

Mental illness, drugs keep homeless people from safe housing

Beth Dedman and Grant Lancaster
The Arkansas Traveler

Many homeless people are plagued by mental illnesses or drug addictions, which can prevent them from finding housing, homeless service providers said.

Some landlords are not willing to rent to homeless people living with those conditions, and because of this, they have to stay in shelters or camp in the woods.

Before service providers are able to provide homeless people with counseling for their mental illnesses or drug addictions, they first have to house those people so that they have a stable foundation, said Solomon Burchfield, director of operations at 7Hills Homeless Center.

Most of the people who spend their time at 7Hills have some form of mental illness or drug abuse problem, said Daniel Robertson, site coordinator for 7Hills.

Butch Cozine, a 58-year-old man who suffers from multiple

mental illnesses and substance addictions, has lived in the back corner of the property at 7Hills for the past two years, he said.

In 2015, Cozine's wife, Lucille, died after an infection caused her organs to fail because of her diabetic condition. Instead of continuing to seek hospital treatment, she chose to live out the rest of her life at home. Cozine was the only one bringing in a check to pay for himself, his wife and his three kids to survive on, he said.

After his wife died of her illness in 2015, Cozine was unable to continue to make enough money to pay for his mortgage and lost his home, he said. He has been homeless ever since.

Cozine deals with multiple mental illnesses like schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder and bipolar mood disorder, he said. Over the course of his life, he has also dealt with addictions to heroin, cocaine and marijuana. He is now sober on everything except for alcohol, he said.

There is only a 4 percent vacancy for housing in



Raleigh Anderson Staff Cartoonist

Fayetteville, which means that there are very few available and affordable houses or apartments where individuals experiencing homelessness can move, said Melissa Terry, a food policy researcher for the Fayetteville Housing Authority.

Bert Morris is a receptionist at Sweetser Properties and manages two of the apartments.

She helps decide which applicants are approved to live in the apartments, she said.

Sweetser Properties has not housed any homeless people in three years because they have not had any vacancies in their properties since then, Morris

See "Mental illness" on page 3

UA tuition ranked among most affordable in SEC

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Some students think the UofA is too expensive, despite it ranking 11th in-state and 12th out-of-state of the 14 colleges in the Southeastern Conference in terms of most expensive 2018-19 cost of attendance without textbooks factored in.

The UofA has the fourth cheapest in-state total cost of attendance, without books, at \$20,150, which is more than \$4,000 less than the SEC in-state averages of \$24,426. It is the third cheapest out-of-state at \$36,188 against the SEC out-of-state average of \$39,747 - over \$4,000 the SEC out-of-state average. This is based on cost of attendance for an in-state or out-of-state undergraduate student with a non-specific major who is living in an average-priced residence hall.

Senior Charlie Elliott thinks the cost of attending the UofA, especially for out-of-state students, is very reasonable, he said.

"I would have paid roughly the same price attending a university in Kansas, but I receive a better business education for the money at the UofA," Elliott said, "Meal plans and freshman housing are costs the university should consider reducing though, since they are mandatory."

Freshman Sydney Gaughan thinks the UofA is still too expensive, she said.

"It's really stupid," Gaughan said. "It's like I'm paying for something I don't need."

Arkansas ranked seventh most expensive room and board fees with an average of \$11,020, which is less than the SEC average of \$11,041.

Sophomore and Texan Josh Buercklin is living off campus with no meal plan, which saves him at least \$1,000 a semester, he said. Buercklin thinks that the UofA is still cheaper than A&M, he said.

Senior Jennifer Boyer thinks these statistics are appropriate given the smaller size of the state of Arkansas, she said.

"A few of those SEC schools are either huge because the state is huge, like Texas, or there's two schools so they have to compete with another in the state - Alabama versus Auburn," Boyer said.

She also thinks that, because Arkansas is small and the UofA is the only SEC school in the state, demand is lower, so cost is lower appropriately, she said.

Boyer also understands the priority of additional fees and how they can benefit

students in ways they do not appreciate, she said.

Buercklin does not think that the tuition and fees are justified, he said.

"There's a lot of cost in education, but we waste our money on things we don't need," Buercklin said.

Comparisons to this data can be seen when comparing tuition and Regional Price Parity, data that compares cost of living at a state level. Arkansas had one of the lowest RPPs in 2016 at 86.9, according to the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Freshman Drew Fletcher is proud of attending one of the least expensive schools in the SEC for in-state tuition, he said.

"With in-state tuition, Arkansas residents are able to have access to a great education at a lower cost than other major schools," Fletcher said.

Fletcher is also proud of how the UofA is trying to keep the cost of education down, he said.

The UofA gives nearly \$180 million in financial aid every year, according to the Office of Financial Aid.

The Academic Scholarship office awards \$12 million worth of grants and scholarships each year, according to the Academic Scholarship Office.

Schools consider a family's income as a factor in the Expected Family Contribution index, which financial aid staff use to determine the amount of aid, according to the U.S. office of Federal Student Aid.

Students at Vanderbilt University have a median family income of \$204,500, and 70 percent of their students come from the top 20 percent of economic class, according to Opportunity Insights.

Vanderbilt has an average tuition including fees of \$48,600 - almost double the price of Arkansas' out-of-state tuition and fees and more than double Arkansas' in-state.

Freshman Reagan Hubbard thinks in-state tuition is reasonable, but out-of-state prices are too high, she said.

"It's a lot of money and a lot of kids can't afford it," she said.

Hubbard does not know what a good price for college is, she said. However, she knows if she had to pay out-of-state tuition her parents would not have paid for it and that she would have had to find a different scholarship, she said.

"The UofA is one of the cheapest, but still not an option to pay in full," Hubbard said.

Students struggle with textbook prices, professors explore cheaper alternatives

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Paying for textbooks can be a hefty fee for college students, but some UA professors are making the switch to free or inexpensive online books to ease the burden.

Senior Kody Piccirilli purchased a textbook and online access code for his Elementary French I class from the UofA Bookstore and still has not received it weeks later even though everyone else in his class has received theirs, he said.

"It is an inconvenience to not have my book that I need for homework and paid \$150 for," Piccirilli said.

Piccirilli can only use his class notes to study and received a temporary online access pass from his instructor but has no idea when he will receive the code he purchased, he said.

Students should expect to spend \$1,046 on textbooks during the 2018-19 school year, according to the UA Office of Financial Aid.

Some professors are turning to open source textbooks such as OpenStax to ease the financial burden on students.

An electrical engineering professor at Rice University founded OpenStax, a service that offers free online text-

books, in 1999. Students may also purchase cheap print versions of textbooks from OpenStax if they prefer to have a physical copy, according to the organization.

The UofA offers compensation to faculty who use Open Educational Resources that can reduce the cost of textbooks for students, according to the UA University Libraries. Faculty who adopt open access course materials into their classes and eliminate the need for students to purchase textbooks or other course materials will receive \$3,000.

The compensation amount can go up if faculty are altering or creating open access course materials themselves, according to the UA website.

Julia Kennefick, a UA astronomy professor, started using OpenStax at the beginning of this semester to save her students the \$164 cost of the astronomy textbook that was needed for her course.

Even though Kennefick liked the textbooks and resources she used in her classes before, all the required materials for the class could easily cost students more than \$200, she said.

"It was hard giving up the Mastering Astronomy website, but I am adjusting to giving students online homework via Blackboard, which is essentially a resource they already have to pay for," Kennefick said.

The biggest challenges of



Bridge Biniakewitz Staff Photographer

UA sophomores Leyla Coronel and Felipe Hernandez pick up textbooks needed for their classes Sept. 27.

changing to a cheaper alternative was adjusting to a new way to set up homework and making sure previous lecture slides went with the new textbook, but overall the online textbooks are of good quality,

Kennefick said.

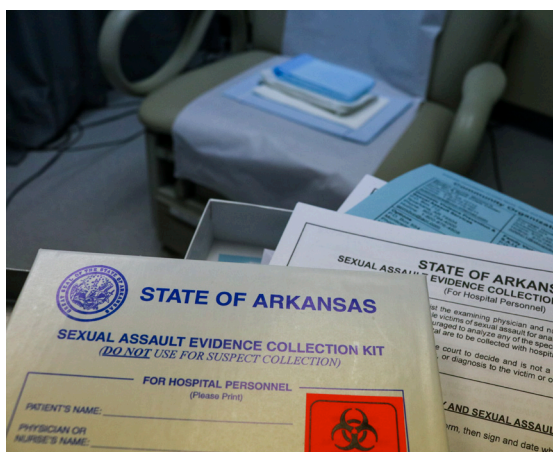
Sophomore Catherine Casey is in Kennefick's astronomy course and bought the

See "OpenStax popular" on page 5

Reality of LGBTQ Homeless Youth



Homeless Victims of Sexual Assault



In-Depth Look at the Homeless



Editor's Note:

Homelessness, poverty prevalent in NWA, on-campus



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As the homeless population continues to grow in Northwest Arkansas, the need for in-depth reporting on the issue follows suit. For this reason, the October issue of *The Arkansas Traveler* will focus on this topic as well as poverty in the area and students facing financial burdens. Our staff hopes that this coverage will provide insight into the causes of financial strain on those residing in Fayetteville and its surrounding areas as well as what factors may lead to someone becoming homeless.

The NWA homeless population has risen by 23 percent in the past year, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness' records of NWA's point-in-time homeless count.

We reported on these issues with a heightened awareness of the specific groups who are at risk of homelessness and poverty, including LGBTQ people and people with mental health issues.

We also looked into the issues that arise within impoverished or homeless people's lives, including domestic violence and sexual assault.

The homeless community in the area is growing and Fayetteville's average salary is on the decline, according to PayScale. With these issues permeating the area, it is only natural that they permeate the media as well, and it is our responsibility as journalists to report on these issues with as much sensitivity and diligence as we can.

Within our coverage of the Northwest Arkansas homeless community, we strived to underline the discrepancies between what we think about homelessness and what homelessness really looks like in the area. We sent a photographer along with reporters to 7hills Homeless

Shelter in September to get a good look at what the homeless community gathered there looks like, sounds like and lives like, especially following the recent homeless camp eviction in September. Their work is laid out in a photo essay on Page 7 of this issue.

Though our reporters could not reach each of the estimated 474 homeless people in NWA, which includes Benton, Carroll and Washington Counties, we worked hard to ensure that the voices we did find spoke loudly and meaningfully.

With this issue, we did not want to stop at homelessness, so we dived into research regarding student finances, the fear of homelessness and displacement. Despite the cost of living being 11 percent lower in Fayetteville than the national average, students still face separate costs like expensive textbooks, fees and tuition. We also looked into how students who might be financially struggling can seek help from the university and how they can shop at lower costs to avoid struggling financially or becoming food insecure, like many graduate students already are.

What united students and homeless people is that the cost of living does not

necessarily benefit them like it would an average resident. While the cost of groceries in Fayetteville is 7 percent lower than the national average, students also wrestle with meal plans, on-campus food and textbooks. Despite housing being 25 percent cheaper in Fayetteville, homeless people sometimes cannot find cheap enough housing with students filling up many of the options. Likewise, as the student population grows, students find it harder to find places to live while keeping in mind that they need to be close to campus and may need to be on a bus route for transportation.

While there is a stark difference between financial insecurity in students and homeless people in the Fayetteville area, they are connected by the UofA and students. For example, financially struggling students who need a cheap place to live off-campus will take up the remaining apartments in the area while homeless people continue to find nowhere affordable to live. Another connection between the two is the several Registered Student Organizations that aim to fight homelessness and poverty in NWA.



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Homelessness often the only option for LGBTQ youth

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In the small town of Elkins, Arkansas, there is a gay teen who is still hiding his sexuality from everyone in his family. It has led him to run away from his home, and even now, he continues to live in fear of the people he loves rejecting him and casting him out.

This is life for 19-year-old Parker, who will be identified by only one of his names for fear of being outed to people he knows. Parker has been forced to put on a facade for years because his family has never accepted LGBTQ people, he said in a text message.

One day in particular stood out to him.

After seeing something related to LGBTQ people on the news, Parker's father turned to Parker and his two brothers and, using homophobic slurs, told them he would kill them if they were LGBTQ, Parker said.

When his younger brother argued back that there was nothing wrong with being gay, Parker became so scared of his father's anger that he ran away, he said.

"I became so paranoid and just plain terrified of him somehow finding out I liked men that I texted a friend and had them come pick me up within an hour," Parker said. "I stayed with them for a couple days, but I knew that eventually I would have to go home. To this day, my dad still feels that way, which is part of why I have cut ties with him completely."

Parker was only 16 at the time.

Because of the tension with his parents, Parker now lives with another relative, he said. His brother still retains a hatred of LGBTQ people from their father.

"I'm still forced to tiptoe around and act completely straight," Parker said. "[My relative] still tries to hook me up with girls daily."

Still, Parker feels much safer in his current living situation than he ever did living with his father, he said.

"He is significantly less violent and angry than my father, and even if now he



*Durso-Gates LGBT Homeless Youth Survey

Kevin Snyder Photo Editor

still has a hatred for the LGBTQ+, I firmly believe it's possible for that to change because it used to be so much worse," Parker said.

Parker is a part of the 40 percent of homeless people in the U.S. who identify as members of the LGBTQ community, according to the True Colors Fund.

Nearly 7 in 10 of the study's LGBTQ homeless respondents had experienced family rejection, and more than half had experienced abuse in their family, according to the study.

Lucie's Place, located in Little Rock, is a shelter that can attest to the large numbers of LGBTQ teens who find themselves living in homelessness. It provides safe housing, counseling and job training for LGBTQ homeless people.

Almost all of those who use the resources at Lucie's Place are there because of familial tension or abuse, Executive Director Penelope Poppers said.

"They are typically kicked out by the parent or guardian because of a disagreement, or they are allowed to stay, but it is so difficult for them that

they leave for their own well-being," Poppers said. "Many people who come here were abused verbally, physically or sexually at home."

Four in 5 providers for homelessness who served LGBTQ clients under age 18 indicated family abuse as the primary cause, according to the study.

The Teen Action and Support Center in Rogers aims to empower homeless youth facing housing insecurity and other hardships. Officials at the support center neglected to comment after multiple attempts to contact.

Poppers worked in the homeless community in Little Rock for many years before founding Lucie's Place, which she created after realizing that most of the people she worked with were self-identified LGBTQ, Poppers said.

Lucie's Place has two main programs. There is a drop-in center, which is open to the public, as well as a long-term housing program for up to six months with an occupancy of eight individuals, Poppers said.

The percent of homeless LGBTQ individuals at drop-

in centers is even higher than the national average at 43 percent, according to the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity at the University of California, Los Angeles.

LGBTQ youth are 120 percent more likely to become homeless than heterosexual youth, according to the Voices of youth Count conducted by Chapin Hall, a University of Chicago research and policy center. There are an estimated 640,000 such individuals in the U.S.

Youth homelessness is a big risk factor for predicting long-term homelessness, said Solomon Burchfield, director of operations at the 7Hills Homeless Center in Fayetteville.

LGBTQ individuals are at a higher risk to become homeless at a young age, which means that the risk of becoming homeless long into adulthood is much higher as well, Burchfield said.

Those who become homeless during their youth are at a much greater risk of their situation becoming permanent, Poppers said.

See "Culture shift" on page 4



Mental illness, drug addiction contributes to cycle of homelessness

Continued from page 1

said. There is a waiting list that people are automatically drawn from the moment an apartment is vacated.

Morris is not the only landlord who does not have any vacancies, she said. Her daughter and her granddaughter both work at different apartment complexes which are both facing the same lack of vacancy.

Morris thinks the lack of vacancy is because all the students looking for apartments are snatching up every vacancy, she said.

"You'd think there would be a let up on this with all of the new places that are being built," Morris said. "I think the places they are building are too expensive but most people are looking for something in the moderate range."

Another issue with housing is landlords' resistance to lease to individuals experiencing homelessness, especially if they have a history of drug abuse, said Steven Burt, executive director for the NWA Continuum of Care, a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development mandated organization.

"Many landlords are afraid," Burt said. "They are afraid to

rent to what they don't know because of their own beliefs of people who have been involved in the criminal justice system."

To combat that fear, the First United Presbyterian Church gave a grant to the Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care to start a landlord incentive fund. The fund will allow landlords who use a service provider who use an individual experiencing homelessness to receive reimbursement for any

"The drugs took over my life. Everything was about getting high and staying high."

- Jessie Anderson, Salvation Army volunteer

damages done to their unit, said Angela Belford, community advocate and board chair for the Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care.

In the four communities that have created landlord incentive funds prior to Fayetteville, no landlords have applied for those funds. However, the Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care still plans to have the incentive in place as a safety net, Belford said.

When somebody applies to

live in an apartment at Sweetser Properties, the landlords run a credit check and a national criminal background check on the applicant and asses whether they are a good applicant on a case by case basis, Morris said.

"It's really hard to say [how we choose]," Morris said. "We look at the whole story. We try to be as fair as possible."

Some homeless individuals who suffer from mental health issues, particularly PTSD, might

rehabilitation program in 2002 and now mentors other people going through the program.

Drummond started using marijuana because of peer pressure from his friends, he said. He thinks that his use of marijuana contributed to his eventual abuse of LSD, cocaine and methamphetamine.

During this time, Drummond was homeless and living with friends three times, for about a month each time, he said.

"I wasn't able to function. I was married and had a little girl ... I had to come back down to reality or I was going to go mad," Drummond said.

Drummond went through three other rehab programs before he joined the Salvation Army's program in Fayetteville, he said. He thinks that the community offered by the Salvation Army's program and the religious mentorship helped him finally overcome his addiction, he said.

"No matter how many times I left and came back, they greeted me with open arms," Drummond said.

Jessie Anderson graduated from the Salvation Army's rehab program at the end of July, he said. He came to the Salvation Army's program after he completed his 7-month

sentence in the Washington County jail for stealing from his mother while abusing methamphetamine, he said.

"The drugs took over my life. Everything was about getting high and staying high," Anderson said.

Anderson has been homeless multiple times in his life while he was dealing with addiction, he said. He stays at the Salvation Army shelter and volunteers there while he searches for a job.

Burchfield thinks people with untreated mental health issues are treated in a similar way: imprisoned for their behavior in a place where they have no hope of getting psychological help and then released into a community where they are often unable to work or find housing, he said. In this way, homelessness becomes a cycle that is challenging to escape.

Because there are few resources to help people with mental illness recover, they often wind up back on the street again where they are arrested again, said Josh Robinett, Salvation Army area commander.

Anderson thinks that the prison system only offered the bare minimum rehabilitation programs through classes that emphasized participation but not lifestyle changes, he said.

Fayetteville Police Department officers are not trained to diagnose mental illnesses in people, so unless they exhibit behavior that merits hospitalization, they cannot distinguish someone who is mentally ill from anyone else, said Sgt. Anthony Murphy with the Fayetteville Police Department.

Drummond owns a house now and lives with his wife and two daughters, he said. He continues to work with the program because he wants to do something for the many people at the Salvation Army shelter that suffer from substance addiction.

"A good majority of the people that come to through our homeless shelter are addicts and alcoholics," Drummond said. "I'm here to try and help them find some hope."

After graduating from the program, Anderson was able to restore his relationship with his mother despite his earlier mistakes, he said.

Like Drummond, Anderson works as a mentor for people going through the rehab program, he said.

"I know I've got a better chance now," Anderson said. "I want to stick around. I see that the people who stick around are the people who make progress."

Homeless service providers create new programs, open doors to address housing issue

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Homeless service providers in the Fayetteville community are working to help with the influx of displaced people needing shelter, said an official for the Northwest Arkansas area of the Salvation Army.

UA officials told homeless people that they had to vacate the encampment on 19th Street by Sept. 6, said Solomon Burchfield, director of operations at 7Hills.

Service providers had a resource fair the first week of the initial announcement to find a solution for campers. Other services included the city of Fayetteville's Hearth program, the St. Francis House for veterans, Genesis Church and other nonprofits.

"Fifteen people were housed that week at the fair, and an additional 40-plus people began to stay at the Salvation Army," Burchfield said.

7Hills is next to the former encampment on 19th Street, so 7Hills officials tried to make transitioning off the property easier, Burchfield said. People donated tents, tarps, backpacks and waterproof totes for people who would need to find new areas to camp. Burchfield thinks there are 20 to 30 people camping in other places since the eviction, he said.

"People camp because they lack any better option based

on their income and the availability of housing options," Burchfield said. "In a whole lot of little ways, we just tried to help ease the transition for people [because] our community doesn't really have a good option right now."

Evicting the people on 19th Street was the right choice, said Kevin Fitzpatrick, a UA professor and member of the Serve NWA Board of Directors. He thinks that the UofA could no longer be liable for the crime that happened at the property.

Crimes that occurred on the 19th Street property this year include homicide, rape, aggravated assault, battery, terroristic threatening, criminal trespass, public intoxication and criminal mischief, according to the UA Police Department Daily Crime Log.

The UofA could not guarantee the safety of people who camped on the property, UA Police Department Capt. Gary Crain said.

"The property was never intended to have people camping on it," Crain said. "The last two to three years the number of people increased, the crime and the calls to service increased in those areas. The type of crime that was occurring got more serious."

Fitzpatrick thinks the increase in crime on the 19th Street property could have been prevented if the UofA did not allow people to camp there, he said.

"I think that what the

university could have done five years ago is to post 'no trespassing' signs on that property and not let anybody on it," Fitzpatrick said. "There's nothing gained in trying to second guess what they did or what they didn't do, but what they did do was listen to us when we told them this is a process that requires some care and some planning."

The problem with finding housing for these people is the lack of affordable options, said Josh Robinett, one of the Northwest Arkansas Area Commanders of the Salvation Army. Many of the people that Robinett serves have questionable backgrounds, involving criminal records and histories of drug abuse, that make landlords wary to rent to individuals, he said.

Brian Swaggerty, who lives in his vehicle, agrees that it is difficult to find a place to live, he said. He does not think people are given a second chance because of a mistake they made in their past, like being arrested, he said.

"It's the system we live in," Swaggerty said. "We're just rats in that cage. If you're a felon, supposedly you can't get a apartment, can't get a job. It's the system. It isn't us. They created us. That's what I think."

Rick Steinburg thinks the homeless are represented poorly in the media, which also makes landlords not want to rent to homeless individuals, he said. Steinburg, who has stage 3 kidney cancer, had to quit his



Mary Katherine Shapiro Staff Photographer

Andrea Mathews (left) talks with Cindy Palmer (middle) and Stuart Schiell (right) at the Salvation Army on Oct. 2. The Salvation Army provides shelter and food to homeless people in Fayetteville.

job because of his health and is camping by a river, he said.

"These landlords see the bad things that the news shows about us," Steinburg said. "They show the bad things. They see a pile of trash, they focus in on that instead of the good people trying to make ends meet, just make it from day to day."

Swaggerty thinks service providers in Fayetteville offer helpful resources despite difficulties with housing, he said. They help with food, clothing and shelter, something a homeless person cannot find in other areas.

"[Service providers have] been good to us," Swaggerty

said. "God bless them, all of them: Salvation Army, 7Hills, the churches. God bless them all because you don't see this nowhere else really."

Salvation Army officials have helped the homeless community by opening their emergency shelters, typically only used during the winter season and bad weather, after people were evicted from the 19th Street property, Robinett said. There is no time limit for their stay, and officials have committed to keeping the emergency shelter open for six to nine months.

Salvation Army officials have also removed barriers that would prevent someone from staying in their shelter, Robinett said. This includes removing the breathalyzer test that individuals had to take before staying and building a kennel for pets.

"We're shifting our focus on trying to just get people in a place, get people housed, get people shelter and provide wraparound services for those other things they need," Robinett said.

Transportation to the Salvation Army shelter in Bentonville is also available for individuals experiencing homelessness, Robinett said. Officials offered the space for overflow if needed.

"We have had a handful of folks go up to Bentonville," Robinett said. "Actually, those folks that I know that went to Bentonville, they've already been housed. So that's into permanent housing, which is fantastic."

7Hills officials created

a program in response to the eviction called the safe parking program, which allows homeless people living in their cars a safe place to park overnight, Burchfield said. The spots are well-lit and a portable bathroom is also available on the 7Hills property.

"We've kind of set off eight designated spots that would be a safe parking location for individuals that are currently sleeping in their vehicles," Burchfield said. "We've got security cameras, and the police will come a couple times a night just to kind of check and make sure things are safe. So no, that's not housing, but at least it's a safe place to park."

During the day, people who are homeless can go to 7Hills for meals, shower and laundry facilities, to get clothing, to receive their mail and to work with a social worker, Burchfield said. He thinks that approximately 100 people are there everyday and about 500 visit every month.

"Most importantly, we have social workers who are able to meet with people, talk through their problems and try to connect them to community resources that they can use to get their feet back under them," Burchfield said.

Homeless people are prioritized on a vulnerability scale of 0-17, said Steven Burt, executive director for the Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care. An elderly woman with a hearing disability is more vulnerable than a young, healthy man, so she would be prioritized above him on the housing list.



Mary Katherine Shapiro Staff Photographer

Andrea Mathews (left) talks with Cindy Palmer (middle) and Stuart Schiell (right) at the Salvation Army on Oct. 2. The Salvation Army provides shelter and food to homeless people in Fayetteville.

Homeless survivors of sexual assault face barriers to recovery

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@shelbyevans

As a victims' advocate, Karen Cockrum saw it all the time. Homeless sexual assault survivors, as she calls them, would come in just after making a police report. The time it took them to go through the process of gathering evidence varies, but every time she watched them walk out after their session, step into a car and disappear, she wondered if she would see them again.

The Northwest Arkansas Center for Sexual Assault in Springdale offers resources to people who have experienced sexual assault, but for those who are homeless, the resources become difficult to access.

"Follow-up becomes extraordinarily difficult for our homeless clients, whether they don't have a vehicle or a reliable phone to call us with, so our advocates and counselors have a difficult time following up," said Cockrum, the victim services coordinator for the Northwest Arkansas Center for Sexual Assault.

For people who have experienced sexual assault, the center offers resources including rape kits, counseling and support groups, Cockrum said. A rape kit is a collection of evidence from a sexual assault forensic exam, which contains any evidence of the assault, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network.

The center also offers special resources for its homeless clients.

"We give them these 'basic needs' bags, which have things like a toothbrush and toothpaste, clothes, a notebook, things like that, which is really nice. We also let them shower if they want to," Cockrum said.

Cockrum does not have an exact number but knows that a large number of her clients are homeless, she said.

Within Northwest Arkansas, there are 2,951 estimated homeless people, according to the 2017 UA Community and Family Institute Northwest Arkansas Point-in-Time census.

Kevin Fitzpatrick, a UA professor and director of the UA Community and Family Institute, creates a Northwest Arkansas homeless report that provides information such as the

amount of income and arrests made within the community. Despite this, there are no official numbers of homeless people who have experienced sexual assault, he said.

"It's not something we focus on," he said. "This is something that requires special attention."

Both Fitzpatrick and Cockrum agree that being homeless can make a person more vulnerable to sexual assault. Because of this, officials within the NWA Center for Sexual Assault try to move a homeless client to a shelter instead of sending them back to the place they were assaulted, Cockrum said.

"We try to get them in a bed at a shelter nearby because we really worry about their safety," Cockrum said. "A lot of times, clients show up here because they've been at the hospital and police get involved and bring them here."

If a person who has been sexually assaulted on the UA campus files a report with the UA Police Department, an officer will take them wherever they might need to go, including a hospital or the NWA Center for Sexual Assault, UAPD Capt. Gary Crain said.

"It's their decision of where they want to go," Crain said. "If they want to go to the hospital or the center, then we'll take them there. But it's their choice."

On July 21, UAPD officers were notified that a homeless woman at Washington Regional Medical Center was sexually assaulted on undeveloped property owned by the UofA.

This property was a known encampment where an estimated 80 homeless Fayetteville residents lived, according to a previous *Arkansas Traveler* article published Sept. 6.

Despite the resources offered to the center's clients, it is very common that homeless clients do not return. Cockrum hopes that as the center grows, they will be able to offer transportation so clients can continue to use the center after their initial visit.

"I wish we could just get them here because I know that they want that free counseling service that we're so proud to offer," Cockrum said. "Back when our office was in Fayetteville, we had a client experiencing homelessness. She was about a 10-minute drive away, but it turned into an hour-and-a-half bus ride. I think she only came for about two sessions before we stopped hearing from her. I think it was just too hard for her to get here. I really wish we could have helped her get here."

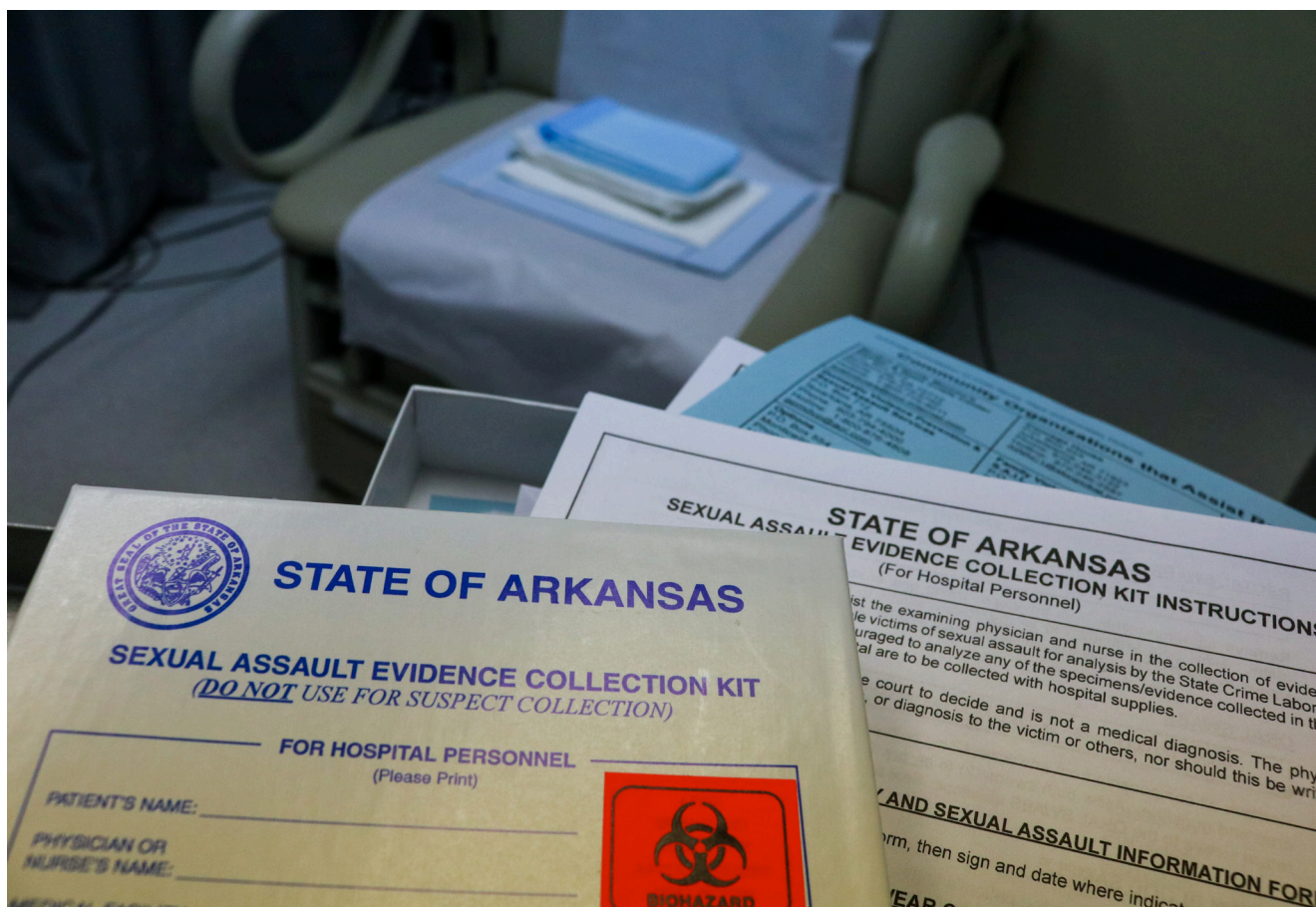


Photo Illustration

When a person who has been sexually assaulted comes to the Northwest Arkansas Center for Sexual Assault, a nurse will gather evidence for a rape kit, which may include physical and documented evidence.

Shelby Evans Multimedia Editor



A bin at the Northwest Arkansas Center for Sexual Assault contains care bags given to victims of sexual assault Oct. 2.

Shelby Evans Multimedia Editor



Courtesy of Hill Magazine

People gather June 16 for the Northwest Arkansas Pride Parade, during which marchers walked down Dickson Street with signs and flags.

Culture shifts toward acceptance, fear persists

Continued from page 2

"It's not any more temporary than any other reason why someone would be homeless," Poppers said. "At the end of the day, LGBT people are still experiencing discrimination when they are getting employed or finding housing. It is harder for them because their LGBT identity is very obvious and that can deter them from getting a job. They don't have a cell phone or a bus pass, which makes it even harder to get a job."

Kevin Fitzpatrick, a UA sociology professor who researches homelessness in Northwest Arkansas, pointed out the American culture is shifting to accept LGBTQ individuals more than ever before.

For the first time in 2017, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ordered that the gender classification on the census be changed from a two-gender system to a spectrum that includes transgender and those who do not wish to identify, Fitzpatrick said.

"That was the first time that they were asked to change that binary," Fitzpatrick said. "Now the acceptable response is male, female, transgender male to female, transgender female to male, or other. That's an important change, and indicative of a larger cultural shift and maybe even a shift in the population as well. Thirty to 40 years ago, there was not a large LGBTQ population to identify, but because of this huge cultural shift, we have

more folks who are willing to self-identify."

This cultural shift also means some responsibility can be placed on both the children and the parents when it comes to LGBTQ youth running away from home, Fitzpatrick said.

"Kids today are just not willing to put up with their parents like they would have 10 or 20 years ago," Fitzpatrick said.

Parker tries to remain hopeful about his future relationship with his family, he said.

"I'll continue to keep my 'Love, Simon' Blu-Ray hidden in the bottom drawer of my dresser and look forward to the day that I can be completely open and honest with everyone."



Couchsurfing benefits international students, people in between homes

Clare O'Hagan
Contributing Reporter
@clarelizabetho

After struggling to find affordable housing in Fayetteville, one resident resorted to couchsurfing to have somewhere to stay at night, she said.

Since moving back to Arkansas, Mychaela Wagner, 20, has found it nearly impossible to find a place to live within her budget, so she started utilizing the 7Hills Homeless Center during the day, she said.

"Housing is not very easy," she said. "Anywhere, especially apartments, that you would even want to try to apply for – they have like a minimum six-month wait. 7Hills is the only thing that is really close to a kind of emergency shelter, and it's really not for overnights. Their hours are only from 8 to 5."

Although the homeless center is nice, if housing was a financial option for her, Wagner would choose that over shelters and couchsurfing.

Because the shelter is only open from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Wagner decided to couchsurf with friends at night, she said.

Homeless people might couchsurf when they are in between apartments, job shifts or homeless shelters, said Kevin Fitzpatrick, UA professor and director of the UofA Community and Family Institute.

Couchsurfing affects every socioeconomic level, not

just the homeless, Fitzpatrick said.

"A large number of [people who couchsurf] are taking place across the socioeconomic landscape not just the super poor," Fitzpatrick said.

Between 2015 and 2016 Fayetteville had a 39 percent homeownership rate, which is much lower than the national average of 63 percent. The Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce states that there are 43,579 housing units in the city and 21,223 of those units are occupied by renters, according to Data USA.

Fayetteville resident Chelsea Ware calls her house a hotel for anyone in need of a place to stay. She is constantly housing her friends and band members who are financially struggling, she said.

"For bands, I throw shows in my basement, so it's usually like, 'Hey you can stay with me for free and save money and not have to buy a hotel room,'" Ware said. "I know they're struggling artists just trying to make it to their next destination."

One of the coolest experiences she has had while hosting couchsurfers is having the drummer from the band Vampire Weekend, Chris Tomson, stay with her while working on a solo project, she said.

Her main reason behind hosting couchsurfers is helping people, she said.

"Growing up, my dad was a youth director, and my parents actually had foster kids, so people taking care of people when they need it has always been around for me," Ware said. "I've always been taught to have

open arms and an open home. I'm probably too trusting, but that's how I was raised."

Ware even has a public Facebook page called "The Syc House" with 3,350 followers, which has her house address on it for anyone, specifically bands, who need a free venue to play or a couch to stay on.

While some use couchsurfing as a necessity when in between homes, others use it as a way to save

money, meet people from diverse backgrounds or create lasting relationships while traveling. For a student, hosting couchsurfers resulted in a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

Last summer, sophomore Hunter Simmons worked at a camp alongside a group of international students who had nowhere to stay on their days off of working on the campgrounds. Simmons

thought this would be a great opportunity to provide a place for them to stay and show them American traditions while they shared their culture, he said.

"I got to get so close to them through this and actually really enjoyed hosting them and showing them my high school or just basic American culture in contrast to what they saw in movies," Simmons said. "In return, I learned a ton about their culture, being that

they were from England and Hungary."

Simmons made friends he could stay with if he ever decides to visit England or Hungary, he said.

"One of the best services I think you can do is be put outside your comfort zone and grow from an emotional standpoint when it comes to truly caring for people who are different than ourselves," Simmons said.



Caroline O'Keefe Staff Photographer

Chelsea Ware sits on a couch in her house where she lets friends and financially struggling band members spend the night.



Bridge Biniakewitz Staff Photographer

For the 2018-2019 school year, students should expect to spend \$1,046 on textbooks, according to the UA Office of Financial Aid.

OpenStax popular among professors

continued from page 1

eBook version of the textbook.

"Personally, I prefer the physical textbooks," Casey said. "Yes, the online version is easier to tote around considering it doesn't weigh anything, but I am old school and like to have the textbook in my hands. For me, it is easier to work with and read from, but that could be because I have only ever used the physical version of a textbook."

Kenfick thinks it might be difficult for some professors to switch to cheaper options because they already have their classes set up around a specific textbook. The textbooks might not have always been expensive, and it would take a lot of time for them to change their lectures, she said.

Kenfick said she has not yet received compensation from the university for switching to free textbooks but plans on applying for the grant this semester.

Gary Ferrier, a UA economics professor, has been using OpenStax for about four years after he realized it could help students save money and still have access to good material, he said.

Ferrier is able to assign homework through Blackboard and is always finding new free material students can access online to help them understand concepts in class, he said.

Representatives from publishing companies do not always discuss textbook prices with professors because the professor does not have to buy the book, Ferrier said.

"Some professors may not think about the price of textbooks," Ferrier said. "They may only be thinking about how they like the textbook and don't realize the cost."

Ferrier likes the free aspect of OpenStax because students should always have the newest edition of the textbook, and all students can access the book anytime throughout the semester, regardless of their financial situation, he said.

Students and professors moving toward online textbooks are not hurting business at the UofA Bookstore, Textbook Manager Ricky Carney said.

"While we have seen a decrease in sales, we have seen a large increase in rental books," Carney said. "We have doubled the amount of rentals we have had available in the bookstore in the last three years, and our sales numbers show that as well."

Carney thinks that online textbooks might not be as popular as people would imagine, he said.

"Honestly, eBooks really haven't taken off like they were predicted to," Carney said. "While more books are available as eBooks, students still seem to prefer the physical textbook."

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Problematic portrayal of poverty in U.S. film damages perceptions

Ryan Deloney
Movie Critic
 @ryandeloneyuark

It has become clear that media outlets levy enormous influence over the perceptions, biases and interpretations that consumers have of the world. In the case of the film industry, it's no secret that Hollywood has a knack for representing things not as they are but as they think we want to see them.

This fact should not come as a surprise, even to the most casual moviegoers. The ways disparate aspects of society are depicted onscreen, and the level to which audiences respond to these accounts, create a kind of call-and-response system – Hollywood offers us their version of reality and hopes we pay to

see it. If we don't, over the long term, they go back to the drawing board.

Particularly alarming is the depiction of poverty by the major studios. Hollywood productions seem reluctant to include any kind of situation featuring financially-strained individuals and situations, and when they do, the result is skewed at best – and toxic at worst.

This phenomenon has been widely studied in terms of Hollywood's willingness to portray diverse characters. But it goes beyond that, reaching into the realms of every type of person, group or situation failing to measure up to the idealistic caricatures coveted by the industry.

The most obvious trend, of course, when Hollywood isn't completely ignoring it, is to represent impoverishment as shameful and dangerous. Take the 1984

film "C.H.U.D." – a loving acronym for Cannibalistic Humanoid Underground Dwellers. The movie (which became a cult classic and spawned a sequel) features homeless people-turned-humanoid monsters literally ascending from the depths of the sewers to slaughter well-to-do innocents.

This may be an extreme case, but when they're not depicted as twisted, murderous gutter-dwellers, poor people are generally cataloged into a number of stereotypes. We see them depicted as irresponsible or unlucky bums, either at fault for their dire situations, posing a threat to well-meaning citizens of the upper class or, an arguably worse fate, completely invisible to the outside world: Films like "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (1986) and "Shelter" (2014).

Movies tend to portray the state of being homeless or poor as the defining characteristic of one's identity.

The narrative function of poor people in films often boils down to just that: being poor. Lacking the nuance or gravitas to delve into traits that have nothing to do with their socioeconomic status, characters are often defined by their experiences and judged by their ability or non-ability to make a better life for themselves.

Hollywood isn't pulling these conventions out of thin air, even if it is encouraging them. The social crime of being unhomeless is seen as an inherent eyesore, according to the research article, "The Lamentable Sight of Homelessness and the Society of the Spectacle."

It's not as if filmmakers

are necessarily trying to perpetuate harmful stereotypes. Slews of films centered around struggling characters have been released over the course of the last decade. Unfortunately, even with the best of intentions, these quasi-sympathetic stories are often among the worst type-casters.

Will Smith's "The Pursuit of Happyness," for instance, breaks from the frustrating practice of portraying homeless characters as incompetent, delusional, drunk or foolish. On the surface, it is the classic feel-good, rags-to-riches story. It centers around a down-and-out man taking care of his son while attempting to climb the business ladder and make a better life for himself. The characters are rendered kindly, enduring through the horrible conditions of living unhomeless in New York City, and by the end of it, after they've finally found success, the American Dream doesn't seem so impossible after all. It's admittedly impossible not to smile as the credits roll. But after a harder look, this glossy Hollywood depiction is all the more annoying.

What kind of message



Courtesy of Alcorn Entertainment

Sandra Bullock in *The Blind Side*

does a sugar-coated story send about homelessness? That there's nothing worse, and that if you're homeless, you're helpless? That the few who break cycle, who surmount the insurmountable, deserve to have their stories told? And as for the rest? Not so much. Why are there no stories about the ones left behind, the ones who didn't go on to become award-winning business-people, musicians ("August Rush") or athletes ("Cinderella Man")?

Worse, and seemingly even more common than the "pull yourself together" genre of poverty-centered dramas, is the unsurprising tendency of Hollywood to make films about

impoverished people that are actually films about the middle class heroes that help them.

Take 2009's "The Blind Side," a saccharine look at a wealthy protagonist taking a careworn youth under her wing. The film, while inspirational, becomes a vehicle more for Sandra Bullock's character and her southern, Christian, charitable charm rather than her co-star's admirable story. Sure, it's sweet, but it leaves little room for any other narrative in this story of triumph than that of the conventional "hero" who helps him get on his feet. Not to mention, it does no favors for opponents of racial stereotyping.

So, does Hollywood know how to portray issues of poverty and homelessness in any other way than the orthodox and formulaic systems they've been banking on? Can it learn? Films like "Winter's Bone" and "The Florida Project," both of which provide fascinating, nuanced and complex exposés of life below the poverty line, offer some hope.

But just like its diversity problem, Hollywood's poverty problem will likely only change if audiences tell filmmakers it needs to.

“ Movies tend to portray the state of being homeless or poor as the defining characteristic of one's identity. ”

- Ryan Deloney



Courtesy of Anonymous Content

Jennifer Lawrence in *Winter's Bone*



Courtesy of Touchstone Pictures

Richard Dreyfuss, Nick Nolte and Little Richard in *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*

Commentary

Pay for play: blame pros, not schools

Seth Campbell
Sports Columnist
 @sethcampbell5

Every sports fan has an opinion on whether college athletes should be paid or not. Most fans blame the NCAA, but for this problem, the NCAA is not the culprit.

The football team might make the bulk of the money, but because of Title IX, equality is assured for all collegiate athletic teams. Title IX states that no one should be discriminated against because of their sex. This means if one college athlete gets paid then they all will get paid, regardless of how much money their sports make for the university.

College sports are becoming more of a business. At prominent universities, athletic programs can make over \$100 million in revenue. With a surplus of revenue pouring into the university, it would seem that programs could pay a small stipend to athletes. Especially since quite a few of these players come from impoverished backgrounds. The problem for people that want college athletes to be paid is Title IX is not going away.

This situation should be looked at from a different perspective. Using football as an example, athletes should be allowed to go to the NFL straight from high school.

Before you write me off as crazy, hear me out. If you let high school students go straight to the pros, the pay-for-play controversy goes away completely.

I know that most high school students are not capable of playing in the National Football League, but there are a few.

Take for example Marcus Lattimore, a running back that played college football at the



University of South Carolina. Lattimore was a freak of nature. He holds the career record for rushing touchdowns at South Carolina with 38, despite just playing one full season. His sophomore and junior year, Lattimore suffered severe knee injuries. He chose to forgo his senior season and enter the NFL. He was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers, but never played a snap. Lattimore was one of the few who could have gone right to the NFL out of high school, but he became a Gamecock with dreams of a future NFL career.

I did say that most high school students couldn't play in the league straight out of high school, but if you let NFL teams draft high schoolers and develop them then the pay-for-play argument gets shut down. If athletes want to get paid straight out of high school, then they should try to be good enough to get drafted, otherwise they can go to college, receive a free education and improve their skills.

The NFL could also start a developmental league to make sure guys stay in their system and

get valuable reps. Right now the NFL doesn't have to develop any players. They let college programs spend millions of dollars to blossom young athletes, and then they get them once the players are physically mature enough to play professional football. This will never happen though, unless the NCAA pushes the league to go this route.

All in all, it's a rigged system that benefits the National Football League. If college athletes were allowed to go pro straight out of high school, then the NFL would have to decide if it was worth drafting an athlete out of high school and mold him into the player they want. By, in a sense, having redshirts, professional front offices would be forced to decide if keeping an athlete on their team is worth one of 53 roster spots.

It would add a dynamic to college athletics that would benefit all parties involved. So the next time someone talks about the pay-for-play debate don't get frustrated with the universities, but realize the problem is with the system between the professional leagues and the NCAA.

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The Simple Things



All photos by Morgan Browning

A group of homeless men and women gather at the 7Hills Homeless Center to get out of the rain Sept. 21.



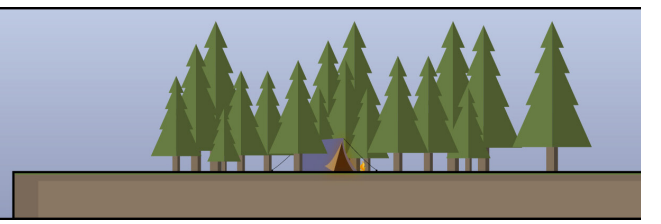
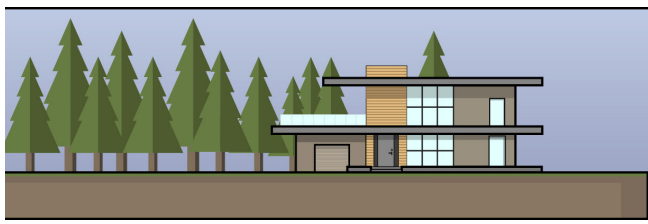
A man who calls himself Bob "The Builder" laughs while talking about how he got his name Sept. 21.



Melony Glover eats lunch with her partner, Dakota Faux, on Sept. 21. Melony and Dakota showed affection for each other through small kisses and hugs all afternoon. Whenever Melony talked about Dakota, a huge grin stretched across her face.



April pets her dog Taz while eating her lunch on Sept. 21. Although April solemnly eats her food, she smiles a semi-toothless grin when her dog is close to her. Taz is the thing that makes both her and her partner Walker happy, she said.



International students pay more, have fewer work opportunities

Laurel Anne Harkins
Staff Reporter
@laurelharkins

International students experience the same daily money struggles as American students but face unique challenges because of the extreme financial burden placed on them by university fees that keep them from being able to travel home and see their families.

Freshman Francisco Ayaviri thinks one of the hardest things about being an international student is not being able to see his family, he said.

High airline fares are a common money issue that prevents international students from visiting family. International students must plan breaks and manage finances wisely to have the money and sufficient time to visit relatives abroad.

Not only is it emotionally hard for Ayaviri to leave home, but knowing that his home will look different when he returns is difficult "because a lot of things will change when I get back to Bolivia," Ayaviri said.

Iranian student Hossein Kashefi is constrained by both money and the travel ban in place for Iranian citizens. He is unable to visit family until the completion of his doctoral program here, he said.

"If I visit, I won't be able to come back. If I go, I say goodbye to my research," Kashefi said. Freshman Gregory Ford is an exchange student from the United Kingdom. Through the exchange program, Ford gets to study at the UofA for one year without paying UA tuition, while a UA student studies in the U.K.

"It's the hidden costs that get you," Ford said. Ford had to spend \$2,016 on health insurance through the UofA, despite already having private insurance through his family as well as insurance from his university in the U.K., he said. International students without citizenship or permanent resident status must purchase UA health insurance for each year spent studying at the university, according to UA policy.



Michaela Burton Staff Photographer
International students are required to have student health insurance, which costs \$2,016 annually, during their time at the UofA, according to Pat Walker Health Center.

"It's a bit pointless to have to pay for an insurance I will never use," Ford said.

Kashefi, however, is appreciative of the UA insurance because without it, the costs of most health services would be unaffordable, Kashefi said.

"I found it really helpful. However, the insurance coverage is limited and does not cover different health services. Sometimes I need to pay terribly expensive bills for some services," Kashefi said.

If international students want a job, they must seek university employment. International students receive an F-1 Visa, which limits their work to on-campus jobs with a maximum of 20 hours per week, according to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

"We accept before we come here that there is a limit to how much we can work and where we can work," Ford said.

Ford recalls working part time in the U.K. while attending a university and making a decent amount of money to cover living expenses, but he cannot do the same in the U.S., he said.

Ford does not have a job now because "there is almost no point in working," Ford said.

Scholarships are another limiting factor for international students, often limited by nationality and area of study more than intellectual ability or test scores, Ayaviri said. Bolivian students can receive in-state tuition with qualifying test scores and GPA.

Kashefi is a doctoral student studying chemical

engineering who chose to come to the UofA from Iran because of its reputable engineering program, Kashefi said.

It was difficult for him to find scholarships that applied to his situation, Kashefi said.

"Finding the funding is the matter," Kashefi said. "It's not that easy to find scholarships within your field of research."

He obtained money through a graduate assistantship in his field of interest, allowing Kashefi to study abroad with financial ease, he said.

Graduate assistantships cover tuition costs and pay students a monthly stipend in exchange for 20 hours of part-time work per week for the UofA, according to UA policy.

"Making arrangements for money in these cases is hectic," Kashefi said.

Doctoral student Mahti Hajiha is from Iran and thinks it is a good opportunity to learn and work here, he said.

When Hajiha started his first semester, he had no university assistance. He took a leap of faith, and his family paid for everything that semester so that Hajiha could pursue higher education, he said.

Hajiha's family supported him for that semester but did not have the financial resources to continue helping any longer, he said. He could not have stayed for a second semester without getting an assistantship.

"Many students like me work more than 20

See "In exchange" on page 14



PUDDLE OF MUDD
WEDNESDAY, SEP 5
8 PM



OPENER: SALIVA AND TANTRIC

INSIDER:
TOM PETTY
TRIBUTE BAND
SATURDAY, SEP 8
8 PM



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CHARLIE DANIELS
BAND
FRIDAY, SEP 14
8 PM



10 YEARS
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Homeless people struggle with harsh weather conditions, violence

Halie Brown
Lifestyles Editor
@halieeliza

When he woke up, he could see his breath curling into the air. Draped in a coat much larger than himself and some blankets he had gotten from a homeless shelter, he sat up, peeled back the fabric and readjusted the back seats of his car, a white Lincoln. It was winter, and frost was creeping up the windows of his vehicle and the Walmart parking lot. This was a normal day for Frank Sout, a Fayetteville resident who lives out of his car.

"It's all I got," Sout said. In 2017, for the first time in seven years, the number of people who are homeless increased. Sout is homeless, like approximately 554,000 others who are without a place to stay for a single night in January 2017, according to the 2017 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report.

There has been a 125 percent increase of the Fayetteville homeless population from 2007 to 2017, according to the 2017 CFI 10 Years of Homelessness in Northwest Arkansas infographic.

The growth of Fayetteville's population and the lack of affordable housing in the area has created the drastic increase, said Kevin Fitzpatrick a UA professor and director of the UofA Community and Family Institute.

"What that [percentage] shows is that the forces that generate and create homelessness are increasing dramatically," Fitzpatrick said.

There are 2,951 estimated homeless persons in Fayetteville, according to the 2017 UofA Community and Family Institute Northwest Arkansas Point-in-Time census.

No matter the season, no matter the weather, Sout always stays in his car, he said. He is unable to find a place to stay, not with what income he makes on the streets and the bills he has to pay for his car insurance, Sout said.

"When I get done, I don't have any money to pay rent," Sout said. "It seems everyday I get up and go, 'Oh no, not another problem.'"

As winter approaches, Sout is still trying to find a place to stay, but despite his best efforts there is not a place available for him, and 7Hills hasn't given him shelter yet, he said.

7Hills is primarily a day center that helps people in a crisis meet their daily needs, according to 7Hills.

Aaron Brodt, like Sout, goes 7Hills to get meals. Brodt thinks the community at 7Hills, which meets under an open awning where food is passed out in brown paper bags, is mostly good and friendly, he said.

In 2017, 2,467 people were estimated to be homeless in Arkansas in a single night in January, or eight people in 10,000. Arkansas is the only state that has not reported higher permanent supportive housing capacity, with the amount of supportive housing staying almost the same compared to 2007, because it has not built more accommodations for homelessness, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

In the winter, the Arkansas cold bites to the bone, with an average low of 26 degrees in



Morgan Browning Staff Photographer

Aaron, a homeless man who relies on the 7Hills Shelter for meals, waits on his lunch Sept. 21.

January. Still, with no other place to stay, Sout bundles up in his car, using the clothes and blankets 7Hills has given him to stay warm, he said.

"It's warm right now, but when it gets cold, I don't like it," Sout said with a laugh. "I was in my car last winter."

JD Valkenburg, or "Chief" as his friends call him, tried to help other people who lived in the encampment with him in the woods beside 7Hills when he could by finding blankets or buying food with his social security checks, he said.

"I take care of them in the woods, I watch over them, I provide the money and things that they need— tents, tarps," Valkenburg said. "But that was

until they kicked us out."

In September, the UA property, which Valkenburg and 40 - 60 other homeless people resided on was cleared. Up until then he took care of them, but now, for the time being, he has somewhere to stay, he said.

"I can't hardly live out here anymore," Valkenburg said. "I've lived out here so long I have become handicapped."

Since he moved into the woods five years ago, Valkenburg has become diabetic and crippled. He feels bad about staying in a nice house while his friends sleep in the cold, he said.

"When I got here, these people wouldn't even touch

each other, hug each other, tell each other [we] love each other," Valkenburg said about his friends, whom he calls his family. "There was a lot of fighting. It's still going on, [but] now they love each other and hug each other."

While he did not panhandle for money, Valkenburg took care of people in other ways, he said. He scavenged for good sleeping bags or tents that had been abandoned and would police the encampment, which on occasion had problems with drugs and domestic violence, he said.

"There were people who would take these people and would [often] hurt to them, especially some of the girls,

so I would put a stop to it," Valkenburg said.

Homeless people are more likely to be exposed to or become victims of violent acts, with 30 percent of 516 respondents saying they have been attacked at least once in the last 30 days, according to the National Health Care for Homeless Council 2014 Violence and Victims report.

"I wouldn't let anyone hurt these people, I don't care what it takes," Valkenburg said. "Some of the bigger boys, some of the bigger boys like this one named Joe, if I holler they would all be there and if anybody ever stood up on me than all these guys would stand up. They're my brothers, my sisters, my family."

Lack of affordable housing affects students, local homeless population

Brandon Davis
Staff Reporter
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The construction of student housing apartment complexes in Fayetteville — fueled by the growing enrollment at the UofA — has had detrimental effects for the homeless in the city trying to find affordable housing, said the director of operations at 7Hills Homeless Center.

7Hills Director of Operations Solomon Burchfield, who has seen this burden firsthand with the people he interacts with at 7Hills, thinks Fayetteville has had "extremely tight affordable housing market" over the past few years, he said.

"The boom in students living in Fayetteville has sucked up all the affordable housing," Burchfield said. "The individuals in housing programs are competing for the affordable units that students are looking for."

Since 2010, student enrollment has increased by an annual rate of 4.7 percent, or 1,050 people, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The population of Fayetteville has increased by roughly 16 percent over that time, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

There are almost 3,000 people in Washington and Benton counties that are homeless, according to 7Hills officials.

The surplus of students

and rising apartment prices makes it tough for people without a permanent dwelling who can't afford what used to be reasonable prices before the boom in the area, Burchfield said.

Ethan Kaplan is a project designer at the UofA

“The boom in students living in Fayetteville has sucked up all the affordable housing. The individuals in housing programs are competing for the affordable units that students are looking for.
”

- Solomon Burchfield, 7Hills Director of Operations

Community Design Center who thinks that the number of places for people to stay in the area is well below where it needs to be, he said.

For many NWA residents, this means a shortage of not only affordable housing but housing in general, with students taking most of the available and cheap options, Kaplan said.

The demand for housing is around 4,000 new units

market harder to invest in for the working middle class, Kaplan said.

Even if there were apartments or homes available for people, wages have not kept up with the increasing rent prices as the living wage gap continues to grow, Kevin Fitzpatrick, UA professor and director of the UA Community and Family Institute.

"More people find themselves either doubling up or literally out on the street because they can no longer afford to live here," Fitzpatrick said.

NWA is home to three Fortune 500 companies, Walmart, Tyson Foods and J.B. Hunt, which has caused the population to grow as these industry giants bring in more talent to the area. This has put pressure on the affordable housing market, limiting the number of available housing, Kaplan said.

For students, the rising prices doesn't affect them as much because most of them have disposable income to spend on an apartment, Kaplan said.

Average rent for a standard four-person apartment in Fayetteville is \$1,300, according to Trulia.

There are not many places to live within Fayetteville for non-students, or people who do not attend the UofA, because students have moved into most affordable complexes, Kaplan said.

People have to live outside of town because of the lack of housing in Fayetteville, which brings its own problems, such as traffic congestion on the interstate and on the transit systems, Kaplan said.

Most of the new complexes going up are defined as student living, which are complexes mostly populated by college students and have amenities students

need, such as study rooms and small computer labs, Kaplan said.

When Kaplan went to school in Springfield, Missouri, he saw housing problems similar to the ones in Fayetteville because of the amount of colleges in the area, he said.

"Most housing stock was either curtailed to students, which had more disposable income to afford the property, or to the growing upper or middle class," Kaplan said.

Development by mixing mid-income housing and mid-income neighborhoods together in the area can create more affordable and diverse housing, benefiting people of all socioeconomic statuses, Kaplan said.

The problem a high student populations causes will come to an end in a few years once the student population levels out because of the lack of available housing. In that case, the challenge of affordability might improve, Fitzpatrick said.

"I don't think the university will grow much more," Fitzpatrick said.

There is a glimmer of hope to people looking to rent. More complexes are in the works, some of which are underway, said Mervin Jebaraj the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in the Walton College of Business.

Over the next couple of years, there are some official projects in the works to build around 8,000 apartment units in NWA. The Bentonville area is building 3,000-4,000 apartment units, and Fayetteville and Rogers is building another 2,000 units.

While some of these units are for students, most of these new units in Bentonville will be for regular residents, Jebaraj said.



Liz Green Staff Photographer

A four-person apartment costs an average of \$1,300 per month in Fayetteville, according to Trulia. Hill Place, located off of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, is one of several student apartment complexes in Fayetteville included in this average.

Working adds stress to students' lives, provides some financial stability

Dyllan Levenson
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She works at Club Red and was a delivery driver for Domino's until her car was totaled in an accident while she was working, forcing her to quit.

Even after junior Blair Carver lost her delivery job, she usually works 35 hours per week in addition to going to school full-time, but thinks grades are more important than working two jobs, she said.

"For a while, work came first, but now I realized that you have to get the degree in order to make the money that you want to make," Carver said. "It's frustrating to a lot of college students to not get the pay that they want to be getting."

After she was a passenger in a car accident freshman year that left her back temporarily injured and in lasting pain, Carver spent money irresponsibly, using alcohol to self-medicate her pain, she said.

"I wasted \$4,000 my freshman year," Carver said.

The Office of Financial Aid offers a program called

work study that provides eligible students part-time job opportunities that allows students to work up to 20 hours a week and earn up to \$3,000 a year. Students are paid twice a month, according to the Office of Financial Aid.

Students who fill out their Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, are awarded work study if eligible, said Denise Burford, associate director of financial aid.

FAFSA is a program that determines if students are federal aid eligible, according to the Office of Financial Aid.

Most people use it for incidental expenses like groceries or daily meals, Burford said.

"We always have more jobs than students to fill them," Burford said. "There are limitations to having a work-study job, one of which is the student's hours don't match up with the work-study hours," she said.

When students fill out FAFSA the next year, the amount they earned is not counted in the student income, so it does not hurt their FAFSA for the next year, Burford said.

If FAFSA allows a student to be eligible for work study and the student accepts it, they are paid based on the



Katie Beth Nichols Staff Photographer

Junior Blair Carver pays her way through college working by working at Club Red on Sept. 30.

amount of hours they work each week. If a student does not complete the process on time, FAFSA officials may not be able to offer work study, Burford said.

Many departments around campus offer work study, Burford said. Some work study positions might vary with how many hours are available, but some places with the most job opportunities on campus are in the Mullins Library and in the Health, Physical

Education and Recreation building.

In 2017, 69 percent of undergraduate students received financial aid, and the amount of federal financial aid awarded was over \$129 million. The university awarded \$42.8 million in scholarships. The state awarded \$25.6 million in financial aid.

Students who worked full-time at a two-year university made up 46 percent of all

university students, versus the 42 percent of full-time undergraduates at a four-year institution, according to the survey.

Carver thinks that the best way to balance yourself when working and going to school is to stay organized and save money, she said.

Working at Club Red has allowed Carver more flexibility than an off-campus job because her boss knows she is a student, she said.

Carver thinks her experiences and her efforts to save money by working multiple jobs have made her mature more quickly than her peers, she said.

"I wasn't ready for the real world in ways I thought I would be," Carver said. "The methods that I was using in my everyday life were not effective. I want people to know that it is possible to make a pretty big mistake and be able to bounce back from it."

Nonprofit buys UA property, begins planning for homeless shelter

Molly McLindon
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Until they can hire a contractor, Serve NWA officials are unsure when workers will complete the New Beginnings homeless community center, but hope that they will be ready to accept residents by mid-2019, according to Serve NWA.

The UA Board of Trustees sold university land to Serve Northwest Arkansas on Sept. 14 to build a homeless shelter in attempts to provide housing following the eviction of the homelessness encampment near 19th Street.

The organization bought 4.69 acres of land for \$72,571, according to Serve NWA.

Serve NWA is a nonprofit that helps the homeless community in the Northwest

Arkansas area. The organization works with community leaders, local politicians and NWA citizens to provide solutions for the homelessness problem in the area, according to Serve NWA.

New Beginnings is an initiative created by Serve NWA to be a solution to Fayetteville's homelessness overcrowding issue, with plans to construct 20 micro-home sleeping units and create a self-managed community, according to Serve NWA.

Serve NWA has hired engineers, architects and a site manager, but no contractor, said Kevin Fitzpatrick, UA professor and member of the Serve NWA Board of Directors.

The New Beginnings community will be one of the ten low-cost, micro-shelters communities popping up across the nation. These

communities provide shelter, case management and counseling to address the root causes of homeless peoples' homeless circumstance, such as drug abuse, domestic issues and money problems through the volunteers, volunteer counselors and donations, according to Serve NWA.

Micro homes are small, environmentally-friendly shelters that allow more comfortable living spaces on smaller pieces of property. These micro home spaces are being built all around the country by other organizations in Eugene, Oregon, and Austin, Texas. This has become a popular option for large cities with limited property to devote to homeless shelters, according to Serve NWA.

The sale of this land is crucial in the progression of the organization's New Beginnings Community

initiative because construction on the housing can now begin for the recently evicted homeless, Fitzpatrick said.

The plans for the housing units are complete and workers have built prototypes, Fitzpatrick said.

"We are meeting with architects, engineers and contractors and will be starting the process [of construction] as soon as possible," Fitzpatrick said.

The project is taking a housing-first approach by putting the initial focus on the construction of sleeping units and addressing immediate needs and then later addressing lower priority additions such as gardens and recreation spaces, according to the Serve NWA Board of Directors.

The 20 sleeping units are first priority so that people can have a place to stay, Fitzpatrick said.

The sale of the property has the potential to improve the south Fayetteville area, where up to 100 homeless people were forced to leave their makeshift camp Sept. 6, according to a previous *Arkansas Traveler* article published Sept. 6.

UA officials forced the homeless camp to disband after the rise of crime in the area, which escalated to the murder of a man and death of a homeless woman. This decision resulted in the displacement of many homeless people in the community, according to a previous *Arkansas Traveler* article published April 25, 2017.

The property was located directly next to 7Hills homeless center and many 7Hills clients lived in the camp.

Solomon Burchfield, 7Hills director of operations, said he thinks the eviction of people

from the property had an impact on the urgency of the New Beginnings initiative.

The 7Hills eviction has "finalized the timeline, for sure," Fitzpatrick said.

Serve NWA officials have consistently kept the community of Fayetteville involved by working with many businesses, faith leaders, politicians and citizens to raise the money for the purchase of the university property through donations and community fundraisers.

The organization has also involved Fayetteville youth by having local junior high school students design the prototypes, said Fitzpatrick.

The New Beginnings community is located at the intersection of School Ave and 19th Street. More information on the New Beginnings project is available on the ServeNWA website.

Graduate students face food insecurity from lack of housing, high tuition

Holly Mitchell
Staff Reporter
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Graduate students are at a higher risk for food insecurity because of the cost of tuition, rent, a lack of help from family and small budgets from working low-income jobs.

"It's a really big problem with a lot moving parts," said Arley Ward, president

of the Graduate Professional Student Congress, or GPSC.

Up to 48 percent of UA graduate students will go hungry during the semester because they are struggling financially, and Ward's office receives calls weekly from students looking for resources to help with food insecurity, he said.

In 2015, out of the 42 percent of students who identified that they were facing food insecurity, 47 percent were graduate

students, according to the 2016 Student Food Insecurity Survey Report.

Ninety-two percent of all students reported their cooking skills to be adequate, meaning that most students struggling have the means to eat, but not the money, according to the 2016 Student Food Insecurity Survey Report.

The report, conducted by the UofA's Center for Community Engagement in 2015, surveyed 418 students

on how much they work, eat and cook from home.

"It's a very complicated issue," said Rodica Lisnic, the principal researcher for the Food Insecurity Report. "And in my opinion, it's not about skill or ability, like cooking. It's about social issues, such as low income and low-paying jobs."

The 1 percent increase of graduate food insecurity over three years is small, but still shows graduate students still are not receiving the food needed to healthily support themselves, said Lisnic.

"It's safe to assume things don't change," Lisnic said about the lack of improvement for food-insecure students.

Students who work at least 20 hours a week are more likely to be hungry. This is because students who work more are typically trying to pay for tuition, rent and food by themselves rather than gain job experience, Lisnic said.

The GPSC steers students to campus resources, such as the food pantry, and guides students on how to apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Graduate students may qualify for SNAP if they live alone, have a car that costs under a certain amount and make under an estimated

gross income of \$1,316. GPSC sponsors classes to teach students how to cook and budget food expenses, and all GPSC events have free food, Ward said.

Another problem is rent costs, because most food-insecure graduate students live off campus, according to the report. High rent in Fayetteville adds financial strain for students, Ward said.

"There's no graduate housing, which is rare for a R1 university," Ward said.

A R1 university is a university that conducts the highest amount of research among doctoral universities, according to a ranking system by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Florida are both R1 universities that offer affordable graduate student housing, according to their websites.

A resource created for students struggling with food security is the Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry, which supplies students, faculty and university workers a free 3-day supply of food, according to the Food Pantry.

Students are welcomed to walk in, and only first time users are required to fill out a basic survey. Students can

use the pantry twice a week, where they'll receive a three-day emergency supply of food, said Nico Suarez, the chair of Full-Circle Food Pantry.

"Anyone with university ID can use the pantry," Suarez said.

Most people who use the pantry are staff or faculty. About 20 people use the food pantry a week, and 11 are graduate students, Suarez said.

Not that many students use the pantry because they may not be aware of it or are afraid of the stigma attached to getting supplies from a food pantry, Suarez said.

"They might be embarrassed of their classmates or friends finding out," Suarez said.

The pantry sees a spike in visitors during the holiday months, when money is tighter. Because of the increase of the visitors, the pantry creates holiday baskets and last year they handed 120 baskets on Thanksgiving, Suarez said.

Volunteers also guide visitors to other food pantries in the Northwest Arkansas area during Christmas Break, when the pantry is closed, Suarez said.

While there are numerous ways to help food insecure students, "many solutions are still just a Band-Aid. We need bigger changes," Lisnic said.



Mary Katherine Shapiro Staff Photographer

Junior Dillon Trinh sorts cans after receiving a donation at the Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry on Sept. 27.

Jane B. Full Circle food pantry fights food insecurity, provides resources

Riley Kelley
Staff Reporter
@rileykelley_

To help the 38 percent of students struggling with food insecurity, a student-run food pantry provides students in need with food, hygiene items and other supplies up to twice a week.

Students operate and supervise the Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry, providing anyone affiliated with the UofA with a three-day supply of meals and snacks based on the size of a person's family, and this supply can include personal hygiene items and fresh produce based on demand and availability, according to pantry intern Kaitlyn Turner.

Students also provide those living with UA affiliates food so long as the affiliate has a UA ID, said Nico Suarez, student board member for the pantry.

Anyone with UA credentials who fills out the request for food can receive it because there is no additional screening process to determine a client's financial need, Turner said.

"Everyone is eligible," Turner said. "We don't ask for any proof of need or anything just because you never really know what a student is going through. It could be that their school is paid for and their bills are paid for, but their car broke down and they have to pay for that out of nowhere and it so happens to also be a week where you need groceries. There are so many different situations where someone could need food and we're not going to make them prove anything."

Food insecurity damages a students' health and academic achievement, according to the Student Food Insecurity Survey Report.

"Students who might be experiencing hunger might not be able to work to their best potential, and we believe every student and faculty member on campus should have the ability to work at their best at all times," Suarez said. "It's just tough to know that there are people who aren't able to do that because they can't access food."

Suarez thinks the impact that Full Circle has on his peers is rewarding, especially when he interacts face-to-face with clients at the pantry when they pick up their

orders.

"What is so unique about it is that we are addressing a problem that affects our own peers and other students," Suarez said. "As students, we are doing our best to combat that head on. It's just a great opportunity to immediately impact your own campus community. We do face-to-face work with clients everyday."

Beyond this, Full Circle continues to reach out to other Southeastern Conference schools like Auburn to discuss the development of their own food pantry programs and establish relationships with other schools, Suarez said.

"The real difference [between schools] is that we started pretty early, and we've really been able to develop a good foothold on campus," Suarez said. "We actually have consistent clientele and an organized system of inventory and some solid relationships with other organizations in the community to help send in donations."

Other SEC schools have started similar programs on their own campuses, like the Tiger Pantry at Missouri, which was founded in 2012 and was based on Full Circle, according to Missouri.

The Tiger Pantry collaborated with their campus dining services to allow students to transfer their unused meal swipes to clients at the food pantry, according to the Tiger Pantry.

In the seven years that the Full Circle food pantry has been in operation, the number of clients has grown significantly, Suarez said.

"The first week it was open I think they served 12 clients and now it's a lot more than that," Suarez said. "Right now it's at around 350 clients per week, which is also their families, so it's more than 350. It's probably closer to 600-700 people."

These numbers indicate that the problem of food insecurity on campus has expanded throughout the years, but UA students may not even realize it, volunteer John Mahaffey said.

"I only ever eat in the dining halls, so I see these people, and I see all of this food available," Mahaffey said. "Then you realize that not everyone lives on campus and not everyone has the meal plans available, so they might just eat Ramen noodles every day for dinner."

There are different ranges of food insecurity, with high



Aleena Garcia Staff Photographer

Sophomores Alexis Skinner (left) and Emma Wiederhoeft (right) use a checklist as they gather food for a client at the Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry on Sept. 27.

food security indicating no problems with access to food and marginal food security indicating some anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Low food security indicates reduced quality, variety or desirability of diet with little or no indication of reduced food intake. Very low food insecurity can mean disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For UA students, 38 percent indicate high food security, 22 percent report marginal food security, 20 percent report low food security and 18 percent indicate very low food security, according to professor Rodica Lisnic's report from 2016, which has the most recent data.

Full Circle volunteers recognize this issue and the impact that their work in the food pantry has on those with levels of low or very low food security, freshman volunteer Elizabeth Black said.

"I think it's a pretty decent impact," Black said. "Thirty-eight percent of people on campus are food insecure. It's just that no one sees it. I mean, we're located in an alley. It's an

impact that means a lot to the people who are food insecure, but I don't think much of the university actually knows about it."

Despite 38 percent of students identifying as food insecure, only 2 percent of students use Full Circle. With a student population of around 28,000 students, 38 percent of students would mean that 10,640 students were food insecure. Turner thinks the stigma around using food pantries could be keeping people from using Full Circle as a resource, she said.

The pantry has attempted to expand its outreach on campus to make it easier to distribute food and to inform students about what it means to be food insecure with programs like Full Circle Express and Full Circle Minis, Suarez said.

Full Circle Express is a service that delivers food to different locations on campus and is available to students who cannot pick up their food during the normal pantry hours. Full Circle Minis is another new program that put kiosks stocked with snack foods in different buildings around campus where students can go to grab a

snack and a pamphlet about Full Circle, Suarez said.

The drop-off locations for Full Circle Express are in the UA Uptown Campus building in room 136, the Arkansas Research and Technology Park at the front desk of the Genesis building, the Food Science Building and the Epley Center for Health Professions. These drop-offs occur from 11 a.m.-noon every Tuesday and Thursday, and the orders can be placed online until 11:59 p.m. the day before delivery, according to Full Circle.

Full Circle Minis are located in the Career Development Center on the sixth floor of the Union, in front of the Epley nursing building and in the Veterans Resource and Information Center in the Garland Center shops, Sullivan said.

"The Minis are initially stocked with an assortment of small cans of veggies, fruit and beans along with other items such as peanut butter, cereal and granola bars," Sullivan said. "It just depends on the size of the Mini. Full Circle provides the Mini structure and the initial supply of food, and then the steward of the Mini will keep an eye on it. Each Mini runs on a take-

what-you-need, give-what-you-can model making them sustainable for the long run."

For those who are able to make it during regular hours of operation, the Full Circle food pantry is located in the alley between Bud Walton Residence Hall and Stadium Garage at 324 N. Stadium Dr.

Students are sent an email at the beginning of each semester and prior to Full Circle's two summer sessions, inviting them to volunteer and sign up for a once per week shift spanning an hour and a half. Volunteers are typically responsible for filling orders, maintaining the cleanliness of the facility and interacting with clients, Mahaffey said.

Along with signing up for the volunteer hours, those looking to get involved can donate food or other household items or sign up to help with Full Circle's special events like Make a Difference Day in November, which is a day that the Volunteer Action Center and other Registered Student Organizations come together to plan a service project, Suarez said.

More information about Full Circle, how to volunteer and how to make donations can be found at service.uark.edu.

Begging for Relief



Andre' Kissel Staff Photographer

A man holds a sign that reads "Hungry, homeless, please help. God bless you!" off of Mall Avenue on Oct. 2. As of Jan. 15, 2018 the number of people experiencing homeless is approximately 474, according to the Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care.

Students, residents use coupons, apps to save money

Patrick Clarkson
Staff Reporter
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When she was a child, she sat beside her mother and watched her flip through the Sunday papers and pull the glossy coupon pages from the center. Together, they would clip them, neatly stacking them into a pile for when they went grocery shopping. Now in college, clipping coupons is a little different. She scrolls through apps and clicks on what she needs, compiling a grocery list for her shopping trip every week.

Junior Megan Medford uses apps to coupon and save money, a habit she picked up from her mother, she said.

Fayetteville resident Chloe Wynter and Medford both coupon any time they go grocery shopping to save

money. Clippings from the weekly paper and apps like Ibotta, SavingStar, Checkout 51, Shopkick contribute to how they save money, they said.

Wynter got into using coupon after a friend gave her a free trial of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. When using the coupons that come in the Sunday edition of the paper while shopping, Wynter found she was saving \$12-\$20 a trip. It occurred to her that she should start using apps she had heard about, Wynter said.

Medford does not think finding coupons is difficult to do and thinks there is no need to make it overwhelming, she said.

Junior Julius Mays only uses online coupons but chooses not to coupon when shopping in a store because he does not want to take the time to cut them out, he said.

Medford thinks the benefits of using coupons outweigh the time spent cutting them out, which amounts to about 30 minutes for her, she said.

"When I get my Sunday paper, I go and [clip coupons] right then," Wynter said. "It normally takes me around 15 minutes to get through an entire Sunday paper for coupons."

Medford does not cut out coupons, instead opting to browse the apps while making her shopping list, she said.

Medford gets a lot of coupons for snacks. She often does not have time to return home for lunch, so instead she packs snacks to have throughout the day, she said.

"I buy a lot of Queso Fresco," Wynter said. "Apps and the paper always have coupons for the queso fresco we use. It is pretty much free."

Medford's advice is to look



Aleena Garcia Staff Photographer

Junior Megan Medford cuts out coupons before sorting them into different categories Sept. 28.

around and find what app works for people best, she said.

"I use two apps to get cash back, but Ibotta is the big one. I get cash back for things I was going to buy anyway," Wynter said.

Medford and Wynter both spend about 30 minutes before a shopping trip on Ibotta, they said.

Ibotta is a coupon app that helps customers find offers in participating stores, according to Ibotta.

Ibotta is Wynter's favorite app because it has the most items relevant to her, she said. The app is incredibly easy to use and has a large variety of items to choose, Medford said.

"It's natural. Anytime I go to the store I think, 'What can

I get? Are there any coupons for this?'" Medford said.

Although watching videos on how to coupon can be overwhelming, Wynter thinks people should take small steps and ease themselves into using coupons, she said.

"Start by finding coupons you like and apps that work for you, then you can slowly build up to be one of those people who can coupon for everything they need," Wynter said.

Medford has not experienced judgement from other students about her using coupons, she said.

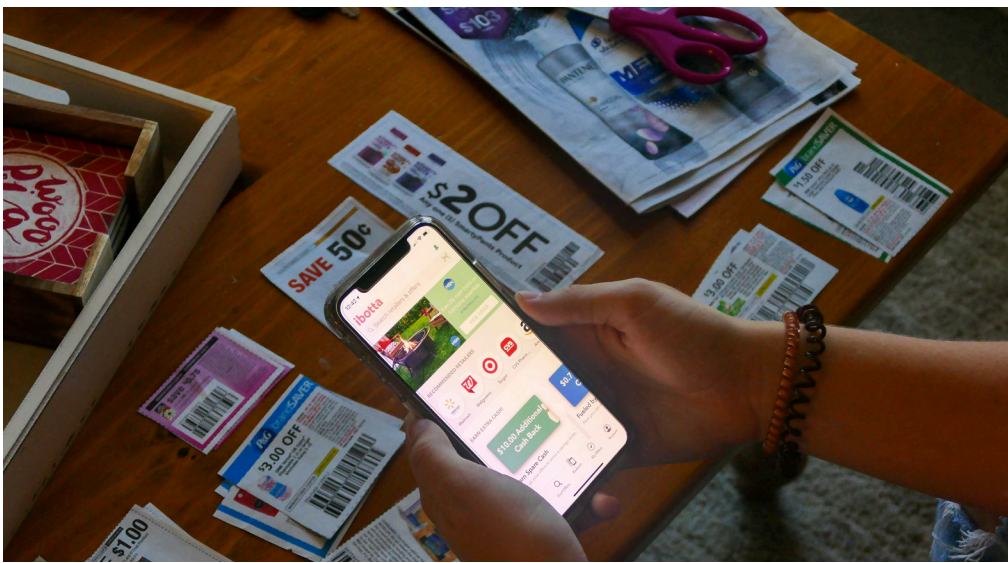
Wynter tries to avoid shopping on Friday or Saturday nights, which have high traffic, so she doesn't hold up the line, she said.

"I always feel like I need to apologize to the cashier when I had them a stack of coupons, but usually cashiers are understanding," Wynter said.

Using coupons has made Wynter think about what she is spending money on, and has helped with budgeting and cutting down on impulse purchases, she said.

"A few weeks ago, I was looking for something healthy that also satisfies my sweet tooth, and I had a coupon for a product called Dang Coconut Chips. I got the chocolate kind, and they are my new favorite snack," Medford said.

Between coupons and cashback Wynter saves around \$50 a month, she said in an email.



Aleena Garcia Staff Photographer

Junior Megan Medford opens the app she uses for couponing, Ibotta, on Sept. 28.

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Resources help students shop

Brooke Bynum
Staff Reporter
@brookebynumbtb

After searching for cheap clothes and other possible ways to get them, a UA student was awarded a scholarship to help her afford business professional attire.

Despite having money specifically for clothes provided by the scholarship, she learned what resources were available to help her afford clothes, as have others.

Through the Sooi Suit Up scholarship provided by National Residence Hall Honorary, an honorary organization that recognizes student leaders in residence halls, senior Tiana Williams was able to save money on clothes, she said.

"I come from a background of having to work for everything I have and did not have a lot growing up," Williams said. "I never had ability to buy things on my own."

She was able to get \$500 worth of clothes for \$150 at JCPenney department store. JCPenney also gave her a coupon for an additional 40 percent off that also works on clearance items, Williams said.

Williams received the scholarship after applying to the NRHH scholarship program. She wore her first pur-

chases to the Fulbright Career Fair on Sept. 25.

Boss Hogs Outfitters, located in Room 418 of Champions Hall, is another campus clothing resource with Associated Student Government, which has a goal is to provide free business attire for students. They partner with the Career Development Center at the UofA, said Audrey Walker, director of Boss Hogs Outfitters.

"On average there are about three students a week that use our service," Walker said. "Two out of three of those students are financially in need, but our service is not solely for financial purposes."

Students can contact Walker anytime throughout the school year about available business attire at alw068@email.uark.edu. The most popular times for Boss Hogs Outfitters are during career fairs and later in the spring semester when seniors are getting ready to interview for jobs, Walker said.

Another resource is the Walton College Career Closet, located in Willard J. Walker Hall room 420. Students who are enrolled in the Walton College can visit the Career Closet and take up to four apparel items to keep per semester. The clothing is gathered by Leadership Walton students through a clothing drive once

a semester, according to Career Closet.

Senior Mary Beth Teague gets used clothes at Goodwill and Plato's Closet. She loves finding old clothes at cheap prices, she said.

"I feel guilty when I spend a lot of money on certain clothing items when I have a good chance of finding it at Goodwill if I really dig," Teague said.

Every formal dress for a Greek Life event that Teague has worn in college has been from Goodwill and tailored by a third party because formal dresses might cost up to \$100. Teague also finds basic T-shirts, work pants and workout tanks. Sometimes she finds jeans but cuts them into a style she likes more, Teague said.

Senior Grant Pickle shops at discount stores because he is a college student on a budget, he said.

Pickle found a \$465 Sitka hunting jacket at Goodwill for \$10, he said. He also shops at discount department stores like T.J. Maxx and Marshalls to find nicer brands at a discount price. He has found Polo Ralph Lauren shirts for \$8 that were originally \$80 and Under Armour that was originally \$90 for \$10. Goodwill and Savers, a for-profit second-hand retail store, are where he finds everyday clothes, and every now and then he finds a nice blazer.



Clay Taylor Staff Photographer

Senior Marybeth Teague sifts through a clothes rack at Goodwill on Oct. 1.



Student group leads multiple projects to help Fayetteville community

Drew Watzke
Staff Reporter
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To combat the issue of homelessness in Fayetteville, one Walton College-based organization at the UofA has made it its mission to help those in need.

Enactus at the UofA is a corporate-funded, departmental organization associated with the university. Enactus USA has over 444 teams across the country.

Adam Franky, co-advisor and graduate director of Enactus at Arkansas, said each team focuses on improving its own community and the issues the community is experiencing through entrepreneurial projects. One of the main issues the UofA Enactus team tackles is homelessness in Fayetteville.

"People all throughout the lower Midwest and the South actually come to Fayetteville because there's a lot more opportunities for them," Franky said, "but now there's an issue because we're not addressing the need as fast as they're coming in, but that doesn't mean we reject them, that means we have to get better at solving the issue."

One reason that the student-members work diligently on these projects is annual competitions, Franky said. Every year, teams around the country compete in regional and national competitions to stack their projects up against each other. Teams typically present three to five projects and are judged on the sustainability of the project, the impact it has on the community, and the entrepreneurial success it achieves.

At last year's competition, Ar-

kansas finished at the top of the regional competition, and placed No. 32 at nationals, an impressive finish out of 444 clubs. One of the projects that Enactus presented, the Independence Workshop, is still ongoing.

The Independence Workshop was built on the basis of one man, Clarke Mitchell. While homeless after being in the Navy for eight years, Mitchell would build walking sticks and sell them around town to try to make some extra money. Because of his woodworking skills, Enactus saw an opportunity to help Mitchell out.

Through its group of business students with innovative ideas and ambitions, Enactus helped Mitchell market and distribute his walking sticks and other products in a much more timely and effective fashion, Franky said.

"[The project is] very experi-

mental," Franky said. "We've been able to get [Mitchell] back on his feet. Now, this semester, we're going to be helping him hire an assistant. His assistant is going to be somebody who has struggled with homelessness alongside him. Through the money that he makes out of that program, he's going to be able to pay for his own housing and get back on his feet."

The project leader for the Independence Workshop, junior Jordan Johnson, hopes that the project can show the value and potential of those experiencing homelessness, he said.

"There are a lot of people that have a negative concept of homeless people," Johnson said. "I feel like we all kind of did until you get a personal story and build a connection with anyone. We want to break that stigma."

Mitchell voiced his opinion

on how the workshop could help those experiencing homelessness "stay productive and keep them out of trouble." It gives them a purpose and a sense of accomplishment, he said.

A lot of homeless people get down when life is tough, and they just kind of stay there. That's why you see homeless shelters that are overcrowded, because they just accept that lifestyle, Mitchell said.

"I want to help people realize that they don't have to be in the situations that they're in," Mitchell said. "Instead of having to ask churches for money and stuff like that, if they actually put a little bit of effort towards [working], they could actually earn money."

Enactus directors have also recently teamed up with NWA Continuum of Care, whose mission statement is to coordinate a community response to end

homelessness in Northwest Arkansas, according to its website.

"As this workshop begins to expand, the [NWA] Continuum of Care is going to use this as a platform to hire multiple individuals experiencing homelessness," Franky said.

While some places stop at providing shelter, NWA COC and Enactus work on getting those people plugged into tutoring centers and workshops so that they can transition out of homelessness.

Enactus wants to get the message out that those experiencing homelessness have a story.

"I want [Independence Workshop] to show people that the homeless have skills," Mitchell said. "A lot of people have a stereotype of the homeless, but not all of them are like that. Give them a chance, see what they can do."

Razorback transit benefits students, Fayetteville residents without vehicles

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Offered to the public but dominated by student riders, Razorback Transit bus stops are scattered throughout Fayetteville with its station in the heart of campus, saving

UA students and Fayetteville residents time and money.

Razorback Transit is a public service, partly funded by UA student fees that provides transportation to on-campus locations and major off-campus living and shopping areas, according to Transit and Parking. The transit fee varies for each student depending

on amount of credit hours taken, but the standard base is \$3.02, said Dorothy Landerito, director of student accounts.

Razorback Transit is a federal government grantee, which requires the system to offer rides to the general public free of charge. Students continue to dominate the Razorback

Transit population though, said Adam Waddell, the associate director of Transit and Parking.

Bus drivers estimate 80 percent of riders are students, Waddell said.

There has been a nationwide decline in vehicle miles traveled and a 40 percent increase of transit trips among millennials,

according to millennial travel trends in the UA 2015 Transportation Plan.

Today, roughly 20 percent of riders are non-students, Waddell said.

For some passengers, the amount of money saved from riding the transit is significant, Waddell said. Razorback transit helps riders who struggle with the cost of campus parking permits and gas prices, he said.

The transit might take longer than driving cars because of the multiple stops, but riders can work on things during their trip, gaining back time, Waddell said.

Freshman Carter Colclasure plans to ride the transit next year to avoid the \$600 cost for a student Resident Reserved permit, which he thinks is overpriced, he said. Having his car on campus isn't a necessity, and he would advise other students to leave their cars at home if they can, Colclasure said.

The permit allows Colclasure to park his car behind Maple Hill South residence hall, but spots are limited and costly, he said.

"Sometimes [the lot] is pretty filled up during the day," he said.

Senior Iglia Castillo Hernandez occasionally rides the red route to the

Northwest Arkansas Mall or Walmart because she does not have a car, she said. The routes are not always ideal for Hernandez because of her tight engineering schedule, and her transportation options become more costly after 7 p.m. because the transit stops running at this time, she said.

Hernandez uses Uber when the transit is not running, she said. As an international student, she is used to riding taxis in Panama, which had fares significantly cheaper than Uber in Fayetteville, so the transit would be more useful if it ran later at night, she said.

Razorback Transit has saved Hernandez a significant amount of money. She rode the bus everyday to the Spring International Language Center for classes because she did not have a car. When she used Uber to get to the mall when the bus is not running the trip would cost her roughly \$28, she said.

Sophomore Abdul Ansari rides the transit everyday because parking is limited on campus, he said. Ansari thinks the system is efficient during rush hour and saves time by avoiding parking hassles, but he uses his student permit after transit hours, he said.



Bridge Biniakewitz Staff Photographer

Students gathered in the back of a crowded UA bus leaving the Union Station, commuting between school and home Sept. 27.



In exchange for U.S. education international students shoulder cost

Continued from page 8

hours because the work is something I want to do, not just assisting my advisor but doing my research and dissertation, not just helping other people, but helping myself to finish my studies here," Hajiba said.

Hajiba and Kashefi think their international student issues stem more from volatile politics rather than money problems, they said.

Kashefi said the time spent on his doctorate degree is hard work he does not want to lose.

Perhaps the biggest financial shock for Kashefi and Ayaviri was the price of textbooks.

"The books here are very expensive for us," Ayaviri said.

Many international students are completely unaware of how expensive books are until they walk into a bookstore for the first time, Ayaviri said.

There is a difference between the imagined cost and the reality of the cost of textbooks for international students, Kashefi said.

"Oh, the textbooks suck in the U.S.," Kashefi said in an email. "I knew they are expensive here, but not SO MUCH expensive."



Michaela Burton Staff Photographer

Freshman Francisco Ayaviri is an international student from Bolivia who thinks being unable to visit home is one of the biggest financial problems international students face.

Textbooks are much more expensive in the U.S. than in Bolivia, and a majority of Bolivians would not be able to afford to buy hundreds of dollars worth of textbooks, said Carlos Malky Sandoval, a freshman from Bolivia.

In Bolivia students do not have to buy textbooks because the universities provide them, Sandoval said.

One major monetary adjustment for freshman international student Carolina Virreira was getting used to American taxes, she said.

In Bolivia, Virreira's home country, tax is

included in the final price, but in the U.S. the price tag does not usually match the final cost of the product, often deceiving students like Virreira who assume the tax rate has already been incorporated, Virreira said.

Although international students face challenges, the chance to study in the U.S. makes the financial sacrifice worth it, said Thomas Matto, a freshman from Peru studying civil engineering.

"Being an international student is good because the people try to include you and make it your home," Matto said.