

FANTASY I-HOUSE

SJSU INTERNATIONAL HOUSE NEWSLETTER



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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR...



Hello there! My name is Melvin McElrath and I am the Resident Advisor leading the production of this newsletter. The topic of this semester's newsletter has two parts to it. The first is, "What's your favorite room in the house, why and what memory does it hold?" Second is, "If you had unlimited money, what in the house would you like to change or add if you could?" This is a very interesting topic because usually the newsletter topics are about different subjects in people's respective countries. The topic is never really about the house or asks about the house.

How this topic came up was an interesting story. The RA team and Leann went out to for dinner at the beginning of this semester. Originally we were talking about what we were willing to do for a million dollars and then we changed it to if we had unlimited money, what would we do for the house or what would we

change. It was a really interesting topic and fun to talk about it. We talked about realistic ideas like, redoing the backyard and kitchen. We also talked about unrealistic make overs like making a slide that goes through all the floors or labyrinth that's under the basement.

This is a pretty cool topic and it's always interesting to see what people would change and not change. During this talk, Leann talked about a dream she had about there being a 4th floor to the house and the possibilities it would bring. I always thought this would be a awesome thing to see in the house. The reason I choose this topic is because it is something that can be discussed by all I-housers and alumni. It is a discussion that everyone can give their thoughts and opinions and maybe after reading this maybe you can think about what you would do.



Leann Cherkasky Makhni
Director of I-House

When Melvin came up with the idea for a newsletter on the topic Fantasy I-House, I thought it was a great one for a couple of reasons. First of all, Melvin is really creative. Secondly, Melvin is one of many residents who has shared his strong ideas with me about the way that rooms in the I-House should be redesigned. In Melvin's case, he's told me that the Living Room needs to be modernized, that all of the art needs updating, that the cushions on the Dining Room chairs need to be colorful, etc. You get the idea.

It made me smile to think of Jose and Don asking repeatedly for the addition of an elevator, Kristen desiring air conditioning, Drew describing a house he moved to after I-House in which the basement was filled with sand for a party, and the many people who've requested a Jacuzzi – preferably on the roof of I-House! Whenever we make an equipment purchase or redecorate a room, residents have innumerable opinions about the way it should be.

We're so lucky to have the wonderful I-House we have with so many rooms in it for people to gather, study, sleep, eat, watch television, dance, and more. Still, even I've had vivid dreams of an expansive upper level above the 3rd floor; I could visualize it so clearly in my dreams that I described it to Phyllis and she and I laughed about the possibilities. In my dreams, the upper level had been there for decades, I just hadn't found the entrance until I'd been here for over 20 years...

The good news is that when alumni come back to I-House, we inevitably hear from them that they are so very happy to be back, to recognize the familiar surroundings where they spent many of the best days of their lives. I hope that alumni will find ways to support I-House so that it can continue to be a wonderful, special, welcoming, creative home to SJSU students.



Mike Diaz

Resident 2015-2016

Living in the International House has been a great experience, and throughout that experience, there are special memories in every room. But I would have to say that my favorite room in the house would have to be the Pool room.

One of the things that had initially drawn me to the house during my first tour was the fact that there were pool tables. The game itself holds certain memories and special moments for me. It is also a game that has helped me break the ice and get to know residents better. I mean, hell, I bought my own personal pool stick this past semester because I like to play so much. The pool room is a place I can go at 3am if I can't sleep, a place I can go when I'm waiting for a laundry load or just somewhere I can hang out with my roommate.

There is also a projector in that room which helps make more memories. Sometimes the fellas get together and have gaming tournaments, sometimes people watch movies in the basements and stream the occasional UFC fight. One of my favorite memories from the Fall 2015 semester is the all night FIFA contest we had downstairs.

Like I said, many rooms hold special memories, but the pool room is my favorite room at the I-House.



Renie Scott
Resident 2016

There are a lot of really wonderful rooms in the I-House. It's almost impossible to choose just one! I deliberated with a few I-House residents in the dining room on what room in the house truly holds the best memories. Is it the formal living room where residents join together for the last formal dinner? Or perhaps the basement game room where we throw surprise parties for unsuspecting birthday victims? What about the patio when we got the new smoker and threw barbecues for our friends? It was a tough choice.

We scratched our heads and laughed at all the memories we've already shared together. Then it dawned on us... The dining room! It was the dining room where we all came together as a house for the first time at orientation day. It held our fondest coffee nights, our study dates... It's where we learned about culture during workshops and where the most important breakfast, lunch and dinner conversations were had.

The dining room is the melting pot of the I-House. We got acquainted there, we made friends there, we catch up. It's something to look forward to in the morning, or after a long day - grab some juice and fruits, some deliciously crafted food, and sit in big clusters of people you maybe wouldn't talk to on any other occasion. This is truly the center of all things I-House. This is where we learn about each other everyday.

So on reflection, my favorite room is the dining room. Without it, I would probably be stuck in my room not having made many friends - and I'd assume I wouldn't be alone in that either! So I thank the I-House for giving us the freedom of mingling in a great environment such as the dining room.



Unlimited money is a lot of money. Some housemates and I conjured up a list of things we'd love to see improved or added in the I-House to make life here even more interesting:

- Light-weight wooden tables in the dining room to move around and make more space when necessary. Maybe include wireless chargers or outlets at each table so we can study and interact with ease.
- When we're done with studying, a relaxing sit around a warm campfire would be divine - we'd make s'mores and fry squashes and other delicious vegetables to nibble on.
- If it's too hot, maybe we can watch the flowers grow in a new vegetable garden that we are able to use for our own resources - and maybe even create a club that manages such a thing!
- I've heard many dreams of having a high-end sushi chef to create beautiful rolls of the freshest fish.
- To get to the kitchen, however, it would be more than ideal to have a great slide from each floor of the house straight to the kitchen!
- On the personal amenities, we figured a dish washer might make our student kitchen more efficient.
- And a fully stocked one would be great! With state of the art pans and utensils...
- Lastly, we would love free washing and drying machines!



Bob Aron
Resident 1981-1985

Hmmmm, an article about my favorite room? Well, in four years at the I-House I lived in a lot of them, so it's pretty hard to pick an absolute favorite. In those years at the house I lived in a single (30), double (19, 20, 33), triple (25) and yes, even a quad (27). The quad wasn't my favorite, but might have been the most memorable. One of my roommates literally built a room inside the room by strategically moving the closets, putting up some drywall and adding a door!

Not many people remember this, but in the 80's, the back corner room on the 2nd floor was a women's lounge, so the first room on the 3rd floor was actually #18. I think my favorite will always be #19, which is now #20. I lived there my first 2 years and because I was rooming with a long time high school friend (Tim Devine), we had that room decked out pretty well; quadraphonic stereo (much to the chagrin of my future sister-in-law living in the room below!), wall to wall carpet (back in the days when rooms weren't carpeted) and an excellent set of posters. So many great Thursday night parties with so many people I have stayed in touch with for more years now than I care to admit ;-)

It's really hard to imagine what I would do to improve the house. It's pretty much perfect the way it is! Personally, my favorite part of the house was having a grand piano in the living room. I spent a lot of time there and wrote most of my first compositions at that piano. But if I had a large wad of cash to spend on the house, I might think of putting in a Steinway!



Celestine Thuilliez
Resident Fall 2016

I've had a lot of good memories in several rooms within the whole house but in my own opinion, my favourite room is obviously my bedroom. Not only it is because that's the room where my bed is and that I love to sleep, but also because it is my little nest where I can do anything I want. This is a place where I can calm when I need it, listen to music, dance without anybody seeing me. I also love my room because I am able to spend a lot of time with my lovely and funny roommate. These moments are some of the bests that I've spent in the House during the semester. I am really going to miss her when I'll be alone in my room at home. I also like the formal living room because it reminds me of the Girls floor meeting, which was a nice meeting where we met everybody of our floor. It makes me also think about the formal diner, where we had so much fun with the baby pictures, the secret pal gifts, the slide show with all the memories of the semester.

This is not a secret anymore for some people in the house that I'm inexplicably crazy about unicorns. So, I would advise people here to invest more in unicorns, like fluffy soft pillows or outfits, what is better than a place full of unicorns? Please don't judge me, I please you to believe that I am not crazy, I said it, it's inexplicable! Maybe one thing that I would add to the house is one more floor, consequently we could have all bigger rooms (which helps when you bring big suitcases like me), and instead of having little bed, rather buy big beds, it's better when you love to have a lot of pillows to sleep well, with a little bed, when you wake up they are all on the ground.

After these propositions, I finally would like to say that I find this place very cosy with a lot of nice people inside, that makes my funny big International Family!



Marcus Rafferty
Resident Fall 2016

My favourite room would simply be the dining area. Rooms such as the game room and TV room present fun memories, however the dining room has provided many interesting chats with fellow housemates. From discussing different cultures, countries political history or simply trying to recount the events of what happened the previous night at a party!

In Europe, meal time isn't simply about eating the food presented on your plate. It is a chance discover what is new in everyone lives. This can be seen in the ihouse as it is very rare that someone will eat a meal alone. Usually there is at least one full table full of discussion. An added bonus is the delicious food supplied by Félix and his fellow chefs.

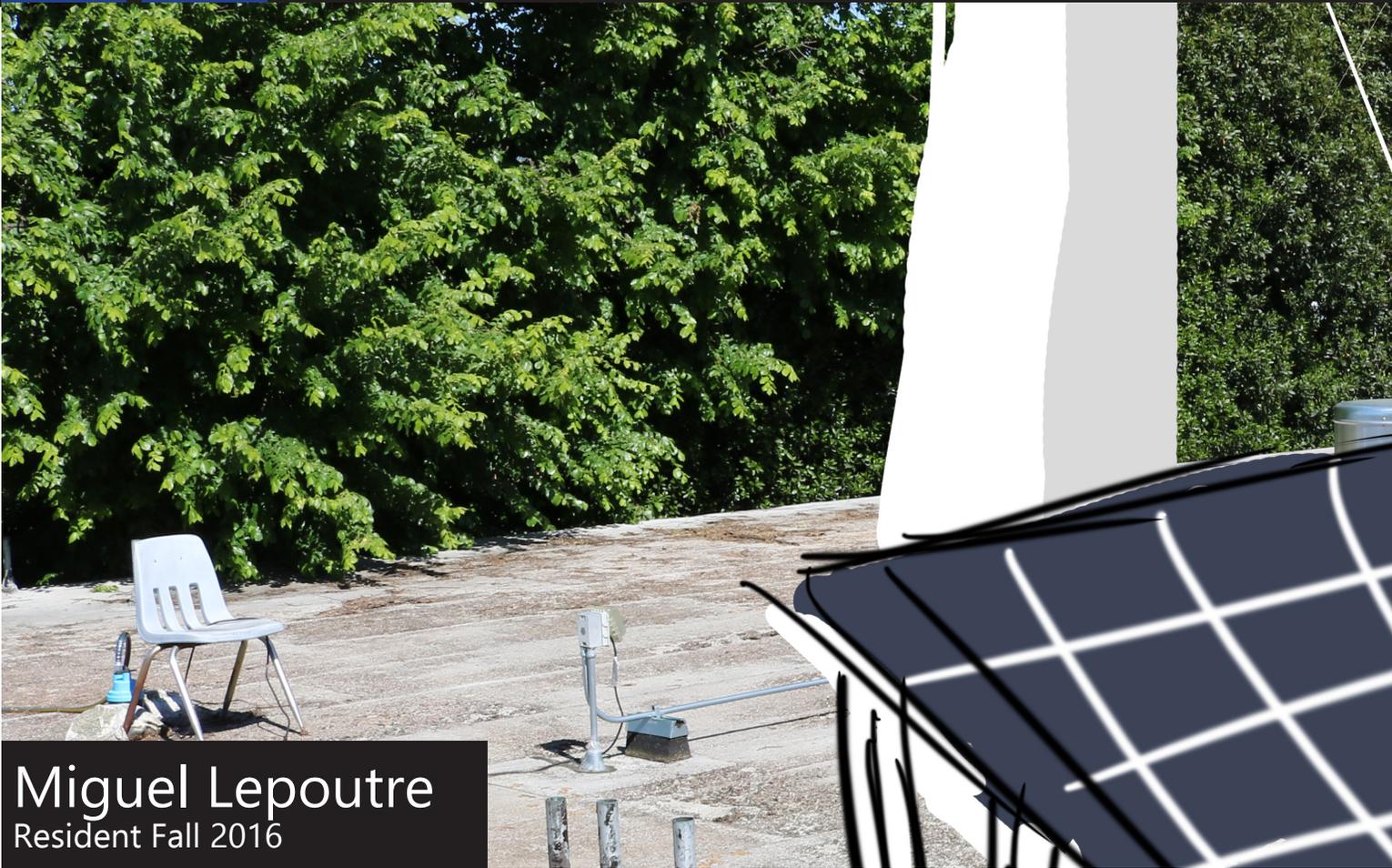
A cool feature to have at the house is an area for residents over the age of 21 to chill and have a few drinks with the added bonus of being allowed invite guests over the age of 21. That would be the one criticism a select few people may have for the house. You can't invite guests who are over 21 to your room if you are drinking, meaning that even if everyone present is over 21 you cant offer to your friends outside of the house to host a pre-game which I believe is always the best part of the night. Hence a designated room for this would be welcomed. I understand that there may be rules and regulations preventing this but if properly monitored by the RAs it would add some fun to the house.



Alicia Bogart
Resident 2014-2016

The study room has always been a bit lacking in my opinion... Where there stands a sparse bookshelf, I would create an expansive library. Think "Beauty and the Beast" style, with shelf after shelf, and a ladder to climb. The style would have ornate molding and a combination of neutral and rich red and blue tones. The room would need to be taller, so we'd make the basement floor much deeper in the ground. The study room/library would have alcoves to hide out and have quiet corners, with huge old-fashioned wooden desks, too heavy to move, laden with warmly glowing lamps. Some long tables would still decorate the room, similar to the ones that are around now, but arcing and made of more heavy wood. This would give the option of hosting lectures or round-table discussions. The room would have thick carpet, luxurious to the touch. It would seem to expand beyond its actual dimensions. The room would be quiet and warm. It would smell like well-kept, old books. A perfect place to cozy up to a good book and a cup of tea.

Of course, a certain bookcase would open up to a secret passageway leading to an intricate tunnel system. It would connect to neighboring houses... specifically to my first roommate's house. She lives two blocks away. The tunnel system would go further and look sparse, but would give way to beautiful sitting rooms, skylights, and furniture straight out of Downton Abbey. You could exit a tunnel into a local park or into the SoFA District, B2 Cafe, or a variety of new places to explore.



Miguel Lepoutre
Resident Fall 2016

For me, as important as diversity is in nature, it is crucial in a house, and the I-house has a 100 on that.

Different people do different things and, in a house, different things are to be done in different rooms. I am a very chill person so I love the terrace; especially the hammock XD, but let's focus on the inside. The room that I like the most is by far the pool side of the party room, basically for the wide variety of things that you can do there, but let me be more specific. Obviously, I love pool tables are a big reason why I like the room. Moreover, the couches are so soft and absorbing! Then, you have the projector with the big screen and the speakers, which makes it the perfect place to watch a movie, play videogames or whatever you want (a good documentary in my case). Aside from the material world, this room is not very frequented, which makes it ideal to spend time with whoever you choose, or on your own! My best memories in this room are playing pool with any I-Houser, listening to jazzy and loud music (or live piano from any of the wonderful pianists of the house if you are lucky) and engaging in a deep conversation about life... Who wins? No-one matters.

If money was not an issue, I would do a major investment to make the I-House off-grid. The first step in that, would be to install both a solar rooftop and a huge windmill. That way, we will generate all our electricity from the sun and the wind, making the



house self sufficient and immune to any kind of power outage; and at the same time let everyone know that the I-House is green now! The second thing I would do would be to build an urban garden in half of the terrace, that could supply most of the fruits and vegetables that residents consume.

Leaving green life aside, I would definitely install a slide that would take you from the third floor to the 1st and to the basement. If Google does it, why not the I-House?

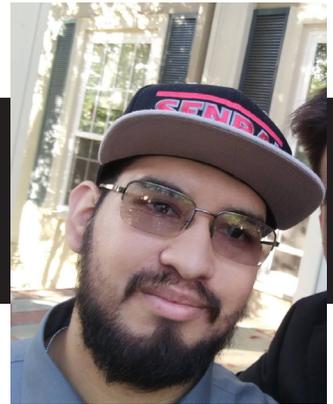
Also, I would definitely pay a person that speaks all the languages to live in the house and helps us all learn the different languages or establish a new international language!

The last thing I'd love to do, is to make a terrace in the roof with a simple gym and a telescope to watch the stars during the night.

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