

Sunrise on the SouthSide (2)

The Bethlehem Gadfly | Lehigh University, Southside | September 6, 2019

(Latest in a series of posts about Lehigh University and the Southside)

Sunrise on the Southside

“We are are linked at the hip. The students who come to Lehigh have to call Bethlehem home. I want them to see themselves as part of the community and to participate in the community. The residents of Bethlehem have to see Lehigh as one of the major employers and a strong academic institution. That links to the ability to attract businesses and jobs. So I think it’s a very symbiotic relationship.”
(Lehigh president John Simon)

“We all just want to work together to benefit the community of South Bethlehem, to benefit the city, to benefit Lehigh. So it’s a win-win.” (Our mayor Robert Donchez)

Last time we took a look at the lead video in Lehigh University’s high quality production “[Sunrise on the Southside](#),” and Gadfly would like to continue a slow walk through the entire project over several posts.

This project comes to Gadfly’s attention just as we have been spending a lot of time on the Southside, a focus especially stimulated by the moving letter from the [South Bethlehem Historical Society](#) and the formation of [Bethlehem Residents for Responsible Development](#).

Begin with consideration of these examples of the symbiotic relationship between Lehigh and the City from the [Lehigh project’s intro page](#):

- the downtown manager position [Missy Hartney]
- the SouthSide Ambassadors, the gold-and-blue-clad security officers who remove litter from sidewalks, clean away graffiti, assist visitors with directions and provide a host of other services
- the Lehigh University Police Department, who work in concert with Bethlehem police and other organizations to keep neighborhoods safe
- two city code enforcement officers, whom Lehigh financially supports, who inspect off-campus properties that students and others rent to make sure they are up to code
- members of the Lehigh faculty affiliated with the South Side Initiative who offer a number of courses that examine the area's architecture, history and evolution, and work to archive the area's culturally rich and diverse history
- Initiatives include Lehigh's Move Out Collection Drive and the Great South Side Sale, where students' discarded items at the end of an academic year are recycled for sale and profits are funneled back into community programming for local school children

The project has seven “chapters,” and we’ll gradually focus on each one. But, for now, chew on the above for a stimulating overview.

Gadfly invites comments on this powerful Lehigh public relations document as we go.