Welcome!

The Housing and Residence Life Office will send out a newsletter each semester to establish a clear path of communication with Blazer parents. “Blazer Housing News” will contain information about hall openings and closings, as well as general office updates that may or may not affect your son or daughter and his or her living arrangements.

I highly encourage you to contact us via phone, e-mail, or standard mail if you have any questions or concerns. Our website is constantly being updated, so be sure to keep http://housing.valdosta.edu bookmarked on your Web browser.

We have dedicated undergraduate student leaders and full-time/graduate professionals in each residence hall to make sure your student’s stay is as personally enriching as possible. Now that midterms are finished, it is time for every student to study hard and do well on his or her final exams.

The in-hall staff can help to make this a reality. Feel free to ask your son or daughter if he or she is consulting his or her Resident Assistant (RA) regularly. The professional staff is here to assist students with their social and intellectual development and to direct them to the proper campus resources for additional help.

A couple of resources for you to be aware of are the Parent’s Resource Center located at http://www.valdosta.edu/prc/ and the Parents and Families Association at http://www.valdosta.edu/pfa/. Both are part of VSU’s ongoing effort to remain connected to the best partners we have, our students’ “home team.” Also, be sure to add yourself to our new parent listserv where we will also keep in touch with you. The signup is off our homepage on the right-hand side, entitled “Parents stay involved with Housing.”

I hope that your student has a good experience living with us this semester, and I look forward to continuing dialogue in the spring semester.

Sincerely,
Dr. Thomas W. Hardy
Director, Housing and Residence Life

Director’s Note

Room selection is the process in which current residence hall students are able to sign up for a space to live on campus. Spaces are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, with students in a higher class standing and/or those with higher GPAs being accommodated first. Look for the December letter mailed to your home with more specific details about how this process works. If your student plans to live on campus for the 2013-2014 academic school year, please pay particular attention to the December letter. Note: Housing is not guaranteed all four years. Each year is a separate contract. If you have any questions before then, or if you do not receive a letter by December 17th, contact the Housing and Residence Life Office at (229) 333-5920.
Meet the Staff!

The Housing and Residence Life Office is excited to introduce you to the hall-level members of the team. This year, there are 15 graduate assistants and three complex directors working in the office and the residence halls. Their full contact and biographical information is available on the Housing and Residence Life website. Here is a quick look at some of the people on staff:

Complex Director for Georgia, Langdale, and Read Hall

Bonnie Brackett is originally from East Point, Georgia, on the southern side of Atlanta. Although Bonnie originally wanted to plan weddings and graduated with a B.S. in Leisure and Sport Management from Elon University in Elon, North Carolina, she discovered the field of Student Affairs and decided to shift career paths. After working as a Graduate Resident and completing her M.Ed. in College Student Affairs Administration at the University of Georgia in 2010, Bonnie headed north where she was the Assistant Director for Residence Life and Housing at the University of Maine at Farmington for a year. She has been a Complex Director at VSU since August of 2011.

During her college years, Bonnie was very active in many aspects of Student Affairs, including residence life, leadership, orientation, admissions, and community service. Bonnie spent several years as President of the Resident Student Association at Elon University and held two positions on the SAACURH Executive Committee while at the University of Georgia before moving into an advisor role for the Campus Residence Council at the University of Maine at Farmington. Currently, Bonnie serves as the Advisor of the VSU NRHH chapter and is the Advisor-Elect for the Georgia Residence Hall Organization or GRHO. Bonnie is also active in several professional organizations including Georgia Housing Officers (GHO) and Georgia College Personnel Association (GCPA).

When Bonnie is not working with students and staff, she enjoys cooking and baking, reading, photography, watching television, cheering on the Elon Phoenix and the surrounding coastal area. Bonnie is also involved with the Young Alumni Council at Elon and travels back to North Carolina several times a year for Young Alumni meetings.

Complex Director for Centennial and Patterson Halls

Donald Coleman joined the Housing and Residence Life team in the fall of 2012. Originally from Savannah, Georgia, Donald received a B.B.A. in Business Management and a certificate in Event and Tradeshows Planning from Georgia State University. During his time at Georgia State University, Donald was a Resident Assistant, orientation leader, and NASPA Undergraduate Fellow (NUFP); these student leadership positions led to his passion for Student Affairs. Donald went on to obtain a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration from Loyola University Chicago. During this time, he also worked as an Assistant Residence Director. Donald’s work in Student Affairs has taken him around the U.S. and even all the way to South Africa. He is excited to join the Blazer family.

Complex Director for Brown, Hopper, and Lowndes Halls

Stephanie Bent grew up in Jamaica but calls the Atlanta area her American hometown. Stephanie graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a B.S. in Applied Mathematics. While attending Georgia Tech, she held various leadership positions in organizations including Student Government, Caribbean Students Association, and Hall Council. Stephanie chaired the planning committee for a leadership conference for Georgia Tech students. While at Georgia Tech, she realized she loved working with people much more than she liked working with mathematical proofs. After leaving Georgia Tech, Stephanie obtained a master’s degree in Higher Education with an emphasis in Student Affairs. She returned to Atlanta to work as a Residence Hall Director for three years with Georgia State University. After that, she spent a year receiving training from and then working with two religious organizations.

Stephanie believes that college students are the future leaders of our society and wants to help students make the most of their college experience. She enjoys talking to students about life’s decisions, purpose, values, and how to interact with those who are different from us. She also loves to hear about students’ classes and what they like doing during their free time.

Meet the Graduate Staff!

CONVERSE and READE RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR

Ricardo Horne joined the VSU Housing and Residence Life Team in fall of 2011. He received a B.B.A. in Marketing from Mississippi State University. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Higher Educational Leadership.

While attending MSU, Ricardo was a Resident Advisor. He was a member of the Appalachian Leadership Honors Program and spent his summer working as a counselor for leaderSTATE. During his downtime, Ricardo likes to read, attend spoken word events, and volunteer for academic tutoring.

CENTENNIAL RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR

Anthony Holmes joined the VSU staff in January of 2011. Originally from Springfield, Ohio, Anthony received his B.A. degree in Psychology from Berea College in Kentucky. Currently, he is pursuing a master’s degree in School Counseling. Ultimately, he hopes to be a professor, training and teaching other counselors.

While at Berea, Anthony worked in Residence Life, holding several positions including Student Chaplain/RA, Student Chaplain Coordinator, and upon graduating, Hall Director for Berea’s Upward Bound Program. In his spare time, he enjoys playing sports, watching movies, spending time with friends, and meeting new people. Anthony has a great passion for helping others and hopes to leave his mark on VSU by promoting growth, learning, and community among the students at VSU.

BROWN RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR

Abbey Thompson was born and raised in Waukegan, Wisconsin. She received her B.A. in Psychology from University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UWO) in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. She completed her senior honors thesis at UWO on pediatric traumatic brain injury and is interested in working with children in the future. She started with Valdosta State Housing and Residence Life in 2011 and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Clinical-Counseling Psychology at VSU.

At UWO, Abbey worked for the Department of Residence Life as a Community Advisor and Senior Community Advisor for three years. She was involved with many activities, including Reserve University Board Cinema Committee and UWO French Club as President. She also was fortunate to spend two summers in New York City as an ACUHO-I Conference Housing Intern at Columbia University. Her experiences at UWO and Columbia University taught her how much she enjoys the world of Student Affairs, mostly meeting and working with people of all different backgrounds and personalities. Abbey is a huge movie buff and loves movie nights and hanging out with friends.

More information can be found at:

http://services.valdosta.edu/housing/SuccessStrategiesWorkshop.aspx
Matt Parnell is a native of Valdosta. He is a recent graduate of Valdosta State University where he received his B.A. in History. He is pursuing a master’s degree in Higher Education. Matt has worked as a Student Facility Assistant and Desk Clerk. In his spare time he enjoys playing soccer. He loves all types of music. He enjoys spending time with his family when he has downtime. He was previously the Contracts and Assignments Graduate Assistant, but he has taken on the role of Hopper Residence Hall Director this year. He is looking forward to this new position within Housing. Matt hopes to one day work in local government.

Kyle O'Bryan is from metro Atlanta and now calls Valdosta home. He recently graduated of Valdosta State University with a B.A. in Marketing, and he is currently pursuing his M.B.A. This is his first position with Valdosta State University, and he is excited to be a part of this school’s success. He enjoys coaching youth soccer at the local park and loves to play the game as well. In addition to soccer, he has a passion for discovering new music and enjoys attending concerts when he can. His involvement with Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) has sparked an interest for community involvement that he plans to stay committed to. In the future, Kyle plans to run his own business.

Kyle's B.S. in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration from Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois. He is currently pursuing a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership.

While at WIU, Fischer worked for University Housing and Dining Services for three years as a Resident Assistant and Desk Clerk. He was involved with National Residence Hall Honorary and Hall Governments. In his spare time, Fischer enjoys leisure running, lifting free weights, spending time with friends, and learning about technology. He is also looking forward to experiencing the warmer climate of Georgia.

Kyle received a B.S. in Business from Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois. Along with the studies of business, she also studied psychology, pre-law, and accounting during her undergraduate time. She started with Valdosta State Housing and Residence Life in the fall of 2012, and she is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Higher Education: Student Affairs.

While at Eastern Illinois University, Randi worked as a Resident Assistant for four years, one of which was done on an exchange at Mississippi State University. This position gave her the opportunity to serve students in many facets and learn from several different supervisors. Randi looks for any excuse to spend time outdoors as well as creating memories to last a lifetime.

Tamera Dunn is excited to join the VSU Housing and Residence Life team. Tamera is a recent graduate of Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Missouri, having earned her bachelor’s degree in History. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Higher Education Administration at VSU.

While attending Northwest, Tamera served multiple terms on the Midwest Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls Board of Directors as Regional Communications Coordinator of Recruitment and Retention and most recently as Regional Director. Her passion for the residence halls also led to two terms as President of the Northwest Missouri State University Residence Hall Association. In her downtime, Tamera enjoys reading, experiencing something new, and volunteering.

Chad Jenkins comes to Valdosta from the small town of Fitzgerald, Georgia. He began his career with the Housing and Residence Life Office in the summer of 2008 as a Student Facilities Assistant. He stayed with Housing until he completed his undergraduate degree in Art Education. Using his degree, Chad taught elementary school art in Statesboro, Georgia. He taught for only a year before he returned to the city that he greatly missed, Valdosta. Returning in the fall of 2012, Chad began a master’s program in Higher Education and rejoined the Housing and Residence Life team, supervising the current Student Facilities Assistant.

Sheika enjoys volunteering in the community as well as painting, drawing, and dancing. She is also an avid Harry Potter fan, one of her favorite Harry Potter quotes being, “It is our choices that show who we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

Katie Colp is excited to join the Student Affairs family at VSU. Katie was born and raised in Indiana and graduated from Ball State University in 2009 with a B.A. in Women’s Studies and again in 2012 with a B.A. in Political Science. While at BSU, she was extremely involved in her campus and as a Resident Assistant for three years and as a Conference Assistant for one very exciting summer. Katie also served as the President of the Ruth Peters chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary, was the Assistant Director of Administration for the Indiana Residence-Hall Organization, and served on several regional and national committees for the Great Lakes Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls. She will be pursuing her master’s degree in Higher Education Leadership. She self-identifies as a proud nerd and in her free time to consume as much British science fiction and fantasy as possible.
Frequently Asked Questions:

WHAT IF MY STUDENT CANNOT COME HOME DURING BREAKS?
Centennial and Converse Halls are the only buildings that will remain open during the Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks. If your student cannot go home, they will need to make other arrangements.

DURING SEMESTER BREAKS, MAY MY STUDENT LEAVE HIS/HER BELONGINGS IN HIS/HER ROOM?
Yes, however, the Housing and Residence Life Office is not responsible for loss or damage to these possessions. Please encourage your student to take home valuable items if there is a concern.

WHAT IF MY STUDENT WANTS TO CHANGE ROOMS OR MOVE TO ANOTHER RESIDENCE HALL?
The room change process began on Monday, August 29. The first week of room changes, students were granted moves within their current residence hall. The second week, students were allowed to request moves between residence halls. After this two-week period, students will be able to continue to request moves for both in- and out-of-hall changes by meeting with their Residence Hall Director or Complex Director.

CAN MY STUDENT BREAK HIS/HER HOUSING CONTRACT TO MOVE OFF CAMPUS?
The traditional hall contract is for the academic year, while Centennial and Conv"e Halls contract are for 12 months. Residents wishing to terminate their residence hall contract during the contract period while remaining enrolled at the university may do so by paying 50 percent of the remaining value of the contract and forfeiting the $300 deposit. However, first-year students are subject to the Freshmen Residency Policy. Specific details are available at the Housing and Residence Life Office.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MY STUDENT’S PROPERTY?
Your student is responsible for his/her own property. Although precautions are taken to maintain adequate security, the university cannot assume the responsibility for the loss or damage to student possessions. We encourage you to carry appropriate insurance to cover such losses.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR MY STUDENT TO WORK PART-TIME IN THE RESIDENCE HALL?
Yes. The Housing and Residence Life Office employs students as resident assistants, student assistants, night operations personnel, facilities assistants, and front desk workers. Please refer to the Housing website for more information and available postings.
Important Dates

**October 15-16, 2012**
Fall Break

**October 17-20, 2012**
Homecoming

**November 15, 2012**
Contract Release Deadline for Spring Semester
(freshmen cannot be released unless they qualify for inclusion in the Freshmen Residency Policy)

**November 20, 2012, 5 p.m.**
Traditional Residence Halls close for Thanksgiving
(Centennial and Converse Halls will remain open)
*Please see your RHD if you need to stay late due to a Tuesday night class.

**November 21 - 23, 2012**
Thanksgiving Break / No Classes

**November 25, 2012, 10 a.m.**
Traditional Residence Halls Re-open

**November 26 - 30, 2012**
Traditional Residence Hall Closing Meetings
(dates/times determined by RA)

**December 8, 2012, noon**
Traditional Residence Halls close for winter holiday
(Centennial and Converse Halls will remain open)

**December 8, 2012 — January 6, 2013**
Winter Break

**January 3, 2013, 10 a.m.**
Traditional Residence Halls re-open

**January 7, 2013**
First Day of class for Spring Semester

*Note: Calendar subject to change as needed by Housing and Residence Life. Visit [http://housing.valdosta.edu](http://housing.valdosta.edu) for more information.*