



PRESS RELEASE

Southern Hospitality: SFCC Professors Serve Soul Food at Shelter

January 25, 2006

By Lindsey Franco

Gainseville--With music playing, lit candles and carefully arranged flowers, you would think it was a romantic dinner for two.

In reality, it was a home-cooked meal for 35.

St. Francis House residents dined in style Friday night at the buffet dinner hosted by members of SFCC's English department.

The meal had a Southern theme complete with fried chicken, ham, mashed potatoes and, the hit of the night, the famous banana pudding of SFCC President Jackson Sasser's wife, Layne.

Pair soul food with soul music and you've got yourself a good time, as evidenced by one resident who was dancing to Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely."

"This was the best meal since Thanksgiving," said resident Wilbur Webb. "It reminds me of my grandmama's."

Webb, whose 59th birthday is this week, considered Friday night's meal to be his birthday dinner. He feels blessed to get a meal like this, he said.

The English department cooks dinner at the St. Francis House the third Friday of each month as part of SFCC's East Gainesville Initiative, a larger effort to enrich the community by helping the poor and homeless.

SFCC English professor Brendan Pieters has been volunteering at St. Francis House for six years.

"It's fun to bang around in the kitchen," he said. "I'm a little wet, hot and dirty, but I like it."

Pieters's English department has been cooking the monthly dinner at St. Francis House for 14 months.

They organize the details of the monthly meal via Evite, a party-planning Web site.

The English department has encouraged other SFCC departments to volunteer, and two members of the finance department helped out at Friday night's dinner.

Many St. Francis House residents await the monthly meal, which has a different theme every month.

This month's Southern theme included a soul mix made by Santa Fe High School sophomore Miranda Blanton.

"Coming here is like a reality check," Blanton said. "You learn not to take things for granted."



Kevin Parekh / Alligator

Dr. Naana Banywa Horne, bottom, of the SFCC English department socializes with her colleagues after cooking at the St. Francis House.



Florida | **Campus Compact**

Media Contact:

Justin Cross, Public Relations Assistant

Email: justin@floridacompact.org

Phone: (850) 488-7782