Off-campus housing options continue to grow

With new development popping up all around Tech’s borders, should Housing be worried?

By Joshua Cuneo
Senior Staff Writer

For many upperclassmen faced with housing lotteries and wait lists, the wealth of new apartment complexes springing up just outside the borders of Tech can look awfully tempting.

Areas such as Atlantic Station and Gables Cityscapes, off of North Avenue, already house a number of students, while yet another complex is under construction at the corner of Bellemade and Northside Drive.

The corporations that own those buildings have even recognized Tech as a potential consumer market and have made an effort to advertise themselves to the student body.

For example, representatives from Metro Pointe Lofts, a new development on Marietta Street, have been on campus handing out flyers. Its website, metropointelofts.com, bills the development as “a new generation of student loft living” and features spacious apartments with access to pools, fitness centers and game rooms. And students have responded.

“The apartment I have now is much larger and costs much less than a Georgia Tech apartment,” said Philip Whatley, a third-year Building Construction major and resident of Collier Ridge Apartments off Howell Mill Road. “I wanted something larger than a dorm...and I don’t mind traveling a little bit.”

With the promise of cheaper rent and greater luxury, it would seem that everybody would be rushing to fill those rooms, leaving the dorms and apartments on campus vacant.

But the Department of Housing, while aware of the increased competition, isn’t worried.

“Students, to look off campus, and the prices may look more competitive until they start to break [it] down into packages,” said Don Morrison, associate director of Housing for Residence Life.

According to Morrison, students are attracted to the rent for off-campus housing while forgetting that electricity, heating, cable and other luxuries are billed separately. Housing offers everything in a single payment.

In addition, aside from Home Park, the closest off-campus housing requires a shuttle or car to get around.

“I think the student takes into consideration...the aggravation of taking a shuttle from wherever location you’re talking about,” said Don Neuendorff, associate director of Housing/Admissions. “I don’t care how they’re going to try to be convenient. You can’t really beat the location we’ve got...it’s nice to roll out of bed in the morning and...cross campus.”

Some students agree, especially those without some mode of transportation.

“I don’t have a car, so my options are limited,” said Mark Moreno, a second-year Architecture major who lives in Hemphill Apartments.

“I have a good internet connection, fast and good maintenance crew, my room is plenty big for me and...I can walk to everything I want to, especially class,” said Dave Link, a third-year Aerospace Engineering major who lives in Maulding.

Data from the Department of Housing shows an increase in the demand for off-campus rooms, due in part to larger incoming freshmen classes and also to efforts by Housing to advertise itself to the student body.

“We actually need...7000 students to decide to [live off-campus] to make all the numbers work,” Morrison said.

“I think we’ve actually had See Housing, page 16
Musing about the generation gap

By Melissa Cataldo
Contributing Writer

I find myself in the room of a Tech student, asking him what he thinks about his generation. He is seated squarely between a Nirvana poster to the left and a Fight Club poster to the right. As these two emblems of Gen-X dissatisfaction with materialism, conformity and the ’90s status quo stare down at me, it seems fitting that I am conducting an interview on what may be the aftermath.

What will we, the generation to follow Generation X, leave behind for historians to categorize, label and generalize? I started wondering about this over Christmas break while snowed in at my parents’ house, watching the Dec. 26 edition of 60 Minutes. There was a segment on Generation Y—defined as the generation born between 1982 and 1995, mostly the children of baby boomers. According to the 60 Minutes piece, there has been a lot of research, especially market research, devoted to deciphering general themes, values and trends among us.

Mel Levine, a historian specializing in generational studies who works in market research, has done a great deal of reading about Generation Y. Levine says it’s not so much about labeling the generation as it is about discovering a group mentality that is stifling to initiative and leadership. He even goes so far as to place Generation Y in the same thematic box as Generation X.

But my impression these days is that, to a great extent, what animates the discussion of the X-generation and the Y-generation is the advertising and marketing industry.

“The advertising industry desperately wants to understand what makes Generation Y tick.”

When talking about our generation, no one seems to disagree that the astounding amount of information made available by the internet and other technology has had a profound effect. We are seen as technology-savvy, media-savvy, quickly jumping from task to task in an increasingly complex world. Some would say we were efficiently multi-tasking, but on the flip side, there are criticisms of ever-decreasing attention spans and a sound bite-driven culture.

There is also the idea of “group think,” a term for a phenomenon where people will blindly do what the advertising industry deserts them to do. 

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Maren Klawiter
HTS assistant professor

The ’Nique’s Melissa Cataldo investigates theories, misconceptions about our generation

and author, had more to say along the same themes. His book Millennials Rising: the Next Great Generation claims we are, on the whole, duty-oriented citizens and good team players. In a BBC story in 2001, Howe said that these traits may make members of Generation Y better suited for military service than those in Generation X.

I decided to investigate these claims myself, and after a conversation with Jack Feldman, a professor in Tech’s School of Psychology, I learned that while generations are often defined by the exceptions and the icons, most of us are destined to become hard-working, decent folks, according to Feldman.

U.S News & World Reports recently reported that juvenile crime has been decreasing over the past two decades, and that teen pregnancy, drinking and drug use are also at historical lows. According to polls, most college kids dream of making money and having a family.

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and basketball. "Most of them know how to play basketball better than us," Miller said, "or play outside on the playground."

The program is good for the kids, Miller said. "They get a mentor, and it is absolutely fabulous to have a positive role model...to see somebody that's in college, that wants to be involved with them and is just full of life, is a great thing," she said.

But it's also beneficial for Tech students to be BOPSOPs. "You don't really appreciate how you were brought up until you see how other children are brought up, and especially when you see the things that other children don't have and the opportunities that they don't have," Miller said.

In addition, Tech students are in a prime position to volunteer, according to Miller. "A lot of them have problems with reading and simple math and things like that, stuff that we're excelling at because we're at Georgia Tech. Right now during this age is the time we need to give back, because we actually have some time to do that."

Other BOPSOPs, like first-year Management major Charlotte Rohling, agree. "I had never done a program like this, and the very first time I set foot in the YMCA I knew it was going to be awesome," Rohling said. "My favorite part so far with BOPSOP is getting to hang out with the kids, whether it be playing dodgeball...or just letting them braid my hair."

My first real day as a BOPSOP, they taught me how to braid...enough said!"

For Tiffany Grant, a first-year Chemical Engineering major, the best part of BOPSOP is simply sitting down with kids and talking to them about their day, their families—anything. "Some of the things they say make even your worst day better," she said.

Like Miller, Bob Abraham, a first-year Psychology major, said he hopes to work with children professionally in the future. "BOPSOP is a great avenue for making a difference in kids' lives...I can't tell you how satisfying it is when the kids run up and latch on to you and refuse to let you leave," he said. "Although Miller was in charge of organizing the entire program this year, she plans to start a BOPSOP executive board for next year, and eventually move out of the head position."

I will basically become just a BOPSOP who is kind of there to give them feedback," she said. BOPSOP applications should be out sometime after spring break, and the program will be open to all students, rather than just freshmen. There are no requirements except a passion for working with kids and willingness to make a commitment to the program.

Miller anticipates BOPSOP lasting a long time. "Hopefully it's a program that continues throughout the rest of Tech," she said. "This is just the first year of BOP- SOP, but I feel that Lauren, [Freshman Council], the mentors and the Y have created a strong foundation for the program to grow over the next several years," Abraham said.

Mock trial earns national profile

By Victoria Tai
Contribution Writer

Thinking about law school? Tech's mock trial team may be a way to get some practical experience. "It's exactly like what you see on TV, basically like Law and Order," said Frances Ma, a fourth-year Industrial Engineering major and a member of the mock trial team.

Though the team was started about eight years ago, it was four years ago that the mock trial team really began to grow. Anthony DeCinque, a fourth-year Chemical Engineering major and the current president of the team, recalled that there were only six members in 2001, making just enough to form one team. This year, however, there are about 40 people participating. DeCinque started participating in mock trial in his senior year of high school and has continued ever since.

The number of awards the team has recently received is also evidence of their growth. This year, the mock trial team placed fifth at the University of South Carolina tournament, first at the Eastern Kentucky University and third at the Middle Tennessee University tournament, which is the largest tournament in the nation, involving teams from 64 schools across the country. They also won multiple witness and attorney awards.

The dedication of their advisor, Kate Wasch, has also contributed to the team's success. Wasch, a lawyer with Tech's Office of Legal Affairs, has been practicing law since 1990.

The team placed 11th in the national competition last year, a significant achievement for the team.

According to Wasch, her goal for the team is to achieve the rank of top 10 nationally in the next few years. If the team's recent performance is any indication, they are well on the way to achieving Wasch's goal.

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Bob Abraham, an associate professor in the School of Public Policy and the advisor for the pre-law program, recruited Wasch as the team's advisor when she found out about Wasch's 10-year background in coaching high school mock trial.

"(Wasch) has been a tremendous asset to the team and has developed wonderful relationships with students," Berry said. "(She) is very dedicated to excellence and helping students achieve to the highest level they can."

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At a competition, members of the team must play the roles of witnesses and lawyers. However, they never find out whether their role is for the plaintiff (or prosecution, if it is a criminal case) or the defense until shortly before each round; therefore each member of the team must be intimately familiar with all aspects of the case.

Berry strongly encourages pre-law students to participate in either mock trial or the pre-law fraternity, Phi Alpha Delta.

According to Berry, mock trial is very beneficial for pre-law students because it educates them in trial practice, civil procedure, and skills such as legal presentation and legal analysis, which are very useful in the law career. For DeCinque, who is graduating this semester and planning on attending law school, it was his participation in the mock trial team that made him want to pursue law in the first place. Ma also plans on going to law school after working for a couple of years.

Even with Ma and DeCinque as examples, the mock trial team does not consist solely of pre-law students. In fact, its membership is split about 50/50 between pre-law and non-pre-law students. According to Berry and Wasch, all students can develop their public speaking and analytical skills through mock trial. There is also a mock trial class, taught by Wasch, which complements the mock trial experience. Ma, who took the class last semester, said that it helped her in her preparation for the competitions while receiving class credit.

According to Wasch, the best part of working with mock trial is getting to meet and know a wide variety of students who are not pre-law or engineering, but well-rounded individuals.
CAN YOU FIGURE OUT WHERE ON CAMPUS THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN?

Email focus@technique.gatech.edu if you think you know the answer—and check to see if you won in a later issue.

Answer to previous Tech Up Close:
Vents outside the Bunger-Henry building

Previous winner:
no winners

The caption contest will return next week.
Housing from page 11

A better information campaign...this year in terms of signs and table tents and all of that,” Morrison said. The campaign came about in the face of increasing competition. Whereas the Department of Housing once offered the only convenient residency options for students, the new privately-owned complexes mean Housing has to prove they’re still the best option.

“To simply say [that we’re] the only game in town except for a bunch of houses over in Home Park...isn’t true anymore, so we have to change how we go about doing things,” Morrison said. “It has to be true that the Residence Life staff, the programs, the activities, the convenience, the proximity has to really deliver, making sure that we offer students what they want as well as what we think they need.”

This includes some recent changes to Housing policies, which Morrison believes helps keep students on campus. For instance, Housing now places a higher priority on pairing up friends as roommates.

“Our data show us is people would like to be in X kind of building, but they’re willing to compromise on that if they can be with their friends,” Morrison said. “We find that if people are happy, then all those other things start to fall in line.”

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One popular implementation is the introduction of block housing. Students, especially rising sophomores, can all request an apartment together for the new school year.

Some apartments have tried to mimic the trends of on-campus housing in response. According to Morrison, 100 Midtown at 10th Street, which opens this fall, will offer individual leases for individual rooms, and they even plan to hire resident assistants similar to the PLS and CAs in on-campus housing.

“But talk about random roommates,” Morrison said. “My sense is that...they’ll fill it up with anybody who can pay the rent.”

Morrison also pointed out that off-campus residents have to deal with landlords and roommates who fail to pay their part of the rent. For reasons like this, some students discover off-campus residency to be less than they expected and quickly opt to return to campus the following year.

“[Maybe] It’s a semester we will get a parent usually calling and say, ‘Can you help my kid out of the mess?’” Morrison said.

However, other students remain off-campus. “I have a lot more room, am able to furnish the apartment with my own more comfortable furniture, and am located right in the middle of Midtown but am still just a couple of minutes from Tech,” said Nate Lacy, a second-year Management major who lives in Arts Center Tower. “I’m just not a big fan of dorm-style housing.”

Administrators, alumni offer advice about how to deal with senioritis

By Katherine Sather
The Montana Kaimin

(U-WIRE) U. Montana—Caps and gowns are for sale, and graduation announcements are in the mail. The countdown to graduation and freedom is on. So what’s this anxious, confused feeling?

According to some sources, it’s part of being a “quarterlifer.”

The idea is that 20-somethings are faced with decisions that will determine the rest of their lives. “It gets overwhelming,” said Jason Steinle, quarterlifer and author of Upload Experience: Quarterlife Solutions for Teens and Twenty-Somethings. “We’re afraid if we start out with the wrong foot forward, we’ll start on the wrong path.”

The Kaimin consulted Steinle for some tips on surviving the senior year. We also tapped into some campus administrators and students who shared their experiences.

The No. 1 piece of advice: Relax. Transitions in life will always produce anxiety, even if they’re positive transitions, said University of Montana Provost Lois Muir. “It’s just a part of life,” she said. “It’s a good thing for them to practice now.”

Second, don’t lose focus on school. Former Associated Students of the University of Montana President Jon Swan, who graduated in 2003, said the biggest obstacle he and his friends faced during senior year was procrastination. Since he had a job lined up after graduation, he found it hard to concentrate on schoolwork.

Third, channel your energy. According to Jim Lemcke, associate director of public safety, there’s an increase in campus pranks in May. “I don’t know if that’s seniors or students in general just getting fired up to leave,” he said. But extra energy can be channeled into something positive.

Fourth, realize that you have tons of options. Just because you have a degree in English literature doesn’t mean you need a career in it, said assistant director of dining services Ken Arledge.

He recommends that graduates first decide where they would like to live, whether it’s Los Angeles or Great Falls, Montana, and more there. They can find work to get by while they’re looking for their dream job.

Fifth, don’t be afraid to be single. Steinle cited statistics that the average marrying age is 27 for men and 25 for women, an increase from 25 and 21 in 1970.

Then 20-somethings are waiting until they find love and emotionally stable before tiring the knot, he said.

“A lot of people interviewed said when they married in their 20s, they didn’t know who they were,” he said. “As they began to discover who they are, there’s an increase in campus pranks.”

Arledge said that students shouldn’t underestimate the value of a degree. “When you get out, you have probably the most freedom of choice you’ll ever have in life,” he said.

Gen-Y from page 12

others do when forced to make a decision on which they have very little background knowledge or “when their standards of behavior are poorly developed or in conflict,” Feldman said.

Professor Klawitter told me about The Paradise of Choice, a book by Barry Schwartz, a professor of social theory at Swarthmore College, that describes how the choices from the proliferation of goods and marketing are so broad that we are left paralyzed. Possibly this psychological insight helps explain the observation that our generation follows authority—“with such a vast world of information, any parental or teacher’s advice may help us find our moorings.”

Along with the proliferation of information, confusing mixed messages abound. Cigarettes cause cancer, but studies show that nicotine improves memory in lab rats. Carbs are food for the brain, yet they make us fat. At work, seated at a conference table, we might be pretending to idolize. Rebellion is still cool to young people—we enjoy movies and video games with increasingly graphic depictions of sex and violence—but as far as actual rebellion goes, our generation is statistically shaping up to be rather tame.

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