recipe is for roasted broccoli. Measure out enough broccoli to cover the bottom of the air fryer basket, drizzle it with olive oil, salt and pepper, then toss or stir. Other seasonings like garlic powder or lemon pepper seasoning can be substituted or added.

To continue this method, pour the broccoli into the air fryer basket and heat on 350 degrees for six minutes, then remove the basket and shake around the contents before replacing and heating for another six minutes. For crispier broccoli, increase the heat to 400 degrees and heat for a few minutes less at a time.

Other vegetables like string beans or asparagus could be substituted for broccoli in this recipe, although exact heating times would likely vary. This recipe allows one to make a serving of vegetables without having to use an oven and in a fraction of time it would take to make the same food in an oven.

For a sweet treat, air fried Oreos are a quick and easy



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Air fried Oreos provide the perfect sweet treat after a load of classwork.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Fresh broccoli crisps up inside the air fryer.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Seasoned air fried egg-in-a-nest rests on a platter.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Tempura vegetables battered and fried paired with a cup of soy sauce.

option. Simply wrap an Oreo in one triangle of premade crescent roll dough and lay in the bottom of the air fryer. Make sure the wrapped Oreos don't touch one another and at least a centimeter of space is between them because they will puff up as the cook.

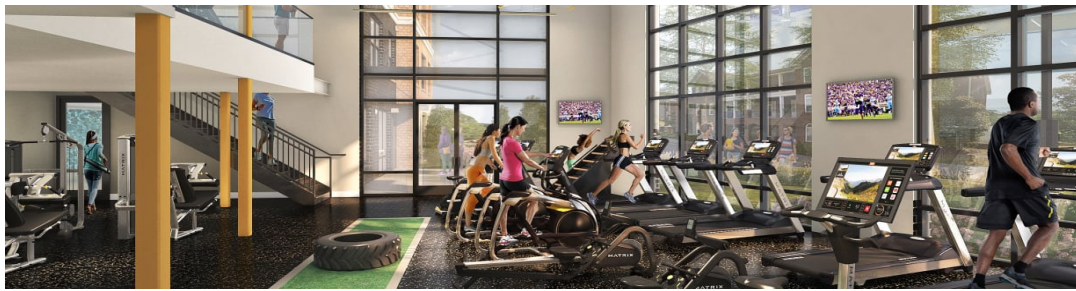
Heat on 300 degrees for about five minutes and then flip and heat for another five minutes for this recipe. After removing from the air fryer top the dough with powdered sugar. These desserts have the flavor of deep fried Oreos as one may get from a street food vendor, but without the additional fat from the oil.

The air fryer can also be used to make breakfast food. An easy-to-make recipe is for an egg and toast dish sometimes called egg-in-a-nest. This simple recipe has a piece of toast with a hole cut out of the center and an egg fried in the middle.

To begin, take any slice of bread that will fit in your air fryer and cut a circle out of the middle by pressing a cup rim into the bread. Then, preheat the air fryer for a few minutes at 300 degrees and take the basket or slotted tray out. After it is heated, spray the bottom of the fryer with non-stick cooking spray and place the bread flat inside. Next, crack an egg into the hole in the bread.

To continue this recipe, heat for four minutes and then check the progress of the egg. Continue to cook and check periodically until the egg is cooked to the desired consistency. Remove from the air fryer then sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.

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Greek Life remains dedicated to members

Sarah Hooper
TEC STAFF

Since the initial outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, Greek Life, predominantly in-person organizations on East Carolina University's campus, has found ways to continue involvement with the community throughout the pandemic.

John Mountz, director of student engagement within ECU's fraternities and sororities, said each organization is privately owned, so living capacities and COVID-19 regulations are managed on an individual basis.

Overall, Mountz said Greek Life organizations have seen a decline in new members this year due to COVID-19, but expect those numbers to rise again in the coming semester.

"Most houses have reduced their living capacity and limited access to residents and/or members only," Mountz said.

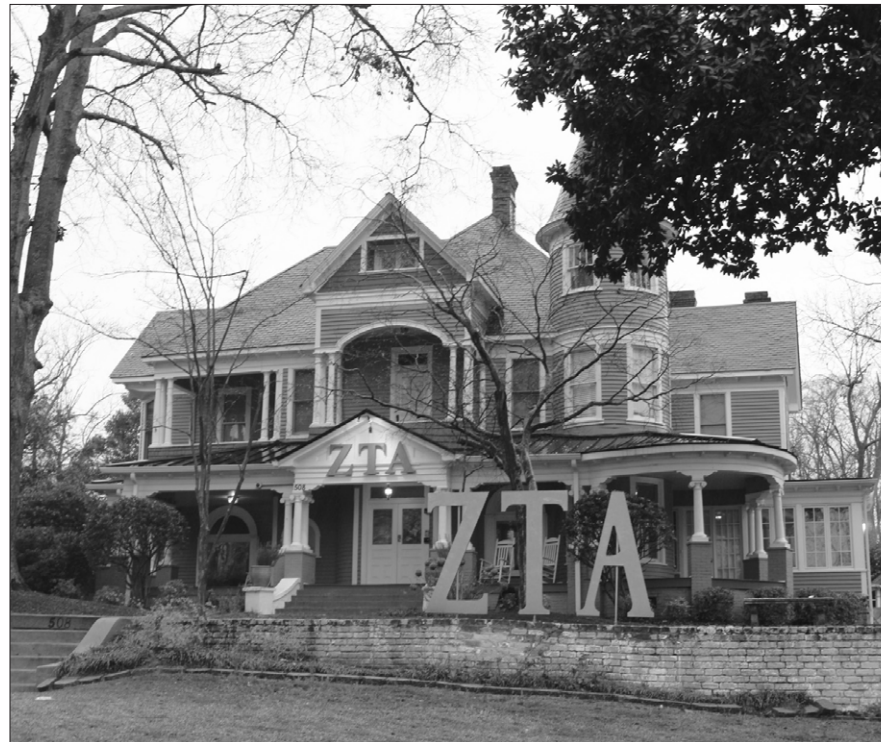
COVID-19 presented multiple challenges and opportunities for ECU's sororities and fraternities, Mountz said. They have adapted to holding meetings and programs virtually, and found different ways to continue service and fundraising, according to Mountz.

Mountz said he believes ECU's fraternity and sorority members have found the relationships they have with their brothers and sisters helped them get through this past year.

Teresa Hupp, a sophomore nursing major, currently lives in the ECU Zeta Tau Alpha house. Hupp said after her experiences from when she lived in an on-campus residence hall, the sorority house provided a nice in-between for her before moving to an apartment complex.

"The best thing that has come from living in house is learning about the women that make up my chapter and creating bonds with women I wouldn't have had I not lived in house," Hupp said.

Residents of sorority houses have to share a room with one or more people, which isn't too different from residence hall life, according to Hupp. Hupp said she recommends living in a sorority house if a Greek Life affiliated student is looking for a way to get more involved in their chapter or wants to make new friends.



MADISON GRIFALDO | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

East Carolina University Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority house resides at 508 W 5th St. in Greenville, N.C.

ECU has multiple Greek Life councils, including the Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), the Panhellenic Association and the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). Marius Morrison, a senior parks and recreation major, is president of ECU's NPHC Council, which oversees the historically African American Greek organizations, and is currently president of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity.

Morrison said Phi Beta Sigma is a social and community based fraternity, so it has been difficult to be out in the community during COVID-19. He said NPHC is hosting everything from pledging and meetings virtually.



Marius Morrison "We are unable to host events in person until further guidance. It's a pain to not be as active in the community as I was last year," Morrison said.

Recruitment for Greek Life through

NPHC and other councils at ECU will remain virtual until further guidance is released from the state, according to Morrison. Morrison suggests if a student is interested in Greek life, to do research prior to joining.

Morrison said an issue that many members have is wanting to join organizations simply because of their name. After joining these organizations, they may find the fraternity or sorority on campus isn't a good fit for them, according to Morrison.

"Get accustomed to the brothers on-campus and before you join any fraternity, know what you're looking for and know what you want to give. Your purpose is to make the environment and the college a better environment for students," Morrison said.

Josiah Thornton is a senior political science major and member of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, chapter business manager, and also serves as the community service chief for ECU NPHC.

Thornton said COVID-19 has pressed the NPHC fraternities and sororities in terms

of recruitment and interaction, but the organizations have found ways to think outside of the box to engage members.

"The principles of our fraternity are leadership, citizenship, fidelity, brotherhood and scholarship. We have found ways to do community service which is a main factor in Black Greek life, or any Greek life for that matter," Thornton said.

ECU NPHC has a format used called "Meet The Greeks," in which all organizations under NPHC join a meeting to speak to potential members, according to Thornton. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the meeting format has gone virtual, according to Thornton. NPHC hosts the event each semester to cater to interested students who want to be a part of NPHC sororities and fraternities, Thornton said.

Finding ways to engage not only with students on campus throughout COVID-19, but engaging the members in his fraternity has been a challenge, according to Thornton. Presenting in-person material and holding traditionally in-person gatherings online requires innovative thinking, he said.

"Making sure their (other members of the fraternity) mental health is okay, making sure their families are okay, giving education about how to handle and maneuver your family and how to survive and cope. Giving resources during this time as brothers and as men and individuals," Thornton said.

Prior to joining an organization, Thornton said he recommends looking into the values behind each. If someone doesn't know what they are joining on campus, it may not be what they expect, he said.

Students are doing themselves a disservice by not researching organizations prior to joining them, Thornton said. Information for all Greek organizations and councils can be found on ECU's website.

"Our council promotes excellence, promotes community, a sense of pride and also showcases that here in this NPHC community, these are the creme de la creme of student leaders on campus," Thornton said.

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Best to-go, pick up bites for Pirates

Greenville continues to make virus friendly dining available

Brendan Cavazos
TEC STAFF

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic closed the dining rooms of many restaurants across the nation. Across Greenville, North Carolina, local eateries proceeded to rely on to-go orders for business. Now that a year has passed since the start of the pandemic, most restaurants have found a safe way to have customers eat inside.

However, as the virus continues to linger, to-go and curbside pickup orders are still available and commonly used by most restaurants in the Greenville area. Smashed Waffles, Wings Over Greenville, Chico's Mexican Restaurant, Pop's Old Fashioned Cheeseburgers and Insomnia Cookies each provide unique and delicious to-go options to try, which can be enjoyed in the comfort of your own home.

Smashed Waffles: 718 Dickinson Ave.

Located in Uptown Greenville, this restaurant provides a menu based on a variety of Belgium waffle recipes. Every option on the menu has a different variation of waffles with additional pieces to add both flavor and appeal. Both sweet and savory tasting items are available to satisfy any cravings the consumer may have such as bacon, fruity pebbles or fresh fruit.

As a delicious savory option, the "Chatty Patty" contains sausage, egg and a slice of cheddar cheese sandwiched between two small waffles. This option is priced at \$4.75 each. For those with more of a sweet tooth, the "Swirly Sin" is a single waffle drizzled in cream cheese icing and sprinkled with brown sugar. The sweet waffles are priced at \$3 for one, \$8 for three, \$15 for six and \$19 for 12.

Wings Over Greenville: 1400 Charles Blvd.

Located near the Province and across the street from the Jolly Roger apartment complex, this restaurant is the staple for buffalo wing orders in the Greenville area. A total of 17 sauce flavors along with five dry rub flavors are provided to choose from, and depending on the amount ordered, flavors can be split up among the wings. A six-piece combo comes with six wings, a side of waffle fries or garlic parm tater tots and a drink. A combo meal costs \$10.99, but six wings alone cost only \$7.99.

Chico's Mexican Restaurant: 521 Cotanche St.

Located right outside West End and across the street from University Book Exchange, Chico's is the closest Mexican restaurant for ECU students living on-campus. Its large menu provides many options for its customers to satisfy any Mexican food desire, perfect for a take-out night. There are choices for burritos, quesadillas, soups, salads and more.

The "Spicy Texas Burrito" is a large tortilla filled with either beef or chicken, beans and grilled onions. The top of the burrito is covered with spicy queso, and is served with guacamole, sour cream and rice. The meal costs \$12.29 and with its large portion, it can easily fill any void of hunger.

Insomnia Cookies: 116 E. 5th St.

For those craving a perfect desert, the chain Insomnia Cookies in Uptown Greenville is both a convenient and delicious option for takeout or delivery. Its menu features cookies, ice cream and cookie ice cream sand-



MADISON GRIFALDO | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Local Uptown Greenville, NC, restaurant Smashed Waffles resides at 718 Dickinson Ave.

wiches. There is the "Classic Combo," which offers two cookies with a bottle of either regular or chocolate milk to customers for \$6.25.

For those that like the combination of peanut butter and chocolate, the "Peanut Butter Chip" and "Double Chocolate Chunk" are great options. Adding a chocolate milk to wash it all down will provide the satisfaction sought after by customers.

Pop's Old Fashioned Cheeseburgers: 1011 S Charles Blvd.

Pop's is the spot for old fashioned flat top burgers in the Greenville area. Located right outside the Proximity apartment complex, Pop's is in a convenient location near the ECU Main Campus Student Center. Its menu supplies options like burgers, hot dogs

and cheesesteaks as well. As seen in the restaurant's name, Pop's menu is known for its burgers.

The "Burger Combo" is a safe and delicious option to get a solid first impression of Pop's. The meal comes with a burger, a side and a drink. The burgers have three different size options with the "Pop Burger," making the meal priced at \$8.95, the "Jr. Burger," with the price at \$7.95, or a "Double Pop," which is the most expensive selection at \$12.95. Fries are the main side for the combo, but there are other options like tater tots, sweet potato fries and onion rings to go with the meal.

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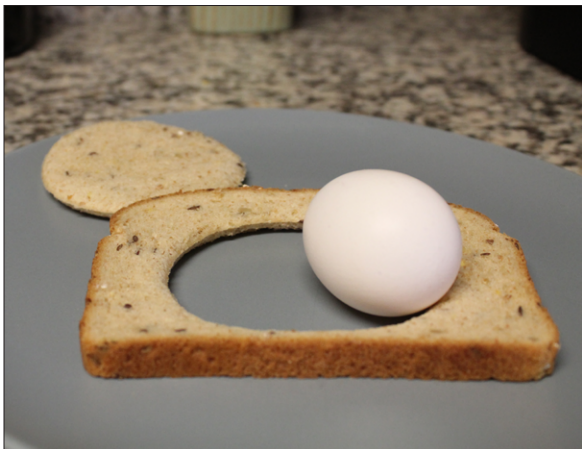
HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

A set of freshly battered Oreos turn their golden color inside the air fryer basket as their icing filling melts inside the cookie.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

An air fried Oreo sprinkled with a pinch of powdered sugar.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

First, to make egg-in-a-nest, cut a circle inside the bread.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Second, place your bread inside the air fryer and crack an egg.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Finally, season your egg to perfection and enjoy breakfast.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Slightly roasted broccoli rest inside the air fryer container.



HANNAH BOLICK | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

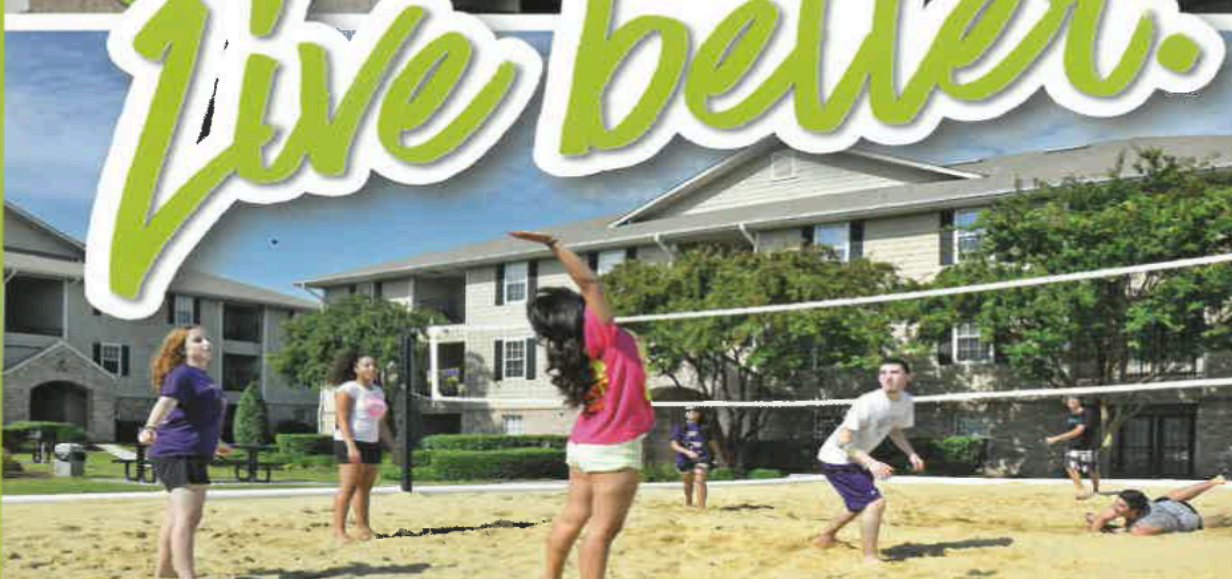
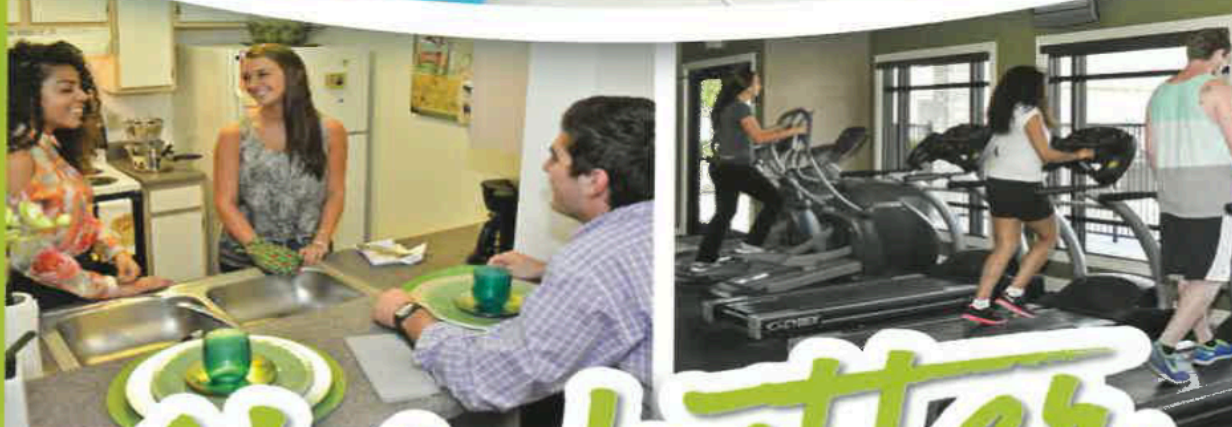
Frozen and fresh vegetables are easier to make in the air fryer, such as crispy cut broccoli at a mild set tempature.

MORE FEATURES. BETTER VALUE.

- Furnished apartments
- Extra-large bedrooms
- 24-hour fitness center
- Roommate matching
- Two swimming pools
- Outdoor sport courts
- Direct bus service to ECU
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