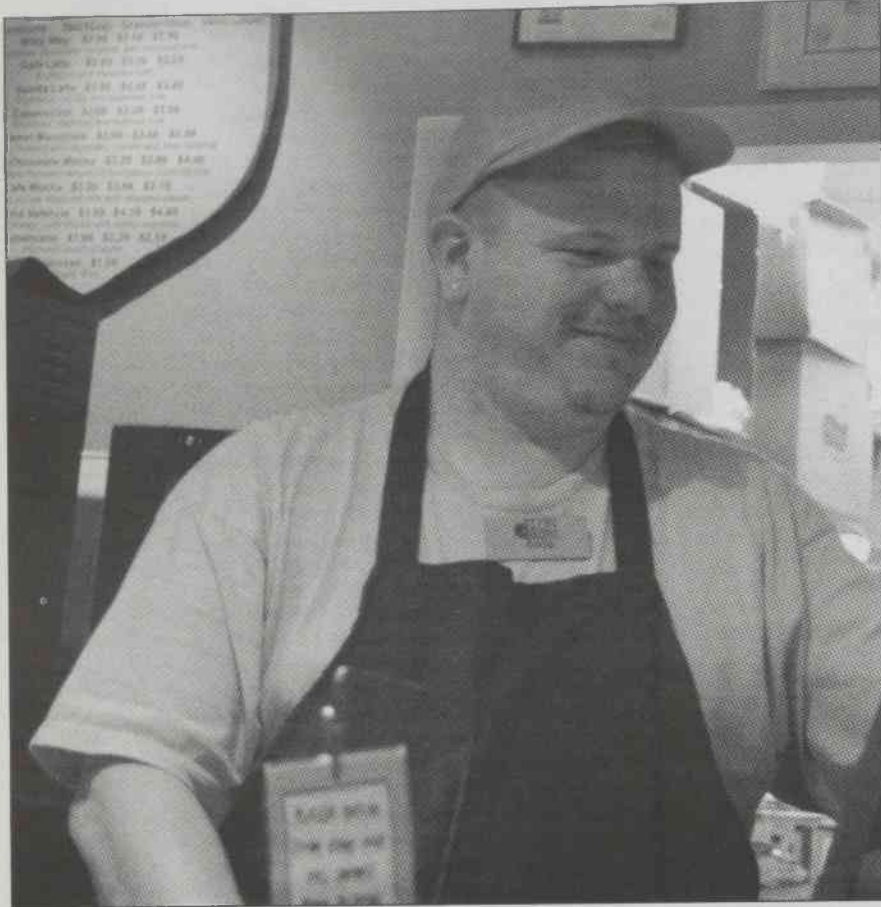


'Do you know the muffin man?'

Coffee shop employee Eddie Talley brings fun to campus food



Talley said the customer interaction makes it worthwhile to work evening shifts.

Brandon Marshall
Reporter

Most regular customers at Acorn coffee shop knows Eddie Talley, the talkative evening worker. If the variety of deli sandwiches and bubbly beverages isn't enough, Eddie adds his own flavor to the coffee house.

"I've been here since 2006," he said. "There's nothing that I can't do, you know, and there is a lot of the time, you know, that it's left up to me to do it. This is a coffee shop and a social area."

Born and raised in Alamance County on the other side of Haw River, Talley has seen many changes around the Elon and Burlington area. Since he started work, he's made a name for himself through his expressive personality and eager service.

His southern drawl kicks in with each new face he meets. If he doesn't know your name, he'll call you "buddy, or "honey, or "sweetheart" if you're a girl.

"I'm a happy person," Talley said. "I don't hold grudges, neither. I'm the type of person that may get mad with you one minute and then forget it the next minute. Holding grudges is a waste of time. It's a waste of energy."

He spends most of his energy caring for his job, parents, sister and everyone else around him.

"That's the biggest part of my job, is the students," Talley said.

And he does what he can to make them laugh.

"I tease them — that's all I do," he said. "I look for facial expressions. Some just don't pay me no attention. They'll come through the door and I'll say, 'Oh we just closed.' It's more of me joking and cuttin' up."

For this, his co-workers jokingly call him "crazy."

During operating hours, his free-spirited antics and phrases like, "Meghan! You're the next contestant on the Price is Right!" are what make him enjoy the closing hour duties of vacuuming, rolling up carpets and turning chairs on tabletops.

"Far as couples, I pick on them," Talley said. "I try to speak to everyone,

you probably notice that.

I try to speak to everyone, I mean. I'm just that type of person. That's my biggest enjoyment, getting smiles off of people, cutting up with people," he said.

Any visitor who is unfamiliar with his personality will soon be able to recognize the color he brings to the black coffee and mustard-colored work uniforms.

He isn't afraid to speak his mind. "I am open to who I am," he said. "Look at me and tell me who I am." He stops vacuuming and points to his rainbow-colored necklace and belt.

"My story is very simple," he said. "I stayed in the closet for 30 years until I came out in June of 2004. Before then I was scared, just like a whole lot of other LGBT people that walk right here on this campus. June of 2004, I decided I'm not going to be scared no more. By December of 2004 I was pretty much out. I accepted myself for who I was."

Outside of the coffee shop, Talley lives with his cat in a home he moved into last September.

"He's crazy," he said. "He has his own room. Probably the only cat in Alamance County that has its own room."

Before mixing smoothies and yelling students' orders over the counter, Talley used to yell behind the microphone.

"There's another side of me that nobody sees until I get behind my microphone," Talley said. "I was involved with racing from about age 10 to (the year) 2001. I sold programs from about 13 or 14 at the race track, and then when I turned 18 I got involved with public address."

He stayed involved with public address until he started his deejay services in 2001.

Whether or not it's in his North Carolinian genes to be so social, Talley is never hesitant to share his thoughts. He said he is unafraid to speak his mind and shows the greatest sense of compassion for himself, co-workers and students of Elon.

"People are all about this," he said as he pointed to his head, "and not all about this," as he placed his hand on his heart.



Customers can always count on Talley to greet them with a smile.

"I try to speak to everyone, you probably notice that. I try to speak to everyone, I mean, I'm just that type of person. That's my biggest enjoyment, getting smiles off people, 'cutting up' with people.

- Eddie Talley
ARAMARK EMPLOYEE

Clubs4Kids provides unique bonding experience

Students form bonds with faculty, staff through teaching children about sports

Michelle Longo
Online Programs Director

Sports teams are often built upon the premise of unity. They work as one, they practice as one and they play as one.

When senior Krista Montes de Oca got involved with Elon's club sports program her freshman year, she thought about how that should apply to not only every club sport team, but to the program and the university as a whole.

"I felt there were some things that could be changed," Montes de Oca said. "I wanted to get more involved, so I ran for vice president and by senior year I was president. That gave me more leeway to change things."

One of her big changes was the implementation of a program Montes de Oca calls Clubs4Kids.

"My main goal was to unify the teams," Montes de Oca said. "There are about 20 teams in the organization, but they are each their own team and only do their own sport."

Clubs4Kids was Montes de Oca's solution to a persistent unity problem in club sports, as well as a perceived lack of unity with the members of the university.

As part of the program, every first Saturday of the month, two different club sports teams put on a 90-minute program for Elon faculty and staff



Members of the men's club lacrosse team hosted Clubs4Kids in the beginning of April. Children of Elon faculty and staff came out for a morning of learning and playing.

children. Members from both teams play their respective sports with the children — whether it is introducing them to a lacrosse stick, helping them shoot a basketball or just being there as a playmate.

"I wanted to establish a more in-depth

relationship with the staff, especially the people behind the scenes like Physical Plant," Montes de Oca said. "It's a chance for faculty and staff to get together with students and really form a relationship that way."

Clubs4Kids has happened three times

this year. Once with the basketball and volleyball teams, again with the soccer and lacrosse teams and two weeks ago with the swim and waterski clubs.

The women's soccer and the men's and women's lacrosse teams took to the intramural fields in the beginning of April for their morning of fun with the kids.

Although it was the first time many of the children had ever picked up a lacrosse stick, Shannon Crawford, women's lacrosse president, said it couldn't have gone better.

"The way the younger boys looked up to the older boys on the team was amazing," Crawford said. "The way they would look at one little thing and try to be exactly like them. One kid even changed his name for the day to sound more like one of the older kids. They looked up to them so much. That was the best part of it."

Although Montes de Oca is a senior, she said the program will live on after her. She has already added it to the club sports constitution, placing the responsibility of the program on the next executive committee and president.

"I think it is important because it's a very different program than what else is used to," Montes de Oca said. "There is not another program like this for faculty and staff and I hope people take advantage of the opportunity."