

By Eliza Jordan | [ejordan@flagler.edu](mailto:ejordan@flagler.edu)

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## Loyal Sidekick: St. Augustine's newest local talent



Ryan Souder, 24, is most creative before his head hits the pillow, and this is only a plus to St. Augustine's local band, [Loyal Sidekick](#).

Born and raised in Charlottesville, Va., Souder spent most of his childhood outdoors. But this active lifestyle never stopped his drive at the age of 12 to start playing guitar.

"I've always wanted to be a musician," said Souder, after explaining that he originally was influenced by the band

Korn, but is now mostly inspired by older bands such as Aerosmith, Lynrd Skynrd, and the technical prowess of Coheed and Cambria.

Loyal Sidekick is an alternative rock band that is made up of just three talents, and these guys all have been or are students at Flagler College.

Souder explained that the songs are all collaborations of the band member's efforts. "Sucker Punch Generation," a hit on their new demo, was all made up on a whim.

Josh Thompson, 25, is the lead singer and bassist and graduated from Flagler College in 2009. David Clark, 21, is the drummer and a current student and basketball player at Flagler College. And Souder, the guitarist, graduated from Flagler College in December.

Souder described their individual duties as band members, and pointed out that Thompson acts as their General Manager and does a great job at it too.

"We are lucky enough to have the means to manage ourselves without relying on anyone else," he said.

Souder said he believes independence will save the music industry.

"I think the industry needs to be much more self-managed," he said. "The biggest obstacle is putting other things on hold."

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Clark is still a student. Thompson has aspirations to possibly go to graduate school and Souder has always wanted to be on the TV show, Survivor. Clark and Souder also have girlfriends and Thompson has a wife.

“I try and be patient, too, because I know his schedule is so grueling.” said Keila Davisson, Souder’s girlfriend.

Souder said having patience is key when trying to make things right while not only in a relationship, but also in the music industry.

The trio has been together and has been playing music in the St. Augustine and Jacksonville areas for a little over a year. They have performed around 10 concerts in the St. Augustine area and one so far in Jacksonville. But their plans for future concerts are already set in stone.

Loyal Sidekick will be competing in The Battle of The Bands on Oct. 4 in Jacksonville, will be performing at Local Heroes on Oct. 14, has a gig at Jack’s BBQ on Oct. 23 with The Bastard Sons and is scheduled to play with them again on Nov. 5 at Jack Rabbits in Jacksonville.

They have just finished recording their first demo on Sep. 24 and production elements were recorded at My Platinum Sound in Jacksonville by Paul Lipinski, Souder said.

Although their CD won’t be available for sale until their next show, their new hit single “Way Down” just debuted on [WFCF 88.5 Flagler College Radio](http://www.wfcf.com) on Sep. 19.

“They have a strong lyrical presence,” said Marissa Melillo, one of WFCF’s music managers. “They take catchy melodies and combine them with electrifying guitar riffs to create a high-energy rock mashup.”

As for the future, Loyal Sidekick plans on touring in the Spring, selling their demos and climbing the charts.