

Freshman finds support, family in sports

By Karina Davila
Staff reporter

As a child, my parents always told me there's a first time for everything. There was the first day of kindergarten. The first time I went to summer camp and the first time I ever went to a sleepover. I even remember the first time my mom allowed me to go to the mall by myself. Long story short, there are plenty of firsts, but I never thought the time would come that I had my first Thanksgiving away from home.

For a work study job I chose to be the women's basketball manager. I figured it would be a great opportunity to get involved, get to know people and I love sports so it just made sense.

One of the first things Whitney Corley, women's basketball coach told me before I took the job was that I wouldn't have much time off, and that they practice during breaks.

I had no idea what that truly meant. Repeat: I had no idea what that truly meant until I received the schedule that said, "Thursday, November 26 Thanksgiving: WBB TBA Depart for Hastings." Even then I was in denial. I thought, Dodge City isn't too far, I could just go and then come back before we have to leave and no one will know. Clearly my naïve freshman brain was not putting two and two together. It wasn't until my mom gave me a call a few weeks ago and asked what my plans were for the holidays, when I realized what it really meant. That's when the little elves in my head started to work, bells and whistles started to ring and I finally realized I won't go back home until Christmas.

So now instead of driving three and a half hours west on Thanksgiving break, I'll be here at Southwestern with my "second" family, spending Thanksgiving with the team.

College definitely makes you grow up. It literally forces you to be grateful and thankful for everything you had while living at home and that's *actually* what Thanksgiving is about. It's about a group of individuals coming together to give thanks for all the blessings they have. Yes, it usually involves home-cooked meals that are to die for, and watching the Thanksgiving Day football games that most Americans watch.

However, in a way I got lucky. According to

Labor Statistics, 43 percent of Americans have Thanksgiving away from home. For most of the girls on the team, this won't be their first Thanksgiving away from home. Me'Shelle Parker, psychology

last three years. The good thing about it is that we have our own family here. When it comes down to that, we don't miss out on much but the quality of the food. We miss out on a home cooked meal." She also mentioned that when you spend Thanksgiving away from home, "It's important not to be close-minded. I know a lot of people like being with family, but if you can be open-minded and surround yourself around people like your family it will make the process a lot easier," said Parker.

The most important part about this whole process really will be about staying surrounded by our Builder family and our team even though we are away from home.

Some players look at the situation a little differently than others.

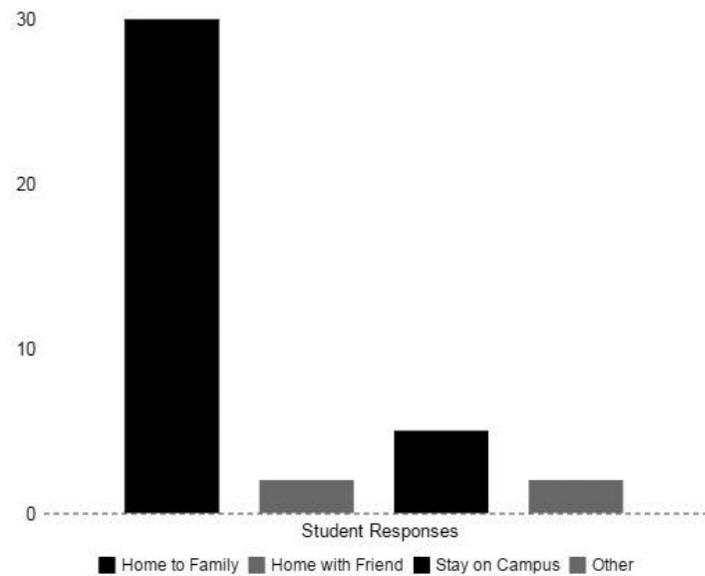
For the freshmen on the team it's not an easy task.

"I'm devastated because my family makes everything home-made for Thanksgiving," said Kari Blattner, elementary education freshman. "Number one is family but food is a big part of it. I'm also really going to miss seeing my family. In college you don't get great food and you don't see family so I'm going to miss out on a lot. The positive part about this is that we have a team and that's what we call family."

There is a first time for everything and in this case it's going to be the first time I spend Thanksgiving with a new family. It will be a new adjustment and a new adventure, but thankfully I will be with a group of people I can call family.

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What do you do over Thanksgiving?



Thanksgiving Tips

"Calories don't count during Thanksgiving"
- Brenna Truhe, English Senior

"I am challenging myself to take as many naps as possible"
- Maggie Collett, Student life GA

Happy Thanksgiving to our SC Family

