The Office of Residence Life & Housing believes that a student's support system has an integral role to play in the success of their overall college experience. We have made it a priority to embrace all Parents and Families by spreading awareness about certain aspects of our office. In this newsletter, you will learn about the Returning Student Housing Selection, how to support your Spider through the process, how to encourage your Spider to get involved in the halls, and more!
The best part about being a Spider is the pride and the sense of community that I have been able to build so far away from my home. As an international student being in a new country and continent can be daunting at times, but there is a sense of belonging that I have found being in the University of Richmond community. Once you arrive you realize being a spider is so much more than having university merchandise and attending the university, it means having a family, being a part of a community that wants to help you thrive, and having access to opportunities I could only dream of. Being a spider means the sky is the limit, and through the resources and networks of the school I have been able to see the world beyond the University, traveling to Brazil and Germany. The Sky is the limit as a Spider!

**WHAT I LIKE BEST ABOUT BEING A SPIDER...**

**ADVICE TO PARENTS...**

I remember the first week of being at college I called my mother every day and she would always end the call in a hurry. One day I confronted her about feeling like she was always trying to leave the call or didn’t have time to talk to me. She confessed that she had been trying to let me go and felt she had to help me “leave the nest” so to speak. The truth is this was the time I needed her the most. As parents, it’s important to remain available and open to your child during their initial move. The temptation to distance yourself to help them transition better doesn’t always have the greatest impact. We are in a new space, with new people and it is all so unfamiliar, we need to know we can always tap into what is known and comfortable to ground us in the chaos that can be college. Be near and let your child establish the support they may need from you. That might mean daily calls, biweekly, or once a month but just be available. We may not say it as much but we need you - just in a different capacity.

**ADVICE TO SPIDERS...**

We often have so many beautiful and exciting dreams about college before we arrive and we so easily get carried away with the idea of college, forgetting that it is like any other season of life - It has its highs and lows. I have found that when we give ourselves room to discover new friendships, classes, and parts of ourselves it’s not always a straightforward or instantaneous process. Be kind to yourself and remember everyone is going through a similar transition. You won’t always have it together and that is okay. I took my first year way too seriously. The four years will go by so fast and you don’t want any regrets, so be yourself, work hard academically, but also build community, try something new and be willing to put yourself out there – you’ll be surprised where it leads.

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**RA Spotlight**

**Kerry-Ann Moyo**
Gray Court

**Major:** Rhetoric and Communication Skills  
**Minor:** Data Science and Statistics  
**Involvement:** Executive Member of ASA (African Students Alliance), President of Multicultural Student Solidarity Network, member of Women’s Rugby Team.
Our 2023-24 Resident Assistant application is currently open and accepting applications until January 31st at 11:59pm. This is a 15 hour a week position where your student will learn new skills, develop community, help create a safe and comfortable living environment, and support residence hall and University policy. More information about the position and application process can be found here: https://residencelife.richmond.edu/residence-life/Support/resident-assistants.html

**Qualifications**

- Cumulative 2.5 GPA at the time of hiring
- In good conduct and honor standing with the University
- Available for minimum of 1 semester
- Attended an info session (see below)

**Timeline**

**Submit RA Application**
- Due Jan. 31st at 11:59 PM
- See QR Code below

**Applicant Open House**
- More info will be sent post application submission.

**Interview Weekend**
- February 11th-12th, 2023

**Decision Letter**
- February 17th

**Info Sessions**

Wednesday, January 25th
Whitehurst Living Room
6 PM
Getting Involved In the Res Hall

SPIDER CHATS

Spider Chats provide RAs the opportunity to meet and connect with each of their residents individually to build a foundation of support. Each semester, RAs are required to facilitate at least one Spider Chat with each of their residents. Spider Chats will be expected to take place between Weeks 1 and 10 of both the Fall and Spring Semesters. The conversations should take place in a space that feels comfortable for both the resident and the RA. Ask your Spider if they have checked in with their RA!

SPRING RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE
DATES & LOCATIONS COMING SOON

- February
  - HiHello Networking Social & Workshop
- March
  - See a Leader, Be a Leader
    - Student Leadership Social Media Initiative
- April
  - First Year Hall Mural Ceremony

WHAT THE RAS HAVE PLANNED...

- One Building-Wide Event for the entire hall.
- One Community Gathering for your individual floor.
- One Passive Activity to engage on the go.
- One Take-To where RAs will take residents to support a campus event.

Have your Spider check with their RA to see what great opportunities they have planned for them this semester!
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.

**Housing Selection Support Tips**

- Encourage your Spider to know and stay ahead of deadlines. This process has multiple steps and quick turnarounds. Our staff can't accommodate late requests, and this could affect your Spider's ability to participate in the housing selection process.
- Talk with your Spider about their housing priorities. No housing is going to meet all of their priorities so work with them to create multiple back-up plans, and help them process which need is greatest to them.
- Encourage them to ask questions. If students haven't done this process before they may not know all of the steps. Our staff is here to help them navigate it.

**Help your Spider stay motivated as they Spring forward**

- If your Spider ever feels unmotivated, encourage them to look at the big picture and remember why they started.
- Celebrate your Spider's small victories! Encouraging them to have small goals throughout the semester can feel less daunting and encourage them to keep putting their best foot forward when they see family or friends cheering in their corner.
- Much like spring cleaning, encourage your Spider to evaluate their routine and space to feel organized.
- Remind your Spider to recharge when needed! Spring semester happens fast, packed with many obligations, but planning time for rest and self-care may help to alleviate some stress.

**Policies & Services**

RLH Policies:
https://residencelife.richmond.edu/policies-and-services/policies/index.html

Room Change Process:
https://residencelife.richmond.edu/housing/RLHRoomChangeProcess.pdf

Housing Services:
https://residencelife.richmond.edu/policies-and-services/services/index.html

Contact Us:
https://residencelife.richmond.edu/about/index.html
In the spring semester, returning students have the option to participate in room selection to pick rooms for the following school year. The room selection process is in StarRez, the Housing automated system. Students participating in room selection must pay the housing deposit to Student Accounts and accept the housing contract by the deadline date, form roommate groups and select a room within StarRez at the day/time of their timeslot. Check out more information below to help your Spider through the process!

**Timeline**

- **February 6th:**
  - Application and Roommate Portal open
- **March 6th:**
  - Deposits or Financial Aid Waiver due by 5 pm (EST)
- **March 12th:**
  - Application deadline
- **March 19th:**
  - Roommate Portal closes
- **March 23rd:**
  - Apartment Selection
- **March 24th:**
  - Roommate Portal reopens
- **March 29th:**
  - SSIR and LLC Selection
- **April 3rd - 7th:**
  - Residence Hall Selection

**Info**

- Spiders must pay their deposit or finalize their financial aid waiver AND sign their housing contract in order to participate in housing selection.
- We offer Gender-Flexible Housing (GFH) to Spiders of all genders, particularly those that identify as transgender, non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming.
- Spiders need to be able to fill all of the beds in a room, suite, or apartment to reserve it. They will create a roommate group within the application.

**Events**

Residence Life and Housing hosts several events to help your Spider prepare for Returning Student Housing Selection. Please speak with your Spider about the following opportunities:

- Returning Application Webinar
- Returning Selection Webinar
- Gender-Flexible Housing Roommate Mixer
- Roommate Mixer

More information (dates, times, locations, and links) will be sent to your Spider’s UR email address.
Residential Experience Advisory Council (REAC) is recruiting new members. REAC is a leadership group that advocates for Spiders and seeks to make the residential experience the best that it can be. Come together with your peers and create change among our communities! If interested, have your Spider contact Taylor Walsh at twalsh4@richmond.edu.

Encourage your Spider to come out to provide your feedback on a variety of topics so that we can enhance their experience! RLH along with REAC will host 3 opportunities.

**Dates**
- February 10th
- March 24th
- April 14th

More information about times and locations will be sent to your Spider’s UR email address.