



SPIDER FAMILY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 • SEPTEMBER 2025



GREETINGS PARENTS & FAMILIES!

A student's support system is essential to their success in college. We believe that parents and families play an integral role in their student's college experience, and we want to help you help them thrive.

In our newsletters, we'll introduce you to our new staff members, share important information about housing processes, and provide tips on how to support your student through transitions and beyond. We're committed to keeping you informed and involved every step of the way.

SPIDER FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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Meet OUR STAFF



Taylor Walsh
Director of Housing



Joy Heinzman
Director of
Residence Life



Jacob Lowman
Coordinator for
Residence Life &
Housing



Leslie Jacobs
Administrative
Coordinator



Emily Paradise
Coordinator for
Training &
Development

Area Coordinators



Amala Thomas

Keller Hall,
Gray Court, &
South Court



Emily DiMaria

Lora Robins Court &
North Court



Isaiah Smith

Lakeview, Marsh,
Wood Halls, &
Residence Hall No. 2



Cambria Rotondo

Moore, Dennis,
Robins Halls, &
Residence Halls No. 1 & 3,



Stephanie Kauffman

Westhampton Hall,
Gateway Apartments &
University Forest Apartments

Learn more about the entire Office of Residence Life & Housing Team and our mission, vision, and values on our [Contact Us Webpage!](#)

MEET OUR STUDENT STAFF



HEAD RESIDENTS

The Office of Residence Life & Housing is excited to highlight a leadership opportunity for our returning student staff: the Head Resident (HR) position.

Head Residents are experienced RAs who are ready to take the next step in their leadership journey. In addition to their regular RA duties, HRs are responsible for leading a team of 4-10 fellow RAs within their community.

This vital role focuses on empowering their peers, fostering a strong sense of community among the RA staff, and serving as a key link between the RAs and our professional RLH staff. Just like RAs, Head Residents are dedicated to providing support and connection—not only for their team but for their entire residence hall or apartment community.

We are proud to see our students step into this new leadership experience!



RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

We're proud to welcome our 90 dedicated student leaders who have returned to campus and started their roles as Resident Assistants (RAs) for the new academic year. These hard-working students arrived two weeks early to prepare for the arrival of all our other residents.

As the first point of contact for many students, RAs play a crucial role in shaping a positive, inclusive, and safe community for the 25–60 residents they oversee. Their commitment to our values helps ensure a supportive environment where every Spider can thrive.

Stay tuned for updates about the 2026-2027 RA Recruitment Selection Process.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR STUDENT STAFF ON OUR
[RESIDENT ASSISTANTS WEBPAGE!](#)**

RA Spotlights

Daniel Polonia

HR- Gray Court

Major: Double Major in Leadership Studies and Rhetoric and Communication Studies
Minor in Gender Studies

Activities Involved In: Co-Leader of UR Well Peer Educators, President's Student Advisory Board member, *will*, 8:15 Barista



Advice to Parents: Let your spider become their beautiful self! It may not be easy at times, but trust that they are going through so many experiences and learning lessons in their own way! Give them some grace as they grow at UR, and of course, some tough love and advice where it's needed :)

What I like best about being a Spider: What I love most about being a spider is the fact that the staff and faculty care. When I miss class or a meeting, I know someone cares enough to send me a message and check that everything is okay. In every organization I'm involved with, I feel that my well-being and support make my work and motivation ten times higher.

RA Spotlights

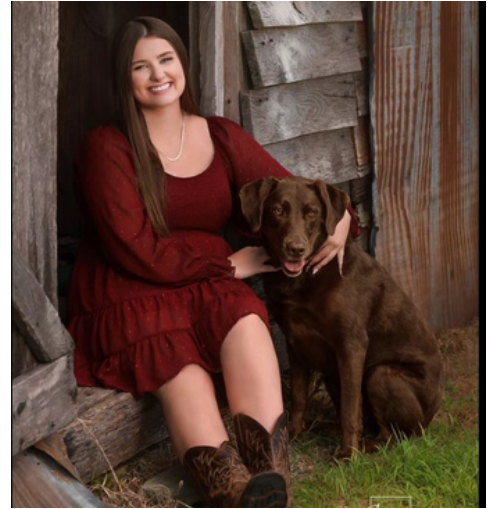
Madison Roady

RA - Lakeview Hall

Major: Political Science

Activities Involved In:

Student Employment at the Westhampton Deanery, member of the Student Conduct Council, and Cru.



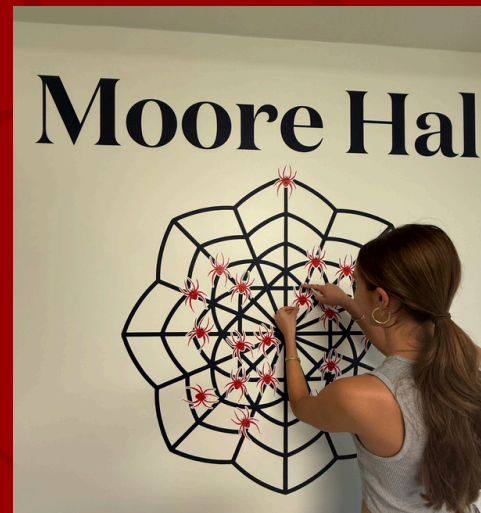
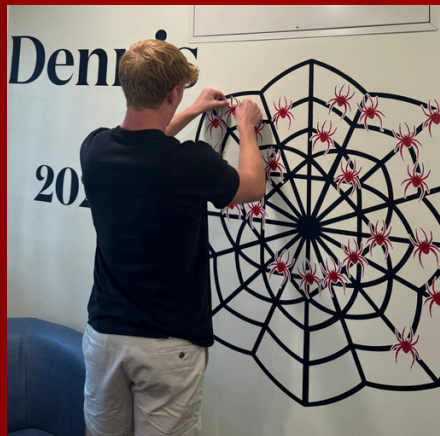
Advice to Parents: For parents of college students, one of the most important things to remember when sending your kids back to school is to enjoy your own freedom while also providing a safe and supportive space for them to return to. Although grades are very important, you should let your student have the authority to take charge of their education while supporting them through their victories and helping them recover if they fall short.

What I like best about being a Spider: Being a Spider has become such an important part of my identity. The community I've built here means so much to me, and the time I've spent learning and developing new skills has been one of the most rewarding parts of my college experience.

RLH Annual Spider Mural Day Event

**First Year
Residence Halls
showing their
SPIDER PRIDE!**

**They added
their name to
our web!**



Summer Block Party



Summer residents
enjoyed food,
games, and
community on the IM
fields during the
summer block party



Room Change Process

Support your spider with roommate conflicts!

- 1) Conflict is a normal part of college life.
- 2) Encourage your student to talk directly with their roommate.
- 3) Remind them that their RA can help with mediation.
- 4) Support them in thinking through realistic boundaries and compromises.



Room Change Process

- Student meets with RA for mediation.
- Time is allowed for mediation to work.
- RA follows up with the residents.
- If unresolved, student completes a Room Change Request Form
- in their StarRez Portal.
- RLH staff coordinate the move.

Expectations for Room Changes

- Room changes take time and depend on space availability.
- New roommates receive at least 48 business hours' notice.
- Single rooms are only assigned with approved accommodations through Disability Services.
- Even with a new room, challenges can arise. Our priority is developing lifelong 1) **healthy communication**, 2) **boundary-setting**, and 3) **conflict-resolution skills**.
- Roommate concerns must come from the student. While we value family support, our process requires students to advocate for themselves.



2025 - 2026

Faculty in Residence

The Office of Residence Life & Housing in collaboration with select UR faculty members combine forces to promote an intellectual community and encourage creating connections among peers, faculty, and staff to provide learning opportunities beyond the classroom to broaden the pursuit of knowledge.



Andrew Alwood

Marsh Hall



Colleen Carpenter-Swanson

Wood Hall



Tom Mullen

Dennis & Robins Hall



Bill Bergman

Moore Hall



Shannon Jones

Lora Robins Court

Stay tuned for more information about upcoming Faculty in Residence (FIR) events, such as their individual hall community events and monthly FIR talks hosted for all first-year students to help them further develop their academic web.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR SPIDER!

TRANSITION

The transition to college may be a difficult journey, and not just for first-year students. It is a time filled with an overwhelming amount of change from new environments and roommates to new challenges with exploring majors and new ideas. As a member of the Spider Family, you play a crucial role in providing additional support to your Spider. Please see the topics below for ways you may assist in supporting your student.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Encourage Open Communication

- Remind your student that their roommate won't know if something is bothering them unless they tell them

Provide Support

- Listen
- Validate their feelings
- Offer advice

Help them identify boundaries

Focus on the positives

HOW WE CAN HELP

Complete the RLH Roommate Agreement

- We advise that within the first month they sit down with their roommates and discuss topics like guests, study times, cleanliness, and quiet times.

Meet with the RA

- RA can assist by facilitating the roommate agreement conversations.
- RAs can assist if the struggles advance and mediation becomes necessary

Room Change Process

- If you have any questions regarding roommate conflicts or concerns, check out page 10.

ROOMMATE STRUGGLES

Sharing your space with another person for the first or even second time is a big transition for some students. Most conflict stems from a lack of communication and unrealistic expectations. Even if roommates have been friends for a long time, living with someone is a very different experience. Putting in the effort to get to know another Spider can be very beneficial and your student can make a life-long friend.



Residence Life & Housing

HOMESICKNESS

It is very common for students to feel homesick in the first few months of the Fall Semester. This is truly the fear of missing out on the happenings at home. This may present in personality changes, anxiety, stress, sadness and struggles engaging/ getting involved. Sometimes students will want to come home every weekend. Going home might feel like they are staying connected with family and friends but it is important for them to make connections on campus. Encourage your Spider to get involved with events on campus over the weekend. Check out our campus partners below to see what is happening on campus.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Encourage them to highlight aspects of home in their space.
- Stay connected! Schedule times to chat with loved ones at home.
- Send a care package.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Activities on Campus

- Check out the Weeks of Welcome events
- Check out the campus partners below

RA

- Spider Chats
- Floor Programs
- Building Wide events

CAMPUS PARTNERS

Hub for Student Inclusion and Community

Whitehurst Hall, 2nd floor
246 Richmond Way
Office: (804) 289-8032

Living-Learning & New Student Programs

Boatwright Administrative Wing, Suite 01
261 Richmond Way
Phone: (804) 289-8415

Well-Being Center

363 College Road
Phone: 804-289-8064

- Student Health Center
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Health Promotions
- University Recreation

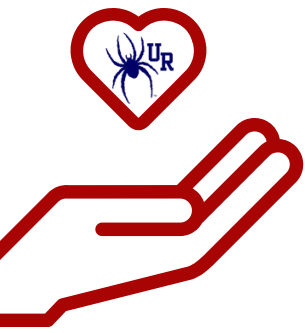
Disability Services

The Refectory Suite 127
206 Richmond Way
Email: disability@richmond.edu
Phone: (804) 662-5001
Fax: (804) 289-8375

Center for Student Involvement

Tyler Haynes Commons, suite 217
270 Richmond Way
Email: involved@richmond.edu
Phone: 804-289-8505
Spider Central Platform (On-Campus Events)

POLICIES & SERVICES



Residence Life and Housing has policies in place to ensure safety in the residence halls, and to help encourage a sense of community. Students are responsible for knowing and following all residential policies.

We also partner with many offices across campus to provide students with residential needs, such as: Facilities, Disability Services, and Support Services. Each of these offices help us to keep the residence halls up and running.

Fire Safety Inspections

Each year professional staff members conduct Fire Safety Inspections in every residential room. We look for potential fire hazards such as: candles, cooking appliances, decorations hanging from the ceiling, blocked smoke detectors, and other fire hazards. If a staff member confiscate items from the room, the items can be picked up when the student returns home next.

A student's first fire safety violation will be a warning letter they receive to their University of Richmond email address. A second violation will result in a \$25 fine, and a third violation will result in a \$50 fine. Any further violations will result in conduct charges.

Campus Partners

- Facilities: Students can submit work orders for any facility concern.
- Disability Services: If you feel that there is a barrier to access due to a disability please contact Disability Services.
- Support Services: Students can contact Support Services for furniture concerns.

Helpful Links:

Links Open in a New Window

[Housing Policies Webpage](#)

[Staying on Campus for Breaks](#)

[Room Change Process Graphic](#)

[Housing Services Webpage](#)

[Resident Assistant Webpage](#)

[Coordinator Staff Webpage](#)

Interested in living on campus next year? Visit our [Returning Student Selection Webpage](#)

[Contact Us Webpage:](#)



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