



SPIDER FAMILY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 • SEPTEMBER 2024



GREETINGS PARENTS & FAMILIES!

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 our newsletters, you will meet our new staff members, learn about Housing Processes, how to support your Spider through transitions, and more!

SPIDER FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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Meet our STAFF



Patrick Benner
Senior Director



Taylor Walsh
Associate Director



Joy Heinzman
Associate Director



Leslie Jacobs
Administrative
Coordinator



Emily Paradise
Coordinator for
Training & Development



Jacob Lewman
Coordinator for
Residence Life &
Housing



Emily DiMaria

Area Coordinator -
Lora Robins Court
& North Court



Amala Thomas

Area Coordinator -
Gray Court, South
Court, & Keller



Jo'Nae Olds

Area Coordinator -
Lakeview Hall,
Marsh Hall,
Residence Hall No.
2, & Wood



Jocelyn Dinh

Area Coordinator -
Moore Hall, Residence
Hall No.3, Dennis, Robins,
Residence Hall No. 1



Stephanie Kauffman

Area Coordinator -
UFAs, Gateway, &
Westhampton Hall

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

MEET OUR STUDENT STAFF



HEAD RESIDENTS

The Office of Residence Life & Housing provides the unique opportunity for our returning RLH student staff to step into a new leadership experience through the role of the Head Resident.

Head Residents (HR) are responsible for leading a staff ranging from 4-10 Resident Assistants within their community. HRs are empowering leaders who foster community amongst the RA staff and connect the RA staff to the RLH Pro Staff. Similar to the RA role, HRs not only provide peer support and connection to the RA staff, but to their own residence hall/apartment community.



RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

Within the Office of Residence Life & Housing, we have identified and selected about 90 student leaders across the University of Richmond to serve as Resident Assistants.

As Resident Assistants (RA), our student leaders are responsible for supervising a community of about 25-60 residential students. RAs are typically the first point of contact for support your Spider and actively work to practice our values of building a positive, inclusive, and safe community.

**Stay tuned for updates about the
2025-2026 RA Recruitment
Selection Process.**

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR STUDENT STAFF [HERE!](#)

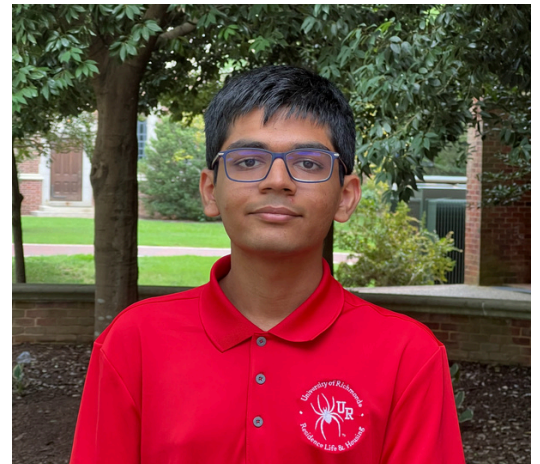
RA Spotlights

Dhruvam Desai

HR- Dennis Hall

Major: Mathematical Economics and Computer Science

Activities Involved In: Bonner Scholars, Honor Council, and UR Games Club



Advice to Parents: College brings change and uncertainty for students. While it's a safe space for exploration, it also brings a confusing time in our lives. Try to support us as we face that confusion and attempt to find how we fit within the communities we become a part of. Often, this is the role of being an open ear with whom we can share our concerns and lives. Sometimes, this is the support role that encourages us to embrace exploration with activities such as self-reflection, utilizing campus resources, or seeking guidance from others who have walked similar paths. This gives us the freedom and space to digest our confusion because this exploration helps us find our passions, role models, and purpose. Meanwhile, don't forget to share about your own life back home because a huge part of our life is you even as we grow and explore afar on campus.

What I like best about being a Spider: The best thing about being a spider is the empowering community that I am a part of. Every experience and role I have held was recommended to me by the Spider community by its different members who cared for my professional and personal growth. During my first year, I gave up on many applications as I felt indecisive and unmotivated, but friends and faculty empowered me to pursue my passions and shared endeavors that were more aligned for me. I began research, consulting, community service internship, and my RA role all within the spring of my first year. I knew I wanted to help others and the Spider Community showed me ways how I could turn that motive into action by sharing opportunities and support. At UR, simply sharing your intent and interests can open doors and experiences that seem out of reach. So the best part of UR is its empowering community that helps explore your passion and find opportunities that align with it. With my RA position, I aim to pass this support on by empowering my first-year peers to pursue their interests and passions while utilizing the available resources at UR.

RA Spotlights

Emma Walsh
HR- South Court

Major: Rhetoric & Communications

Activities Involved In:

Student Employment at the Westhampton Deanery, UR Museums, & Head Resident of South Court & Keller Hall



Advice to Parents: I can only imagine the bittersweet sentiment stuck in many hearts and minds at this moment, but please let me begin by saying you did a wonderful job raising them. Your children were hand-picked to attend this institution, based on intelligence, yes, but also virtue, character, and tenacity. Those are not just traits picked up from anywhere; they must be cultivated intentionally, with thought and care. As one of seven kids, my parents constantly reminded us of the importance of letting a child tumble in order to learn. Let me tell you, the first time I fell off my bicycle, I did not like that rule very much, but I learned from my mistakes and adapted to become better next time. This may be an elementary example as we are all far older now, and I assume your children are much better cyclists than I, but the underlying truth remains. Your children have blossomed into brilliant young adults; now it is time for them to fly, fall, then soar. There are countless resources available for additional support should they need in addition to the love your family provides. Remember to take a step back and witness their becoming. It is beautiful, truly!

What I like best about being a Spider: The access to opportunities at this university is unlike anything I could have ever dreamed of. Even though the road was difficult as a junior transfer student, I could still cultivate a strong sense of belonging and found avenues to express myself. The friendships forged here are forever and my insatiable appetite for learning has returned. I could not be more grateful to have found myself, passion, and purpose at UR.

RLH Annual Spider Mural Day Event

First Year
Residence Halls
showing their
SPIDER PRIDE!



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



Well-Being Center

363 College Road
University of Richmond, VA 23173
Phone: 804-289-8064

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

Disability Services

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

Office Hours: M-F; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND



Center for Student Involvement

Center for Student Involvement

Tyler Haynes Commons, suite 217
270 Richmond Way
University of Richmond, VA 23173
Main phone: 804-289-8505
Fax: 804-289-8328
Email: involved@richmond.edu

Student Center for Equity and Inclusion

Whitehurst Hall, 2nd floor
246 Richmond Way
University of Richmond, VA 23173
Office: (804) 289-8032

2024 - 2025

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.



Ashley Austin
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.

Room Change Process

Here are ways you can support your spider with roommate conflicts!:

- 1) Tell them conflict is natural.
- 2) Ask them if they have spoken with their roommate (in person) about the situation.
- 3) Encourage them to talk to their RA to set up a mediation.
- 4) Help them brainstorm compromises and understand where their boundaries are.

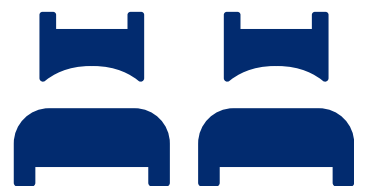


Room Change Process

- 1) Mediation with the RA.
- 2) Allow time for the mediation to work.
- 3) RA will check-in with residents.
- 4) If necessary, student will complete the Room Change Request Form found in StarRez.
- 5) RLH staff will coordinate with the student to complete the room change.

Expectations for Room Changes

- Room changes don't happen immediately. RLH has to give any new roommates at least 48 business hours' notice that a new student is moving in.
- Room changes won't be to a single room, unless the student has an approved accommodation on file for a single.
- Room changes don't prevent new conflicts. Our goal is that students have the tools to communicate boundaries and address concerns.



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.

RLH Policies:

<https://residencelife.richmond.edu/policies-and-services/policies/index.html>

RLH Break Policies:

<https://residencelife.richmond.edu/policies-and-services/arrival-break-transitional-housing/index.html#end-of-springsummer-transitional-housing-end-of-yearend-of-summer>

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>



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