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## A Seat at the Table: Table Tents Extend a Warm Welcome in Crowded Library

Katy Kelly  
*University of Dayton*, [kkelly2@udayton.edu](mailto:kkelly2@udayton.edu)

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**SUNDAY DECEMBER 8, 2019**

# A Seat at the Table: Table Tents Extend a Warm Welcome in Crowded Library

By Katy Kelly

Final exam season is fast approaching, and the library is full of people studying, reading and working on projects. Walking through the library spaces, you might be looking for a seat, but every table is occupied, and you're wondering if that single person at a large four-person table would mind if you sat down. Would you say something?

University of Dayton senior engineering student Dan Pearson identified an opportunity to improve student life, using the university's Marianist identity as guidance.

"There are people on campus who feel isolated for various reasons. Whether it be from homesickness, adjusting to the rigor of college classes, not having a solid friend group, struggling in your major, roommate issues, family life, etc." Pearson said. "I saw an opportunity to welcome those students and others to the table for a few reasons: students could sit together in solidarity with others who feel isolated, or to allow others to fill a study space vacancy when all they need is the extra chair and a piece of the unused table, or to share in a fruitful conversation with a student they might have otherwise never had a chance to speak with."

Pearson, along with senior graphic design students Meg Farnan and Liv Pettigrew, developed a new triangular tent sign intended for communal tables on campus. The table tents provide a nonverbal indicator to an open seat or conversation, which can be more appealing and practical than a verbal interruption.

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“It is more intimidating, as a more reserved person will tell you, to interact with a stranger not expecting conversation than it is to interact with a stranger expecting conversation,” Pearson shared.

The green three-sided table tent reads: “In the spirit of inclusivity, have a seat. You are welcome to join this table. For privacy, please stack the red card over the green card.” The red card reads: “Privacy please. Join a table with a green card.” Each tent is lightweight, easy-to-use and recyclable; its tabs fold together, meaning no staples, tape or other fasteners are needed.

Produced in collaboration with Finance and Administrative Services and Procurement and Payable Services, the tents will be placed on library tables that can seat three or more people, just in time for finals week.

We hope this small addition to our campus environment will convey the Marianist spirit of inclusivity, which often manifests itself as “a seat at the table.”

Want more information? Contact Dan Pearson at [pearsond2@udayton.edu](mailto:pearsond2@udayton.edu).

— *Katy Kelly is the coordinator of marketing and engagement in the University of Dayton Libraries.*

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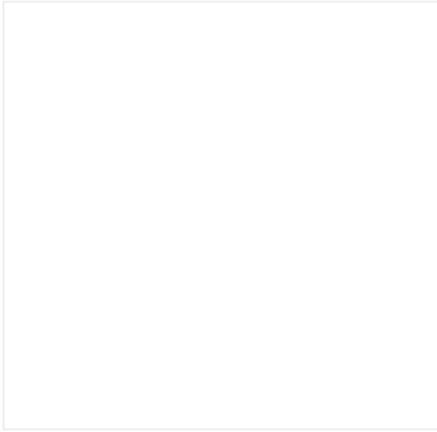
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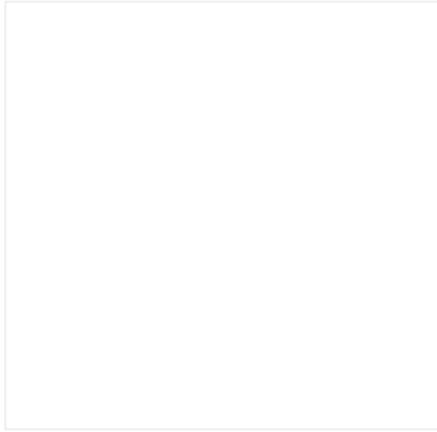


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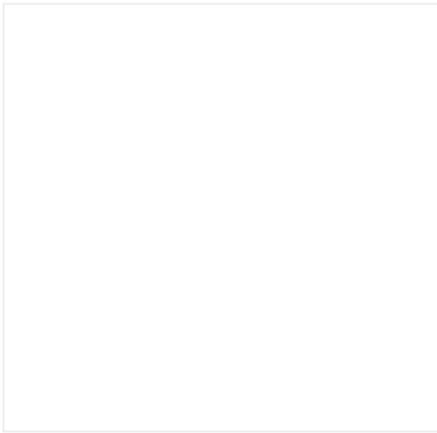
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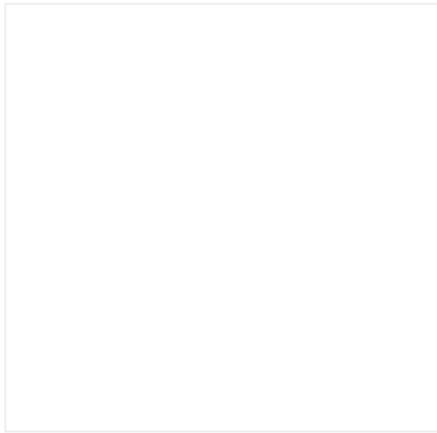
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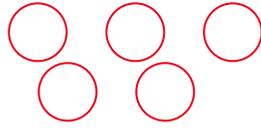
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