



QUOTE, UNQUOTE

"We're trying to be as focused on conservation as we can whenever we tear down one of the buildings."

Gene Luna, director of housing, on the demolition of residence halls

New day dawning for students

TINA MORGAN
EDITOR IN CHIEF

A new day is dawning for everyone invited to join the USC

class of 2000. New opportunities for academic achievement, personal freedom and perhaps even love are here for the taking. The best part of it all is the ability to start life anew.

No one here will know if you had braces in high school. No one will care if you got dumped right in the middle of your senior prom. If your parents are divorced or if you're out on your own, all you have to do is say so. Unlike many of the environments you and your peers came from, no one here will judge you by those facts alone.

While in high school, I was overweight, considered the class witch because I hardly smiled and was perceived as a goody-goody because my mother worked in the guidance office. I was the official target. Many of those people followed me here to USC. Know what? It hasn't mattered one bit.

I have accomplished a lot since I arrived. I have managed four difficult semesters as an Honors College student and, as of today, start summer school. I've lost touch with old friends and met many more. I've learned you've got to cut it on your own in the classroom and still find time to have fun. It's possible but requires sacrifice.

You've got laundry to do now. Some of you may have had to do it for a while, but now your roomie is only going to take so much of your stinky socks. You'll meet different people, some who may be mothers or fathers, come from a different cultural background or are the first in their family to go to college. And you'll miss your family if you've gone away whether you want to admit it or not.

But it isn't all that bad. You walk in with your name and social security number and that's it. No one can tell you who you are because that is one of the most important discoveries you'll make while studying here. If you don't have a major, you'll find one. If you do, you'll change it at least once.

I have changed since I arrived. I am losing weight because I choose to, all the while I am also becoming more comfortable with who I am, big or not. I have fallen in love and finally decided on a major. The first semesters are hard, but it didn't prevent me from becoming the person I always thought I could be.

I haven't run into many people from high school lately. From what I hear, most are doing well. Some have dropped out of school and some are still hiding at the beach refusing to answer calls from their parents asking when they're coming home to start school. Some will go through their university years without developing a sense of self. If you do nothing else here, that should be your goal. No matter how many times you are warned, you really only do come this way once. It will be exciting and challenging. You should open your minds and hearts and leave here with a sense of accomplishment.

As the summer winds down you may feel nervous and anxious, much like the feeling you get when a summer storm is brewing that promises to be fierce.

Birthday brings back memories of suicide

ADAM SNYDER
COLUMNIST

A few days ago, I celebrated a birthday. Well, not my own; it was my friend's. And well, it would have been his birthday. But this was the third birthday without him.

My buddy Joe and I used to have the best times together. When we were younger, it was spend-the-night parties and Cub Scouts. When we reached high school, it was movies and cruising. We were always laughing.

We spent close to 10 years together in elementary school enjoying our childhood in the midst of school work and the trials and tribulations of growing up. We would cut up in class, write in secret code and quietly bash some of the others who were too cool for us. All they saw was my obese friend and my lanky awkward self. We, the somewhat outcast, united to become great friends.

Eighth-grade graduation found us going different ways for our secondary education. Despite not going to school together, we continued our friendship into high school. From our experiences

in elementary school, Joe and I saw eye to eye on many issues, especially a particular dislike for the privileged and arrogant. But, we never let them bother us, and we just enjoyed being ourselves.

That's why it seemed so strange when it happened. That is why I still have questions today. It's why we all do. You see, on one bright May morning two years ago, Joe decided he had had enough. So, right after his mother woke him up to get ready for school, he took a gun and killed himself.

And with all suicides, questions linger. Theories were immediately whirling about what could have caused a seemingly happy young man to end it all. His grandfather, who he was very close to, died three weeks before. He was taking some medication that could incur deep depression. And what did he mean when he said in his final note, "I know everyone is proud of me, but I'm not proud of myself?"

We all learned quickly you could not concentrate on those questions; you had to concentrate on the living. I remember crying myself to sleep that night, angry Joe had left me alone to face those we fought daily. I thought about his mother and his whole family and the pain that must have been tearing them apart. I thought about all of his classmates and friends in elementary and high school he touched with his great spirit.

I realized everyone's pain was just as important as the pain Joe must have been going through. I will never forget the hundreds of people who came to his funeral to say goodbye.

I think of my old friend every now and then. Luckily, all I have are memories filled with laughter. He and I had a great time growing up and we never fought. I try to concentrate on his life and the impact it had on mine. I almost feel like I will see him again one day. Maybe not in this lifetime, but hopefully sometime beyond that. And then I can feel whole again.

CREATIVITY IN THE 90's



Goals fall prey to summer's lethargy

JULIE LIBBEY
COLUMNIST

What is it about summer that infects your bones and turns your brain to goo?

It is amazing how the Southern sun simply sucks your energy and you become some protoplasmic entity who manages to flip the channel from Geraldo to some other brain-stealing television show.

We all have intentions to do something with this summer. There are books to read and closets to clean. There are letters to write and friends to catch up with. It never changes, though.

In some sick cosmic joke the days run into one another until you find you have done half the things you need to do and a callous on your remote control finger.

My last two classes of my college career are in summer school. I managed to cram two major requirement classes in the last minute of the last summer of my degree. There has to be odds for this kind of thing. It's nice and good to whine about how the rays of summer are finite etc. The question is, will something actually be done?

It's my vote to lengthen the summer

to Labor Day. That will not happen.

That leaves the ever-scary adage of using one's time wisely. As all seniors know, the last year is a pain. Not only do you have to consider which credits you might have missed in a last minute panic, there is the job hunt, the resume game, the safari of searching for that ever elusive salary and the hope you might escape flipping burgers at Mickey D's along with 90 percent of the other graduates. Maybe it is not as grim as it sounds. There are always jobs at the mall. But seriously, this is a huge strain on a sun-soaked cranium.

The first recommendation I can give is to purchase a Resume Expert Plus disk from the Career Center. The Career Center is on the sixth floor of the BA building for you slackards who haven't been there yet. That disk will be especially helpful in making a variety of different resumes for various interviews and job applications.

The Career Center also has really

nifty books with job listings and advice on interviews. Realizing Baywatch has some finer educational points, seniors have to get started on the job hunt as soon as possible.

The jobs will not come to you. So make the bed and iron your tie, it is time to get moving. Move it! Move it! What would your Mom say if she saw that room, huh? What is Mom going to say, after paying for four years of school, when you knock on her door and say, "Hey Mom, can I crash here until I get on my feet?"

Sometimes that is the best solution, but it seems like too many students start thinking about their future too late. A student shouldn't see the inside of the Career Center for the first time when they're in their senior year.

There are lots of things a student can do to prepare for a career. There are internships and co-ops, shadowing programs, and tests to see what career choices match your personality. Use the resources available to get ahead. Baywatch will be on tomorrow, I promise.

The Gamecock

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IN OUR OWN
OPINION

Class of 2000 must face future challenges

Welcome to the University of South Carolina class of 2000.

As you enter the Carolina Community, we ask you to give some of yourself to this university and leave it much better than it was when you got here.

More than any other class you have the potential to do so.

There are two ways you can look at the future of your class.

The first is to think of yourselves as those who are made to suffer for the benefit of future students. The second is to see yourselves as a deciding force in improving USC.

The first path promotes the image of students as victims of the university's renovation rather than active participants in it. This way will gain you nothing.

The second path means focusing yourselves on the future of this school and becoming an integral part of its development. This way makes you a necessary part of the university that will be considered in all stages of the decisions and changes that lie ahead.

Make your voice heard.

Let the administration know what

THE TOPIC

The potential of the Class of 2000

OUR OPINION

Class of 2000 has bright future but many challenges to face

you think about the new facilities it is building and how you think they can be improved.

In your years here, the university will undergo a dramatic change in how it will fulfill its mission to educate you.

Old buildings will disappear, new ones will take their place. There will

be change all around and we ask you to embrace it rather than withdraw from it.

Your time will be marked by many challenges that have been met by those who came before you. Here the world lies ready for you to take. You can find love, friendship, honor and more challenge than some people see in their entire lives.

You are also different from any other class before you. You are the first class of the new century.

Like an old wooden sailing ship, the university is following a course intended to take it to new discoveries and destinies.

The course may be charted, but that path can be altered for the better or for the worse by a storm. That storm is you, class of 2000. See that you rage well.

Old ways will change with new experiences

Orientation brings to mind leaving behind the old and finding the new. While in high school, many people did things they have regretted and, chances are, they'll do a few things in college, too.

Although some things can't be avoided - you never know when you'll trip in a busy area or spill ketchup on a white shirt - there are a few things freshmen (and some students already here) should know.

For example, the days of slinging your backpack over one shoulder are over. Here, the majority of students realize old age is creeping up and are doing everything in their power to keep their good posture by wearing their bookbags like braces.

In college, e-mail is your best friend. All of your pals from home keep you going like a lifeline for at least the first semester. After that, it becomes a tool to meet new people.

Here your parents cannot enforce a curfew. Whether you go to bed early or late is up to you. Of course, you've also got to get up in the morning by yourself.

You no longer have someone to

prepare your meals and call you to dinner. You either eat when the kitchens are open or fend for yourself. You no longer have the luxury of a full kitchen ensemble. At best, you get a sink and a stove down the hall. And don't think the fire alarms aren't sensitive.

In high school, having a car was a top priority. Here, a car can be a headache.

There are no bells and buzzers to tell you to go to class. Get a watch.

Professors will sometimes have to go out of town and seldom is there a substitute. You get to actually go back to bed instead of sitting there for a whole class period.

There are no dress codes to follow except when it comes to indecency. Present yourself well as often as possible.

Getting books is also your responsibility. Going to the bookstore will leave you broke, and there are many other things we all want to buy, but having a calculus book to do calculus homework helps.

Finally, seniority often plays a big role for classes, football tickets and housing. Put up with it - you're day will come.

The Gamecock

Student Media • The University of South Carolina • Russell House • Columbia, SC 29208

Tina Morgan
Editor in Chief
Keith Boudreaux
Viewpoints Editor
Cece von Kolnitz
News Editor
Chris Dixon
Features Editor
Achim Hunt
Sports Editor

John Lyons
Copy Desk Chief
Ryan Sims
Online Editor
Robert Walton
Photo Editor
Jason Gamba
Cartoonist
Sue McDonald
Graduate Assistant

Chris Carroll
Director of Student Media
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Marketing Director
Laura Day
Creative Director
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Erik Collins
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Letters to The Gamecock Policy

The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words and must include full name, professional title or year and major of a student. Letters must be personally delivered by the author to The Gamecock newsroom in Russell House room 333.

The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.

How to Reach Us

The Gamecock
The University of South Carolina

News Editor (803) 777.7726

Features Editor 777.3913

Viewpoints Editor 777.7181

Sports Editor 777.7182

Classifieds 777.1184

Advertising 777.4249

Fax 777.8482