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NEW &  
RETURNING  
STUDENTS!



# What is *The Lions' Pride*?

**Alora Peters**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Whether you are new or returning to Saint Leo University, you may still find yourself asking the question, “What exactly IS The Lions’ Pride Media Group?”

Established in 1965 and rebranded in 2018, The Lions’ Pride is a student-run news organization based at Saint Leo’s University Campus that also encompasses Saint Leo’s Learning Centers and WorldWide program. We cover a multitude of topics that are relevant to our local Saint Leo community and disseminate the news through a variety of outlets—through our monthly print issue distributed across campus, on our website at lionsprideonline.com, and through our various social media platforms as @lionspridemedial.

Students from any major or year can work with The Lions’ Pride; we are one of the most flexible student employment opportunities available on University Campus. Aside from attending a weekly meeting, student workers can work on their own time in between classes and homework assignments, from anywhere on campus to anywhere in the world.

Students who work with The Lions’ Pride can pursue a large variety of projects, such as journalistic articles, news videos, infographics, professional social media posts, photography, graphic animation, podcasting, and more. Students can also base their projects on a host of topics that are of special interest to them, ranging from politics to pop culture, from sports to campus events, and from the arts to science and technology.

Aside from being a fun work opportunity, The Lions’ Pride is also an excellent place for career-minded students to build valuable skills that will impress employers and look great on a resumé.

Working with The Lions’ Pride will help you to become comfortable with working on a team, improve both your verbal and written communication skills, and demonstrate your strong work ethic, self-initiative, and flexibility—all of which are highly desirable attributes that employers look for in college graduates, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

The Lions’ Pride accepts both federal work study and non-federal work study students; additionally, internship credits that will apply towards a degree

and volunteer opportunities for students who are already employed by the university—but would still like to join the staff—are available. Whichever way you choose to join The Lions’ Pride, you will still be considered a member of our staff.

At The Lions’ Pride Media Group, our mission is to be the voice of the students, faculty, and staff at Saint Leo through innovative, informative, relevant, and ethical journalism. If you are interested in joining our mission or in learning more about The Lions’ Pride, stop by our newsroom—located on the first floor of the Student Activities Building—or send an email to our faculty advisor, Dr. Valerie Kasper (valerie.kasper@saintleo.edu), to get in contact with us. Applications are also available on Workday.

## Newsroom

**The Lions’ Pride Media Group** is the student-run publication of Saint Leo University, free from institutional interference from conception to print. We publish in print once monthly, and weekly online at our website and through our social media sites. It is the mission of The Lions’ Pride Media Group to provide accurate news and diverse opinions that are important to the Saint Leo community, and our goal is to inform and entertain readers while providing thought-provoking journalism without fear of reprisal.

We are located in the Student Activities Building in Office 106.

### Letters to the Editor & Advertising:

Send letters to the editor to [TheLionsPrideNewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:TheLionsPrideNewspaper@gmail.com). Guidelines: 500 word maximum. Do not use profane or slanderous language. Faculty must include name and rank. Students must include name, major, and graduation year. Include phone number to verify authorship. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, spelling, or libel.

To inquire about putting an advertisement in the newspaper or social media, please contact Isa Riaño at [isabella.riano@email.saintleo.edu](mailto:isabella.riano@email.saintleo.edu).

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# Get ready to have fun: Campus Activities Board events for the fall of 2022

Isa Riaño

Advertisement Manager

Saint Leo University recently notified all students that COVID-19 restrictions, such as masks and event sizes, have been lifted. What does this mean for the Campus Activities Board (CAB)?

The CAB is a campus organization responsible for planning interactive and enjoyable events for the student body. Some of its plans were limited last school year by Saint Leo's COVID-19 policies, which limited the number of students allowed at events and mandated mask-wearing. However, the organization hopes to have more to offer students this year.

"Students can expect more of us now that there will be no masks or social distancing," said Ashley Tucker, a junior majoring in criminal justice. "There will be more events with a larger number of people attending."

Tucker is the Student Government Union's Vice President of Activities (VPA). As VPA, she oversees CAB.

Students can expect to see various on-campus events from the beginning of the fall semester, when classes are just starting, until the end, when there are Christmas and other holidays. Among them are a welcome back bash, pumpkin carving, movies on the lawn, a Saint Leo talent showcase, Christmas games, a gingerbread house competition, and a snow slide.

The CAB also aims to embrace Saint Leo's core value of community by hosting events that highlight different cultures, such as Hispanic Heritage Month and Native American Heritage Month.

In addition, the CAB hopes to work with Saint Leo faculty and other campus organizations on some events. For example, Dr. Passard Dean, a professor of accounting and economics, has planned a TED talk about the transition to life after college. CAB intends to collaborate with him to make this TED talk available to the student body.



CAB events are a great opportunity for students to get to know new people while having fun!

CAB has also planned a haunted Snyder mansion and trick-or-treating in collaboration with Residence Life.

Lastly, the CAB has planned some activities in which students can socialize and actively participate, such as photo booths, Christmas cards, and monthly bingos.

For many years, bingo nights have been one of CAB's most popular events. They are also extremely competitive because they offer prizes such as televisions, smartphones, Nintendo switches, and apple watches. However, the main reason students find them appealing is that they provide an excellent opportunity to socialize and have fun.

"Students should attend bingo nights because they are interactive and allow students to make new friends," said Tucker. "The way these events bring students together is amazing, and I believe it is important for students to take advantage of that opportunity."

While attending events without COVID-19 restrictions sounds exciting, some students may be unsure what to expect. All they have to do is go out and have fun. "My best advice to students is to come out, be themselves, and have fun," Tucker said. "College is all about putting yourself out there and discovering yourself."

During the first few weeks of the semester, freshmen will be able to attend some CAB events. For instance, on August 28th, there will be a freshman-exclusive bingo at 6:30P.M. in the SCC Boardrooms; on September 2nd, there will

be a welcome back bash from 3:00P.M.-5:00P.M. at the Lakeside Front with a Camp Leo Theme and a Scavenger Hunt; and on the week of September 5th, there will be an involvement fair, where various campus clubs and organizations will have some of their members tabling, inviting students to join, and providing information about their organizations.

Attending CAB events is more than just a way to have fun; it is also an opportunity for students to meet new people.

"When we move into this new environment, we all want to make friends," Tucker said.

Attending CAB events allows students to meet new people who may turn out to be lifelong friends.

CAB anticipates more on- and off-campus events and partnerships with various clubs and organizations now that campus has been fully reopened and COVID-19 guidelines are significantly less restrictive.

Students should keep an eye on their emails because they will receive a newsletter listing all of the upcoming campus events. If they have any questions about attending events, they can contact Ashley Phelps, the Assistant Director of Student Activities, at ashley.phelps@saintleo.edu.



Some CAB events, such as Dear World, give students an opportunity to express themselves.

# New President, New Perspective: An Interview with Saint Leo University's President Dadez

Alora Peters

Editor-in-Chief

"This is day 48," said Dr. Edward Dadez, as he sat down with The Lions' Pride Media Group for his inaugural interview. That was the first thing Dadez, Saint Leo University's 11th and newest president, wanted everyone to know.

"It's usually a little different when you talk to presidents at the end of the year," said Dadez. "In my case, it's less than two months being in this position."

Dadez assumed the role of president on July 1 and has been largely focused on understanding the status of the institution whose responsibility he has inherited. Despite the current brevity of his time in office, Dadez has already identified four main areas of concern that the university must address first: the budget deficit, recruitment, retention, and the organizational culture.

When it comes to managing the budget, the goal is to reduce the deficit with as few hardships as possible.

"When you speak to the budget deficit, we've been spending a lot of time...trying to figure out where cuts can be made to get the budget back to zero—zero surplus, zero deficit," said Dadez.

Closely tied to the success of fixing the budget is the success of recruiting new students to Saint Leo.

"The key to [the budget] will be hitting our enrollment numbers for each of the six terms," said Dadez. "If we hit those recruitment goals...then we shouldn't have a problem in that area. We're still very much a tuition driven institution."

Other changes to the budget have been related to staffing and consolidations. In cases where three people may have filled three different staffing positions, for example, those three positions are being consolidated into a single role where it is possible to do so.

"We've had to make some tough decisions," Dadez said, but he hopes in 18-24 months, these decisions will bear fruit and provide Saint Leo with the funding it will



In addition to having worked extensively at Saint Leo University, Dr. Edward Dadez is also an alumnus, having graduated in 2002 with his M.B.A. in Executive Management.

need to finance the operational projects people want to see on campus.

Retention is another key issue that Dadez plans to focus on. Currently, retention at Saint Leo is in the low 50 percents, which, as Dadez puts it, is "not good."

"It means, for every 100 students we bring in, 48 of them don't return the next year," he said. "That's a lot of marketing, a lot of time, a lot of energy."

One possible reason, Dadez suspects, could be that the college experience students receive at Saint Leo is different from the college experience they were expecting.

"Are we talking about the university in a way that gets students coming here, but is not matching up with the way students think it is going to be? Whatever those reasons are, we've got to address them," he said.

Dadez thinks it is important for incoming students to realize that one thing that sets Saint Leo apart from other universities is its smallness. While students are oftentimes little more than a number at larger, public universities, Saint Leo faculty and staff recognize and know the names and faces of students. For students craving anonymity, Dadez stressed that Saint Leo is "not the place to be."

"We want people to be active both inside and outside the classrooms," said Dadez.

Dadez also emphasized that recruitment and retention of students needs to be specifically catered depending on whether the student is attending via university campus, via the education centers, or via WorldWide online. A one-size-fits-all approach "doesn't work."

"A lot of [education center students] are in their 30's, 40's, 50's, wanting to work on a degree to help them in their current job or to get out of their current job," Dadez said. "There's a different kind of strategy you have to use to entice those students to come. How you recruit a student for university campus has to be different from how you recruit an adult student, and we have to do a better job at doing that."

In addition to recruiting across different student communities, another key issue related to retention is attracting students to Saint Leo who are prepared for success in higher education.

"Are they able to do well here, away from home?" Dadez asked.

Some prospective students may not be ready for the rigorous schedule that college brings, and it is important for students to understand this before enrolling at Saint Leo.

"Part of that is due to

[COVID-19]—a lot of students got used to taking classes online," said Dadez. "What happens now is they are off to college, and you need to go to class."

Dadez wanted to emphasize to students a key piece of advice that he received while in college: if students want to be able to spend time with friends and participate in the evening time recreational activities, such as intramurals and student club meetings, they need to learn to prioritize studying and homework in the morning or in between classes.

"Treat it like high school," Dadez said, suggesting that students use an "8:00a.m.-4:00p.m." timeframe in which to focus solely on academics, while leaving their evenings free for socialization and fun.

In addition to the budget, recruitment, and retention, the final immediate issue Dadez wishes to address is the organizational culture. Recent university surveys of faculty and staff indicated that many of them are feeling overworked and unappreciated.

"They're not respected the way they need to be, or should be," said Dadez. "I believe if we can turn around the organizational culture, we can turn around the retention and the recruitment."

Having worked for

## Presidential Interview

more than 20 years at Saint Leo University, including as the Vice President for Student Affairs and Campus Operations and as a visiting professor in graduate education, Dadez has an ideal background and perspective for helping to resolve organizational culture issues.

Dadez is also a firm believer that it is important to view an issue from multiple perspectives in order to find solutions to problems at Saint Leo. He plans on getting input and suggestions from the people who will be most impacted by a university decision, whether that be talking with faculty and staff on ways to improve the workplace culture or working with students to improve campus life.

“Clearly, an activity I want at my age is not going to be an activity an 18- or 22-year-old wants,” said Dadez. “It’s about empowering students to help us figure out what kind of activities they want.”

The university plans to work closely with organizations like the Student Government Union and the Campus Activities Board to develop activities for the semester. Students should expect to see, though, increased amounts of activities in the new Wellness Center and in visible areas on campus such as the Bowl and Kirk Lawn, so that larger numbers of students can see and join the fun.

“We’ve got to come up with more ways to get people out of their rooms,” said Dadez, adding that he was always surprised by how few students he would see when he visited campus.

In addition to his four main goals, Dadez recognizes that there are other issues on campus that need to be addressed. In an April 2022 interview with *The Lions’ Pride*, former president Dr. Jeffrey Senese stated that the university planned to either remodel or replace multiple buildings on campus—such as Lewis Hall and several of the residence halls, including Apartments 1-4—that were suffering from mold and maintenance problems. Dadez confirmed that renovating these buildings is still on the university’s to-do list.

“Clearly, we need to have a new health and science building,” said Dadez, referring to Lewis Hall. Over the next twelve months, the university plans on campaigning to raise funds for the construction of

a new science building to replace Lewis. The new building—which would likely be located at the current location of DeChantal Hall—is a looming necessity for Saint Leo’s incoming nursing students, but would also be able to provide new and updated labs for biology and chemistry students.

Refurbishing the residence halls on campus is another priority.

“It’s time to replace furniture, it’s time to replace carpet,” said Dadez. “If there’s extra money, it’s got to be spent on the renovations of those facilities.”

As Saint Leo prepares to welcome students in the fall, with Fall 1 classes beginning online August 29 and on university campus on August 30, members of the Saint Leo community will wait with anticipation to see how Dadez’s new leadership and policies will impact the university and what other new changes are in store for Saint Leo.



Dr. Edward Dadez started working at Saint Leo University in 2000 as the Vice President for Student Affairs.



After working for nearly 20 years as a Vice President at Saint Leo University, Dr. Dadez wanted to retire into a quieter, more student-focused role as a visiting professor. It was his love for the university, he said, that convinced him to accept the position of provost and, later, president.

# Remembering Dr. Tim Lowder

**Alora Peters**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Dr. Barney “Tim” McCoy Lowder Jr., 65, an associate professor of management at Saint Leo University, passed away on June 23, 2022. Family, friends, faculty, staff, and students gathered to commemorate Lowder and share memories in TECO Hall on August 17.

Lowder, who received his Ph.D. in management and organizational behavior from Capella University, taught both undergraduate and graduate courses for 15 years at Saint Leo and impacted the lives of countless individuals.

“A couple of words come to mind when I think about Tim,” said Dr. Drew Gold, an associate professor of management at Saint Leo. “Love and selflessness. He was always there, no matter what, with kind words and a helping hand.”

Lowder’s life and actions were deeply influenced by his faith in God. As he wrote in his personal mission statement, “My unconditional goal in life is to expend my limited time on earth in such a manner as to deliver an absolute level of contribution to all humanity while always giving praise and glory to God’s infinite power and ultimate wisdom.”

“He modeled his faith,” said Dr. Charles Hale, a professor of management at Saint Leo. “He treated you as an equal.”

During the memorial, Dr. Keith Jones, an associate professor of marketing at Saint Leo, thanked God “for bringing Tim into our lives.”

“He constantly showered everyone with the fruits of Your Spirit,” said Jones.

Lowder is also remembered for his positivity, joyful attitude, and, especially, for his signature laugh.

“I always knew [Lowder] was in the building because you could hear his laugh down the hall or from his classroom,” said Peter Marian, an instructor of management at Saint Leo. “He was loud and proud of it.”

Others wholeheartedly agree.

“I’ll never forget his laugh,” said Gold, recounting how, even

after his office was moved to the opposite side of the hall from Lowder’s, he “could still hear that booming laugh.”

Even in the face of difficulty, optimism remained one of Lowder’s defining traits.

“He was always happy and positive,” Marian added. “Even when he had challenges with his health, he was always positive. At the end of the day when saying goodbye, I’d say, ‘see you tomorrow,’ and he’d say, ‘God willing!’”

For those who knew and worked with Lowder, losing him was like losing a family member.

“He called everyone ‘my brother,’” said Marian. “It felt like we were family.”

From the moment he met them, Lowder established connections with his colleagues in the department of business administration.

“He was my family right away,” said Dr. Helen MacLennan, and associate professor of management at Saint Leo, who was hired by Lowder. “I’m going to miss his genuine love for the people he worked with.”



Peter Marian took this photo, which Dr. Barney “Tim” Lowder used for his social media and Saint Leo directory photo profiles. “That’s how I will always remember him, smiling,” said Marian.



Dr. Tim Lowder loved teaching and working with students at Saint Leo. He taught classes in accounting, business, and management.

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# Making the most out of your freshman year

Isa Riaño

Advertisement Manager

While starting college is a new and exciting experience for incoming students, it is natural for them to be concerned about challenging classes, costs, time management, living away from home, meeting new people, and living in a different lifestyle in general. With all of the normal anxiety that incoming freshmen experience, it is natural for them to wonder how they can make the most of their college experience.

Coping with the anxiety of being a freshman in college is essential for having a successful first year. While this is a natural emotion, allowing it to take over can prevent you from making valuable connections and having wonderful experiences during your college years.

I remember being so worried about not knowing anyone on campus as an incoming student

that I simply locked myself in my dorm for the first few weeks of college. However, learning about everything Saint Leo University has to offer in terms of mental health helped me overcome these obstacles and break out of my shell.

The Counseling Services office is located in the Wellness Center and provides free counseling services to all students. Those interested in scheduling an appointment should contact the Director of Counseling Services, Lawson Jolly, at lawson.jolly@saintleo.edu. Students can use counseling services to talk about their anxiety and learn how to manage their emotions effectively during their college years.

In addition to resources for mental health, the Wellness Center also has resources for physical health. These resources include an infinity pool, a gym, and a yoga studio, all of which are excellent places to



Photo taken by Isa Riaño  
Campus events allow students to express themselves in various ways.

unwind, both alone and with friends. The Wellness Center also offers free dancing, yoga, spin, Zumba, and other fitness classes to students.

Students who are interested in attending can visit the Wellness Center's website at <https://wellness.saintleo.edu> and register for classes in advance.

These are all excellent extracurricular activities that can help relieve stress and keep students entertained. Because some classes are taught in groups, they can also help students make new friends and get to know others more easily.

The instructors in the Wellness Center have the goal of creating an environment where authenticity is valued.

"I aim for a space where students can express themselves in a stress-free area," said Raegan Buhrman, a spin instructor at the Wellness Center.

Students who have taken classes at the Wellness Center have found them both challenging and enjoyable.

"The classes I deliver consist of hills, sprints, and active recovery. Everyone who has taken them has had fun in their own way," said Buhrman.

Another great way to meet new people and get to know other students is by getting involved in various clubs and organizations. Students can access EngageLeo

at <https://saintleo.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations> to learn about campus clubs and who to contact for more information. Joining a club allows students to gain and develop skills that will benefit them both inside and outside of the classroom, as well as connect with other students.

Some Saint Leo students have stated that getting involved was a highlight of their college experience.

"After I explored all the groups and clubs Saint Leo University has to offer, my time in college felt so much better," said Noah Henry, a rising senior majoring in clinical psychology. Henry is involved in the Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honors Society as the vice president.

"My favorite memory was being able to be on the stage again," he said.

In addition to the existing clubs and organizations on campus, students can form their own if they are passionate about it.

For instance, Aaliyah Dixon, a rising sophomore majoring in biomedical health sciences, started the Creative Minds club over the summer.

"Seeing the Creative Minds club on EngageLeo made me feel incredibly proud of myself," said Dixon. "Being involved in a club that you were inspired to start is



Photo taken by Isa Riaño  
Saint Leo University has multiple events throughout the school year.



# Freshman year, continued

a piece of advice I would give to incoming students."

Dixon explained that starting a new club is a very interesting process.

"I was very passionate about the idea, so I reached out to Ashley Phelps, who gave me the steps to start an organization," she said. Phelps is the Assistant Director of Student Activities.

Dixon added that she first had to send Phelps a roster with at least five students interested in joining the organization, in addition to a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

"I found students who wanted to be involved in my organization by reaching out to my class list in my Academic Writing I class," she said.

Dixon also had to identify an advisor for the club, write a complete constitution for the organization, and come up with a list of planned projects for the school year.

"I met up with some incoming members of the club to take care of all the steps with them," she said. The final step was registering the organization through Engage Leo and adding all the active members of the club.

While academics are important, it is strongly advisable that students supplement their academic achievements with involvement in clubs and organizations. In my personal experience, my extracurricular activities have helped me network with other students in my field, as well as given me skills that I have used during internships and in the classroom.

However, despite the importance of extracurricular activities, the reason students attend college is for their education, meaning it is also critical to succeed in the classroom.

Professors at Saint Leo are extremely helpful and eager to assist students, and office hours are an excellent way for professors to answer students' questions and help them succeed in the classroom. Students should reach out to their professors whenever they need assistance, even if it is just to ask for tips on how to get the most out of



Photo taken by Isa Riano  
Multiple clubs have off campus trips for their members to bond.

their academic experience.

It is also crucial for students to know that networking with their professors is very helpful.

"The first thing students should do is reaching out to professors in their department," said Dr. Passard Dean, who teaches economics, accounting, and finance at Saint Leo.

Dean explained that students must realize that "professors are also human beings; thus, it is very beneficial for students to learn their name and build relationships with them."

Professors also help students gain academic and work experience.

"We are here to introduce students to different organizations and internships in our department," said Dean.

Aside from professors, Saint Leo has excellent academic resources in the Center for Vision and Academic Excellence (CAVE), which aims to provide students with services and programs that serve as foundations for academic success. The CAVE is located on the first floor of Kirk Hall.

Peer tutoring is available for students who need help with specific subjects, as well as peer-

assisted learning (PAL) coaching for those who want to learn about time management and overcoming academic challenges. Students who are interested in these services should visit the CAVE website at <https://www.saintleo.edu/academics/success-resources/cave>.

Finally, it is important for students to not take on more than they can handle. While some students are very involved, others

may burn out trying to balance too many extracurricular and academic activities. It is crucial for students to learn to prioritize between academics and other involvements that are important to them.

College is an exciting time in life, especially for freshmen. While it is initially difficult, knowing what to do to make the most of the college experience can transform it into a life stage that leaves a lasting impression.



Photo taken by Isa Riano  
Some lions have said that free food is a good reason to attend campus events.

# CAMPUS MAP



1. University Safety
2. Music Building
3. Department of Information Technology
4. Chiller Plant
5. U.S. Post Office
6. Saint Leo Abbey Gift Shop
7. Abbey Church
8. Benedictine Monks of Saint Leo Abbey
9. Daniel A. Cannon Memorial Library
10. Saint Francis Hall
11. Saint Edward Hall
12. Tapia College of Business
13. Lewis Hall
14. Selby Auditorium
15. Kirk Hall
16. DeChantal Hall
17. Marion Bowman Pool
18. Marion Bowman Activities Center
19. Marion Bowman Gymnasium
20. Turf Stadium (Lacrosse) / Parking Garage
21. Alumni Residence Hall
22. Roderick Residence Hall
23. Benoit Residence Hall
24. Benedict's Coffeehouse
25. Henderson Residence Hall
26. Thomas B. Southard Baseball Stadium
27. Tennis Courts
28. Intramural Field
29. Beach Volleyball
30. University Softball Stadium
31. Soccer Field

32. Fine Arts Building
33. Student Apartments 5-6
34. Ropes Course
35. Student Apartments 1-4
36. Lakefront Access
37. Lake Jovita
38. Military Resource Center (MRC)
39. Saint Leo Abbey Cemetery
40. The Bowl
41. Student Community Center
  - Stephen Herrmann Mail Center
  - Bookstore
  - Dining Hall
  - Greenfelder-Denlinger Boardrooms
  - Fuz, Saint Leo University Fusion Eatery
42. Saint Jude Chapel
43. Student Activities Building
44. University Admissions
45. Marmion-Snyder Residence Halls



- 46. Wellness Center
- 47. Black Box Theatre
- 48. Benedictine Hall
- 49. Facilities Management
- 50. Crime Scene House
- 51. The Villa
- 52. Abbey Golf Course
- P Parking





Photo courtesy of the Center for Global Engagement

Over 600 international students call Saint Leo University home. Students can visit the CGE office in the Student Activities Building (SAB), room 22.

# Your new home away from home: Adjusting to life at Saint Leo as an international student

**Tayhana Taylor**

*Former World News Editor*

Moving miles away from home to attend a university is a significant milestone, but it may be challenging to adjust to a new culture, new people, and a new environment. Nonetheless, it is possible to cope with being away from home.

“My adjustment to campus was not easy; I struggled a lot with culture shock,” said Joranya Correia, a junior from Cape Verde majoring in criminal justice. “The people, the food, and the habits were all so different—so relying on the support of my family was crucial.”

Acclimating to this new space is about making the best of the resources and the people around you, while still connecting with your friends and family back home.

“I started to live by the motto ‘when in Rome behave like Romans,’ so I knew at some point I would adjust; it was just a matter of time,” said Correia.

One of the perks of attending a culturally diverse university like Saint Leo University is that you never feel completely alone. The international student population makes up 22 percent of the university campus, with students hailing from over 100 countries.

“I learned to talk to people and venture out of my comfort zone because the more people you interact with, the more relationships you will build,” said Nicholae Robinson, a junior from Jamaica majoring in

cybersecurity. “Learning about other students’ cultures on campus helps because, eventually, these friends will start feeling like family.”

It’s also important for you to be patient with yourself—it is totally fine if during the first week you are having a hard time “fitting in.”

“Do not feel pressured to fit in. Just ease your way into this new environment because everyone else is also adjusting,” said Robinson. “It’s also okay to feel homesick because that is a normal part of adjusting.”

Luckily, Saint Leo has over 70 clubs and organizations, so there is something for everyone to enjoy. The Campus Activities Board (CAB) is responsible for hosting events that allow students to interact with each other. Attending these events is a great starting point for incoming international students.

“Being new to college in the United States can be an overwhelming change for international students,” said Ashley Tucker, a junior majoring in criminal justice. “So it is important for them to make new friends, attend events on campus, and learn about what this new environment has to offer them.”

Tucker is Vice President of Activities (VPA) for Saint Leo’s Student Government Union (SGU). As VPA, Tucker oversees the CAB. “Getting involved on campus exposes international students to new cultures and allows them to find their community of people,” said Tucker.

One of the main offices on

campus that helps international students with adjusting is the Center for Global Engagement (CGE). The CGE provides international students with resources for handling homesickness, culture shock, and much more. These resources are usually offered during international student orientation at the beginning of the academic year.

This special orientation discusses matters relating to academic life, cultural adjustments, and immigration. Annually, the CGE also hosts events like international education week, international food night (Feast for the World), Food for Thought, and many others.



Attending the programs held by Resident Assistants is one of the many ways to meet people who share the same residence hall.

It’s also key for international students to learn to advocate for themselves and remember to ask questions—there is no such thing as a “dumb question.”

“Always ask questions because the answer may be right

around the corner,” said Robinson. “Talk to your success coaches about your class schedule and choosing the right classes because this is really important for incoming freshmen.”

Building a solid relationship with your success coach and academic advisors is crucial to achieving academic success, especially since the U.S. education system may be slightly different from the one in your home country.

Not only does Saint Leo have a diverse group of students, but the faculty and staff are also diverse. You may find a professor that shares your same ethnicity. Regardless, your professors will become a part of your support system, especially in terms of adjusting in the classroom, so make use of office hours and ensure your professors know you—class participation is key.

While making this adjustment, be patient with yourself and avoid comparing yourself to how your fellow international peers are adjusting. The process of getting familiar and feeling like you belong at Saint Leo is unique to each international student. It may take a week or a month, but it is a worthwhile journey.

Always share your culture with others while learning about theirs—hold on to what you know, but never stop being open-minded. Not all change is bad; you will learn to adapt and find pieces of home wherever you are.

# Athletes on Air: Grant Disken – Men’s Basketball Point Guard

**Pia Perthen**

*Sports Editor*

Interested spectators might have spotted the athlete with his pink shoes on the basketball court during an exciting match at Saint Leo University’s Marion Bowman Activities Center. He shows some impressive qualities on and off the court.

Grant Disken—hailing from Kentucky, majoring in marketing, and graduating in 2024, has been playing basketball since he was four years old and is enjoying every second of it.

“I am looking forward to my team’s season every year!” said Disken.

Disken’s biggest idol is his father, since he has demonstrated to be a great role model to his three children. Disken appreciates all the lessons he has learned from his dad, including hard work, responsibility, and, most importantly, how to be true to oneself.

“Therefore, my motto is: Be yourself. Your best is good enough. Enjoy life,” said Disken.

Playing basketball is a team effort—Disken is always ready to



Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics  
Grant Disken is ready to win in his #2 jersey and signature pink shoes.

go out on the court, compete with his teammates, and anticipate that feeling day in and day out.

“My favorite part about basketball is winning,” said Disken.

This mindset is showing, since the men’s basketball player has already achieved some great successes at Saint Leo, including winning the Sunshine State

Conference title in 2021 over Florida Southern, being named Mr. Saint Leo at the prestigious Green and Gold Awards in 2022, being a representative on the Saint Leo Student Athlete-Advisory Committee, and being selected as the Vice President of SAAC for the 2022-2023 school year.

“As my favorite memory of Saint Leo, I have to select either winning the conference title in our home gym last season or celebrating the Green and Gold awards where I also had the opportunity of presenting two awards,” said Disken.

However, practice makes perfect! The student-athlete usually practices six days a week and has one day off on Sunday to rest his body and mind after working extensively throughout the week.

“Whether that be on the court, in the weight room, or exercising outside, I am never afraid to push myself to the breaking point,” said Disken.

Equally important to recognize is Disken’s success off the court. He has been able to form a phenomenal friend group at Saint Leo and maintain a solid GPA over the past two years.

The student-athlete enjoys making memories with his friends and playing other sports like football, baseball, golf, and pickleball. Additionally, he enjoys listening to music of all kinds and loves to go to the beach or lake house with his friends.

“My biggest goal is graduating from Saint Leo with success on and off the court,” said Disken. “This means winning more conference titles or even a National Championship. However, it would also include keeping my friends close and being a solid student.”



Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics  
Disken helped the Lions to win the second Sunshine State Conference Tournament title in program history.



Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics

# Ideas for decorating your college dorm

Isa Riaño

Advertisement Manager

Living in a college dorm can be a thrilling experience for students. Having your own space or sharing one with a roommate all while being close to everything on campus sounds fantastic. Many incoming students, however, struggle to answer one question: "How should I decorate my college dorm?"

Most students hope to call their university their "home away from home" when they live on campus. They are, however, assigned to a dorm that has no decorations or personalization at first. As a result, finding ways to decorate it and personalize it can help students "make the dorm their own."

Regardless of how much personalization and authenticity is put into decorating a college dorm, most students also have the same question: "how do I start?" When I first arrived at college and moved into my dorm, I had no idea how to arrange my pictures and frames or how I was supposed to decorate, despite the fact that it was something I was very interested in doing.

Several incoming freshmen have the same problem.

"I have so many ideas, but I haven't decided on one yet," said Tamar Olguin, an incoming freshman majoring in clinical psychology.

While some students prefer to decorate their dorms extensively, others prefer to keep things simple.

"I probably won't decorate my dorm that much," said Collin Laurie, an incoming freshman majoring in social work. "I'm afraid I'll only have a few pictures."

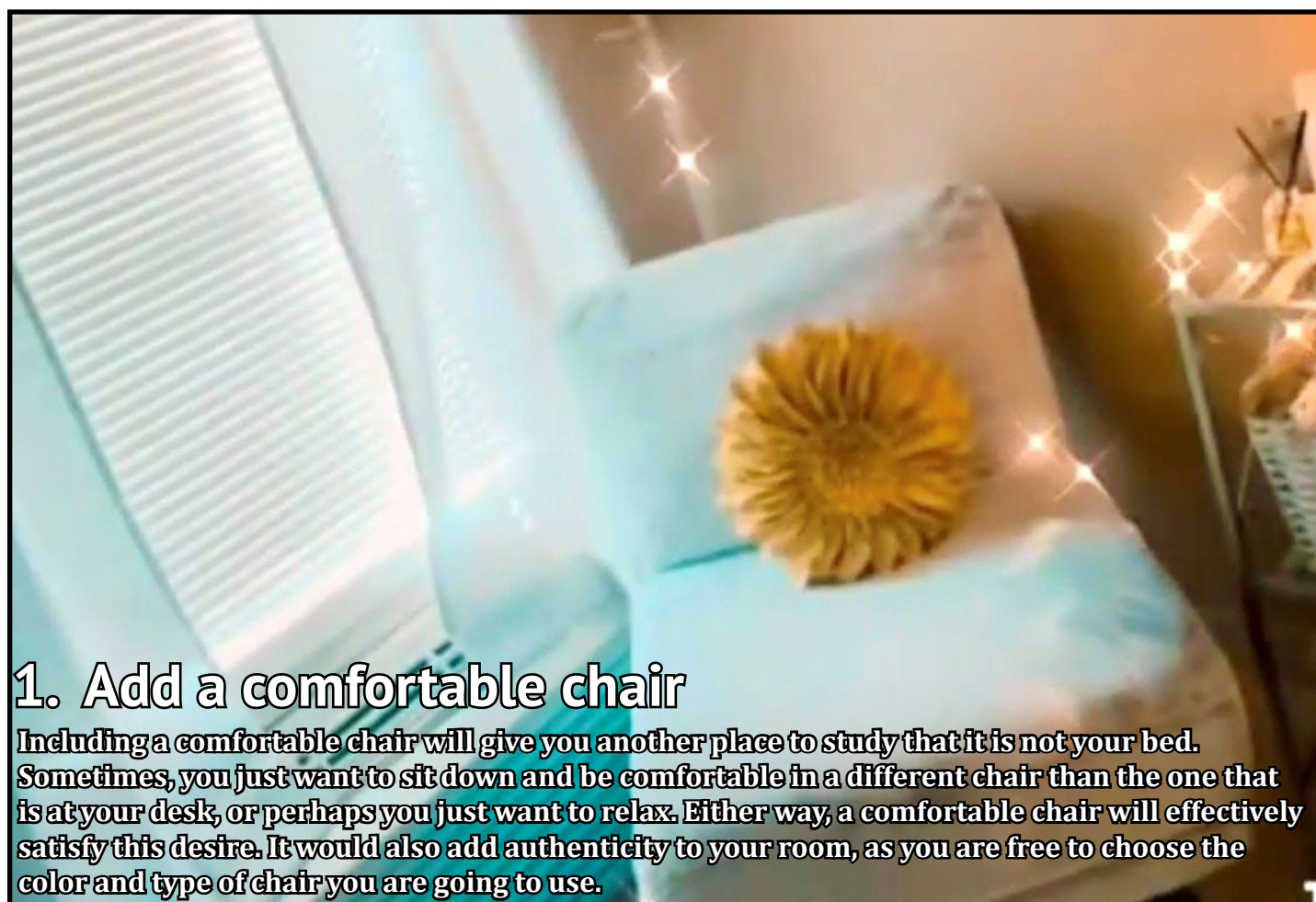
As a result, the first tip for decorating your dorm is to do something that represents who you are. Whether you have many decorations or only a few, just be yourself when deciding how to decorate your room.

There are numerous ways to decorate your room. If you are having trouble coming up with one, here are a few ideas and pictures to get you started:



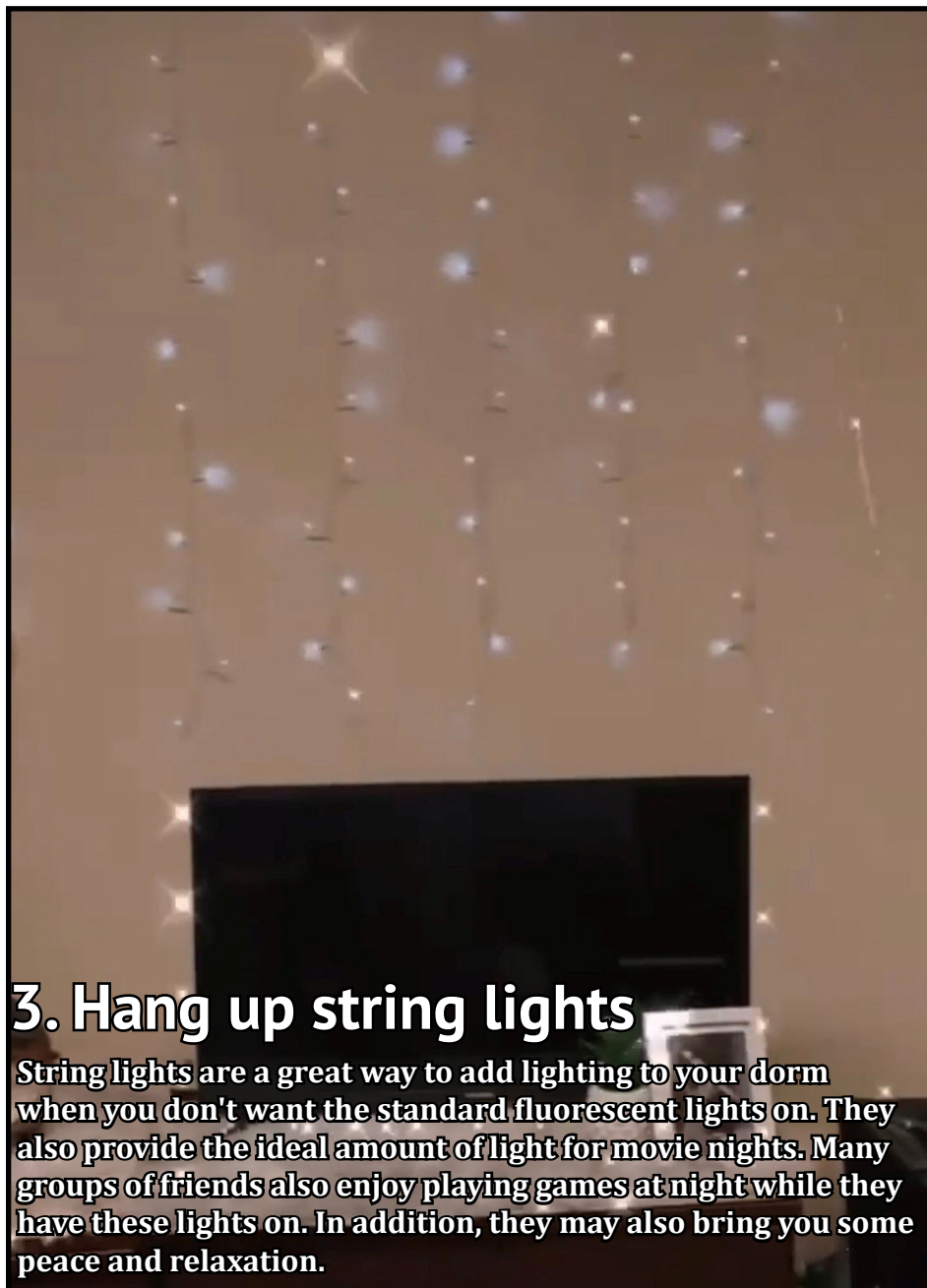
## 1. Add a gallery wall

**Gallery walls add a lot of personality to a college dorm, precisely because you are free to add your own style to them. Gallery words can include pictures, frames, or any other elements that are meaningful to you and make you feel home. Moreover, if you want to remember moments with your family and friends while you are in college, it would be very helpful to take pictures you have taken with your loved ones. You could also add collections of frames or decorations you have received during your time at Saint Leo University.**



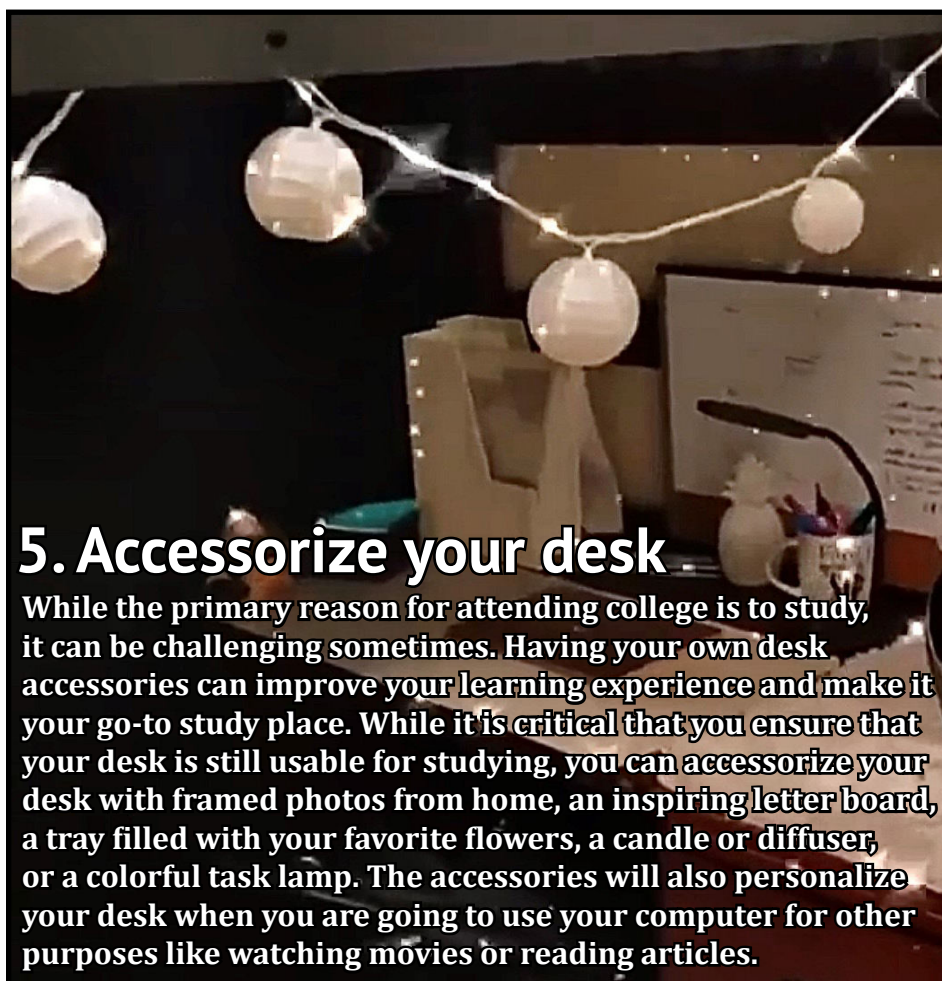
## 1. Add a comfortable chair

**Including a comfortable chair will give you another place to study that it is not your bed. Sometimes, you just want to sit down and be comfortable in a different chair than the one that is at your desk, or perhaps you just want to relax. Either way, a comfortable chair will effectively satisfy this desire. It would also add authenticity to your room, as you are free to choose the color and type of chair you are going to use.**



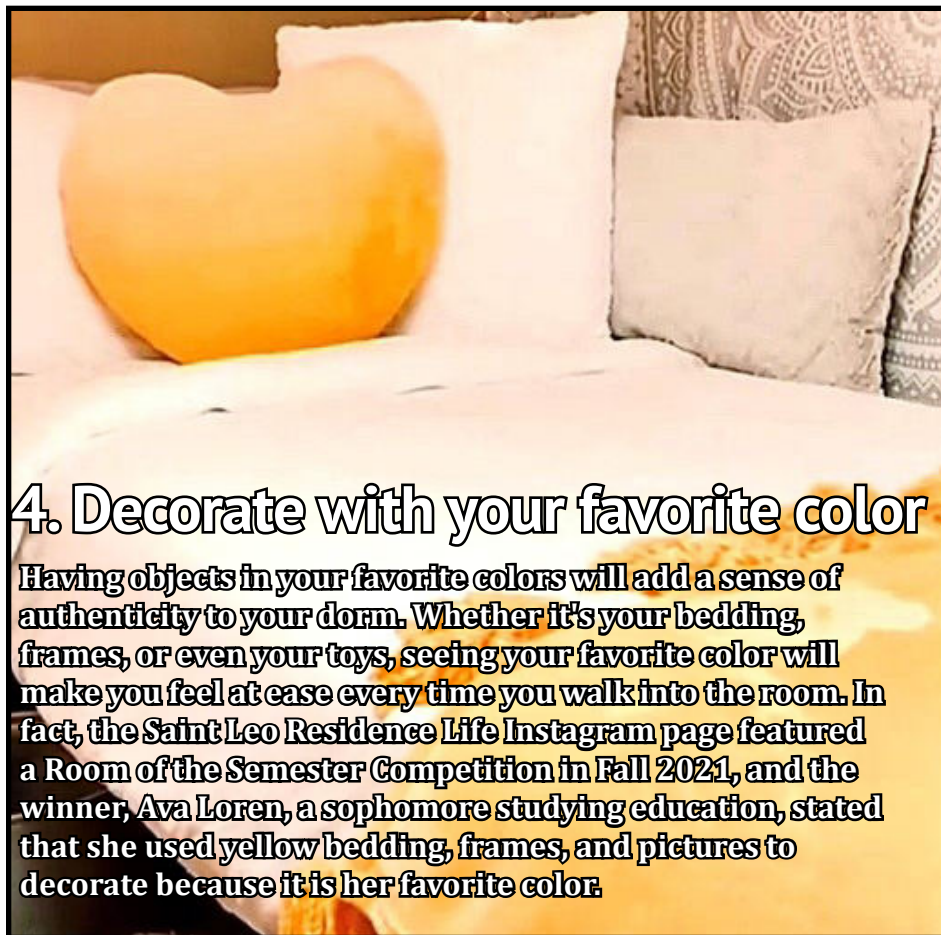
### 3. Hang up string lights

String lights are a great way to add lighting to your dorm when you don't want the standard fluorescent lights on. They also provide the ideal amount of light for movie nights. Many groups of friends also enjoy playing games at night while they have these lights on. In addition, they may also bring you some peace and relaxation.



### 5. Accessorize your desk

While the primary reason for attending college is to study, it can be challenging sometimes. Having your own desk accessories can improve your learning experience and make it your go-to study place. While it is critical that you ensure that your desk is still usable for studying, you can accessorize your desk with framed photos from home, an inspiring letter board, a tray filled with your favorite flowers, a candle or diffuser, or a colorful task lamp. The accessories will also personalize your desk when you are going to use your computer for other purposes like watching movies or reading articles.



### 4. Decorate with your favorite color

Having objects in your favorite colors will add a sense of authenticity to your dorm. Whether it's your bedding, frames, or even your toys, seeing your favorite color will make you feel at ease every time you walk into the room. In fact, the Saint Leo Residence Life Instagram page featured a Room of the Semester Competition in Fall 2021, and the winner, Ava Loren, a sophomore studying education, stated that she used yellow bedding, frames, and pictures to decorate because it is her favorite color.



### 6. Include collectibles!

I put some teddies on top of my wardrobe when I was decorating my room. This gave my room a very relaxing feeling, making me appreciate the sweetness of my new home. If you think plush animals are cute, you should think about incorporating them into your room decoration.

It is also important for you to understand that, if you will be living with a roommate, it would be ideal for both of you to agree on how much space each of you will take for decoration.

Furthermore, Saint Leo has some guidelines for decorating your room.

Students are not permitted to paint their rooms. This means that, while you can use as many frames and elements as you want to add your favorite colors to your dorm room, the painting on the walls must remain intact. Furthermore, no elements in the room should obstruct door opening and closing.

Alcoholic containers or paraphernalia are not permitted in any student room or apartment. Metal-tipped darts and dartboards

are also prohibited in dorm rooms. As a result, when deciding what elements to include in your room, you must keep this in mind.

You can read the Saint Leo University Guides of Residential Living document at Guides to Residential Living.pdf (saintleo.edu) to learn more about all of the room decoration guidelines. You can also find information about the office of Residence Life on all social media platforms at @saintleo.reslife.

Finally, if you're having trouble coming up with decorating ideas for your room, you can seek advice from your roommate or a few friends. Good luck with your dorm decorating process!

*All photos courtesy of Saint Leo Residence Life.*

# Get Involved in the Spirit of the Arts at Saint Leo!

**Satyne Doner**  
Arts & Culture Editor

There is no question that art and culture are intertwined, with art feeding into culture and culture feeding into art. Through art, we can express our true selves and open to the beauty of what it means to be human. It can be deeply personal or used as a tool to connect with others.

Saint Leo University celebrates both art and culture and encourages students to participate in ways that feel authentic to their own journeys!

There are many ways to become involved in the spirit of the arts at Saint Leo. The school offers a handful of different clubs, organizations, and honors societies that cater to the arts. A few that come to mind are Sigma Tau Delta, Alpha Psi Omega, and the K-Pop & Anime Club. For additional information on club events and organizations, students can check out EngageLeo!

For students interested in the theatre, Alpha Psi Omega (National Theatre Honor Society) is nationally recognized and aims to teach students the many skills and talents of the theatre. The organization stresses that anybody can join, not just theatre majors. Students can reach out to this honor society through email at [saintleoalphapsiomega@gmail.com](mailto:saintleoalphapsiomega@gmail.com). Additionally, Saint Leo has a theatre program that does semesterly productions! This is separate from Alpha Psi Omega, but the two organizations work closely together. The Saint Leo Theatre program can be contacted at [stleotheatre@saintleo.edu](mailto:stleotheatre@saintleo.edu) for more information.

Sigma Tau Delta is an English honors society that celebrates the art of the English language. In this club, students will bond over books and writing. While there are some requirements to becoming an official member of Sigma Tau Delta, many of their events, such as open mic nights and literary readings, are open to everyone and students are heavily encouraged to participate! For any



Dr. Cynthia Selph (right) with the Saint Leo Music Collective performing at their annual spring production.

questions regarding Sigma Tau Delta, please contact Dr. Allyson Marino, the faculty advisor, at [allyson.marino@saintleo.edu](mailto:allyson.marino@saintleo.edu).

At Saint Leo, there are many cultures celebrated through art! The K-Pop & Anime Club brings awareness to Korean and Japanese cultures. They admire Japanese and Korean traditions, foods, and recognize K-Pop and Anime as art forms. It is a unique club, and anybody is welcome to join! Just email [kpop.anime.club.slu@gmail.com](mailto:kpop.anime.club.slu@gmail.com).

Additionally, Saint Leo's Music Department is always looking to welcome new students. They host semesterly productions, with the latest being their Spring Concert back in March.

Dr. Cynthia Selph, assistant professor of music and music ministry, is enthusiastic about adding new members to the music program. She hopes that students will come watch the semesterly productions and want to join in on the fun.

"I hope that students will be inspired to come and participate in the music program," said Selph. "We're always trying to recruit new students in."

The fantastic thing about these clubs and organizations is that a student doesn't have to be majoring in an arts program to join. These clubs are open to everyone with an interest in arts and culture—which means that a student majoring in accounting or criminal

justice can still become involved.

However, for students that are majoring in the arts, these clubs offer them the chance to network and find opportunities within their career field. For Sarah Gilley, a sophomore seeking a degree in English with a specialization in professional writing, joining Sigma Tau Delta makes her look forward to finding internships.

"I can't wait to join Sigma Tau Delta officially in the fall because of the internship opportunities it offers. I feel like it's the thing I needed to push me to

the next level of my education," said Gilley. "It's like joining a family."

Not ready to fully commit to a club or an organization at Saint Leo University? That's okay! Students can still be involved in arts and culture in other ways. Students can speak to their academic advisors or student success coaches to learn more about classes offered on campus, like pottery, photography, painting, and poetry!

To conclude, Saint Leo offers many avenues for students who are interested in the spirit of arts and culture. Usually, on campus, information on clubs and flyers for events can be found on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Student Activities Building or on other bulletin boards throughout campus, such as the one inside Lewis Hall.

Through involvement in the arts, students can allow themselves to be more creative and join a community of like-minded individuals. They can learn important skills for their careers and raise awareness of different cultures.

Finally, if a student isn't quite ready to join a club or just doesn't have the time, supporting the arts and culture by reading The Lions' Pride Media Group is always a good way to get inspired!



For Sarah Gilley (pictured), Saint Leo offers many quiet places to sit and work on new poems to read at her Sigma Tau Delta meetings.



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