

Matt Coons, a freshman from Sadieville, Ky. (near Lexington), is a regular at study night at the Gordons'. He likes the environment of the president's home for studying, and he likes having a chance to get out of the dorms. "His family is very inviting," Matt adds.

"When I came to visit, President Gordon asked what he could do to help me succeed, and I told him I was worried about keeping up with assignments. The study nights help." Matt has set aside Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7 to 10. "The Gordons always have snacks. There's been hot cider this fall, and frequently there's ice cream, too," which all the students know is a favorite with President Gordon. Are the study nights paying off for Matt? He reports his midterm grades were great, "What I was hoping they'd be."

A self-professed geek, Matt says he is involved "in everything." He is a service leader, in the honors program and a member of HTCIA – which is High Tech Crime Investigation Association, a group made up of mostly professionals in the business. Defiance College is one of the few colleges who participate in this professional organization.

Brian Norris, a football player from East Lansing, Mich., echoes Matt's sentiments. For him, the study nights are part of the personal attention students receive at Defiance College. His mid-term grade average was 3.6 – but his goal is 3.8. Brian is currently a business major.

One of the young women who participates in study night at the president's house is Gretel Briand, a freshman from Oskaloosa, Kansas. A volleyball player who is studying athletic training, she calls studying at the president's house fun. "I can get a lot of work done." Study nights at the Gordons' reflect the close family atmosphere of the DC campus, Gretel says, much different than the huge state university in Kansas where her mother works.

The Gordons have reached out to students in other ways as well. Anne has provided each incoming freshman with a coupon for a home-cooked meal, and some students have become real regulars for those meals. President Gordon is known for showing up at the dorms to collect students for an ice cream run. He and Anne extended an invitation to all students not going home for Thanksgiving to join them for a pre-Thanksgiving dinner the Wednesday before the holiday. ◆



LET'S COLLABORATE

A Defiance Hall classroom has been transformed into a lab that is both functional and comfortable

A new Defiance Hall student workspace named the CoLab has been implemented in response to student and faculty interest in creating "open" student work spaces that facilitate collaboration on group projects. The CoLab is similar to the Pilgrim Library Learning Commons in both design and purpose in that it is a comfortable yet functional workspace.

Defiance Hall was a logical site for the CoLab since many adult, commuter, and graduate students have classes there and often have trouble finding a functional workspace between classes.

The CoLab has two independent PC workstations, two small group PC workstations, one large work group station, two large white boards, and four "soft furniture" independent work stations.

The CoLab is a great place to read or study between classes, finalize and print papers before class, or to meet for small group project development. The CoLab was designed by Pilgrim Library Director Andrew Whitis (who came up with the CoLab name) and Interim Academic Dean Dr. Tim Rickabaugh, and thanks go out to Jim Coressel and the maintenance staff, Todd Harpest and the computer services staff, and Kathy Panches for the implementation of the project over the summer.

Dr. Rickabaugh commented, "I am sure that our students will appreciate the CoLab and use it on a regular basis. It is our experience, as in the recently developed Pilgrim Library Learning Commons, that students value these areas as their own space." ◆