

This graduating senior knows her dough

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Haley Burns of Huntsville, Alabama, is staying in New Orleans and she will continue her bread business. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Between attending classes and socializing with friends during her undergraduate years at Tulane University, graduating senior Haley Burns founded [Fund 17](#), a nonprofit microfinance institution that provides financial education and empowerment throughout the 17 wards of New Orleans. On top of all that, the entrepreneur also runs a business selling homemade bread, known as Haley Jo's

Dough.

Each month during the school year, Burns sells her loaves of bread at the [Green Wave Community Market](#) that is held at Tulane Hillel, 912 Broadway St. On the eve of each market, she stays up all night baking to ensure the bread is fresh. According to Burns, she has developed a group of loyal customers who often send in their orders ahead of time via Facebook.

“Last summer, I had gone to Ghana and worked there for a month and traveled for a little while, so when I came back to New Orleans I did not have time to get a job anywhere,” she said. “I needed to make money, so I started asking friends if they would buy my bread. Then everyone started loving it, and I started delivering it throughout the summer.”

Burns uses beer in her breads as a substitute for yeast. The rosemary garlic bread is her most popular seller, followed closely by the cheddar jalapeño. She bakes using all fresh ingredients that give her loaves their signature crispy, buttery crust with a chewy, doughy inside.

“My uncle was the first person I ever had beer bread from, and he made a cheddar jalapeño,” said Burns. “He does it a little different but the first time I heard about beer bread it was my uncle's recipe, and I thought it was so good.”

After graduation, Burns will continue her work with Fund 17. She hopes to expand Haley Jo's Dough to some of the bigger markets throughout the city that are unaffiliated with Tulane.

Greg Thomson is a graduating senior at Tulane University majoring in communication.

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—Haley Burns, class of 2015