

Blazer Housing News

A Newsletter for Current Residence Hall students and their family

Fall 2008



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

Please know that we have dedicated undergraduate student leaders and full-time/graduate professionals in each residence hall to make your student's stay 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 they are consulting his or her Resident Assistant (RA) regularly.

A few extra resources for parents to be aware of is the Parent's Resource Center 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."

As we start to enter the holiday season, I hope that your student had a good experience living with us this semester. I look forward to continuing the dialogue in the spring semester.

Sincerely,

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

Room Selection for the 2009-2010 School Year

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 serve basis, with students in a higher class standing and/or those with higher GPAs going first. Look for a December letter mailed to your home with more specific details about how this will work. If your student plans to live on campus for the 2009-2010 academic school year, please pay particular attention to the December letter. 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.

Out to Lunch

Out to Lunch Program: The Office of Housing and Residence Life, along with Campus Dining Services proudly announce a unique opportunity for on-campus residents, Out to Lunch! This program offers students the opportunity to invite a professor, or other faculty member to lunch at no cost to that faculty member. (The student will need to use his or her own meal plan to cover his or her own meal).

During lunch, students and faculty can get to know each other better and discuss various topics such as: grades, a class assignment, joining a study group, learning how about the professor's background, or finding common interests. For a student to obtain a meal ticket for their professor, they need to visit the Office of Housing & Residence Life located in Powell Hall East on the 1st Floor.

Director's Note

The Housing and Residence Life office will send out a newsletter each semester to establish a clear path of communication with Blazer parents. The "Blazer Housing News" will contain information about residence hall opening and closings, as well as general office updates that affect your son or daughter and his or her living arrangements.

Georgia Hall Construction and Reade Hall Renovation Underway!

More new residential facilities!



Georgia Hall



Reade Hall

The Office of Housing and Residence Life at VSU continues its mission to increase the total bed capacity to house 25% of all undergraduates for the fall semester of 2009.

Our partnership with Ambling University Development Group continues as we replace Georgia Hall and begin a complete renovation on historic Reade Hall; both slated to open in August 2009!

The original Georgia Hall, a 200-bed traditional facility has been demolished to make room for its replacement. Standing six stories tall with almost 500 beds, the 130,000-square-foot Georgia Hall replacement building will stand taller than any other building on VSU's campus. Students living in this new facility will enjoy suite-style rooms with state of the art study rooms, community/recreational rooms, technologically advanced classroom, community kitchens, and laundry/vending areas. Plenty of green space around the outside of the building and impressive views of the historic pines and Camellia Trail off of Georgia Avenue will only add to the incredible living experience

our freshman residential students will have!

Reade Hall, our smallest and most historic facility will receive a complete renovation beginning December 2008. With its extra wide corridors and traditional feel, the Reade Hall restoration will bring back the original character and 1930s living experience. Design plans call for attention to detail with a restoration of the building's original central staircase and railing, wooden casework throughout, and a significant expansion of the lobby and common areas. Freshman and upper-class honors residents will enjoy a traditional double room with sink and state-of-the-art features. Two laundry facilities and two bathrooms will be added to the building to accommodate the new coed setup. This completely restored, 92-bed community will reopen in August of 2009!

Feel free to check out the Housing and Residence Life webpage at <http://housing.valdosta.edu> for more details on these exciting new residential facilities!

VSU is pleased to announce Hopper Hall opened on August 13, 2008 and welcomed 513 new residents. The building is predominantly freshmen and suite style. It is planned to house upper-class students next year.



Promoting success of *Campus Residents*

Greetings Blazers!

My name is Gala Jackson and I serve as the Living-Learning and Assessment Coordinator (LLAC) for VSU Housing & Residence Life. Originally from Fayetteville, Georgia, I am a VSU alumna with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Speech Communication and a Master of Educational Leadership in Higher Education. My background includes a solid foundation in organizational development, strategic planning, higher education administration, student programming, and student leadership. As a former VSU student and resident, I have a passion for student leadership and student success initiatives.

The Living-Learning & Assessment Coordinator position is new to the Office of Housing & Residence Life, and I am so excited about the possibilities within this position. My primary responsibilities include: developing new and coordinating existing living-learning communities, developing new residence



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life initiatives for students, assisting resident assistants with the coordination of residential programs, and organizing assessment strategies in multiple aspects of housing and residence life.

A typical day for me involves managing the ResLife Bucks system designed to track all of our residential programs,

corresponding with each of the living-learning community coordinators and resident assistants, preparing for or teaching an Emerging Leader class, developing assessment tools, reserving classroom space in the residence halls, interacting with faculty, staff, and residents about success initiatives, and checking lots of e-mails! In addition, I serve on various campus committees, and assist with advising two student organizations.

It’s a great time to be a VSU Blazer and I look forward to working with you and your student. If you have any questions, concerns, or if you would simply like to know more about the residential programs we offer, please feel free to contact me at gjjackso@valdosta.edu or at 229-333-5920. Also, check us out on the web at www.valdosta.edu/housing/residentialeducationinitiatives. Best wishes for an excellent academic year-Go Blazers!

Attending Programs in the Halls **Earn Rewards!**

Reslife Bucks were designed to help encourage residents to come to RA/RHA programming. The Reslife Bucks programs allow residents to collect bucks (fun money-online credit) to be used in the online Reslife Bucks Store or at an auction to purchase cool prizes

Q: How does my student access these events?

A: Residents have two ways to access the calendar: Blazenet and the Housing website.

Q: What information does this calendar include?

A: The Reslife Bucks Calendar is a calendar of all Housing Events. Residents

can choose from program hosted in their buildings; as well as, programs hosted by other buildings. Residents can also pre-register for programs that they would like to attend. After attending programs, residents can receive an additional \$50 in Reslife Bucks for completing the Resident Program Feedback forms.

Q: Why does housing have incentives & why we do programming?

A: The Reslife Bucks program was created to give residents an incentive to attend both our Living (fun/social) programs as well as our learning (personal

enrichment, diversity and community service). We as a department are invested in living and learning outside of the classroom and we believe that residents can have fun while learning.

Below are the program types and earnable Reslife Bucks:

Program Type	Earnable Bucks
Floor Community	\$10
Hall Community	\$20
Campus Community	\$30
Personal Enrichment	\$40
Learning About Others	\$50
Service to Community	\$100
Apartment Programming	\$300

Meet the New Staff

The Office of Housing and Residence Life is excited to introduce you to the newest members of the staff team. This year there are eight graduate assistants working in the office and the residence halls. Their full contact and biography information is available on the Housing and Residence Life Web page. Here is a quick look at some of the new people on staff:

Complex Directors

Zach Crapa came to Valdosta State University in the summer of 2008. Zach, his wife Janae, and their son Cooper have traveled from Mississippi, where Zach earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from Mississippi State University and a Master's degree in Higher Education/



Student Personnel from the University of Mississippi aka Ole Miss.

While attending Mississippi State University, Zach was a Resident Assistant for three years as well as an active member on the team of Housing Associates. While a team member, Zach realized the value of community in

residence halls and not only wanted to be a part of that community, but a contributor. From Mississippi State, Zach went to the University of Mississippi where he earned a RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR position supervising a building that housed 500 first-year, male college students. The Crapa's make their way to Valdosta in search of palm trees, a department dedicated to the students, and students dedicated to the future.

Chinasa Ordu arrived at VSU in Fall 2007, but recently joined the VSU Housing Staff in Summer 2008 as a Complex Director for Langdale Hall. Originally from Stone Mountain, GA. Chinasa attended the University of Georgia where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology.



She recently graduated with her Masters Degree in Educational Leadership with a Higher Education concentration, from VSU in August 2008. Chinasa has participated actively in Residence Life serving as a Resident Assistant and C.L.A.S.S. Advocate at the University Georgia. She

aspires to actively participate in the field of Student Affairs and work closely with students. Chinasa enjoys traveling, spending time with her family and friends, and giving back to the community through her beloved sorority Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Meet the Graduate Staff



BROWN RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Phillip Boyd is from Nashville, GA. In August 2005, he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Georgia. He is now enrolled in the Master's degree in Public Administration program here at Valdosta State. Phillip can be found exploring the great outdoors when he isn't hanging out in the Brown lobby.

CENTENNIAL RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Christian Riles received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Valdosta State University and is currently seeking a Master's in Public Administration. She loves working with the students of VSU and is looking forward to having a great and successful year.

CONVERSE/RAEDE RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Jessica J. A. Morrison received a Bachelors of Business Administration Degree in Marketing from Valdosta State University in 2008. She is currently pursuing her Master's Public Administration. Jessica has always taken great pride in helping people, and would love to continue that upon completion of the MPA program.

PATTERSON RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Corey Langston graduated in May 2008 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from Valdosta State University and is currently seeking my Masters Degree in Public Administration here at VSU. Corey served two years as a Resident Assistant, and is very passionate about working with students.

HOPPER RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Jack Purser came to us from Puckett, Mississippi, which is a very small town, consisting of only 300 friendly people. He graduated from Mississippi University for Women in Columbus, Mississippi (admitting men since 1982) with a Bachelor's degree in Communications. He decided to attend VSU to obtain a Master's degree in Educational Leadership in Higher Education. Jack's enthusiasm for campus involvement is contagious and will surely infect the community at Hopper Hall.

CENTRAL OFFICE GRADUATE ASSISTANT - MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS



Taqueilla Ivey graduated from VSU in the Summer of 2007 with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Marriage & Family Therapy. She has been involved with Housing in a variety of leadership capacities including RHA and as a Resident Assistant. Her knowledge of Housing will be an asset as she works to keep our residents and their families

informed about what is happening in Housing.

LANGDALE RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Cookie Garrett is a proud Alumnus of Valdosta State, affectionately known as Title Town USA. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology/Counseling, and obtained a minor in African American Studies. She is currently pursuing her Master's of Education degree in School Counseling. Cookie is very active on campus and in the community and hopes to leaves a lasting mark for her service and commitment to helping

others.

CENTRAL OFFICE GRADUATE ASSISTANT - OPERATIONS



Amber Tucker is the new Graduate Assistant for operations. She recently relocated along with her husband to Valdosta from Gainesville, Florida after completing her Bachelors degree in Psychology. She is currently enrolled in the Marriage and Family Therapy Masters program here at VSU.

LOWNDES RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTOR



Vonzelle Johnson is an alum of Colgate University (Bachelor's degree in Sociology), located in upstate New York. He enjoyed his student leadership experiences so much that he decided to be a Hall Director here at VSU while he is seeking a Master's Degree in Social Work.

CENTRAL OFFICE GRADUATE ASSISTANT - PROGRAMMING



Samantha Bolden recently graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Communication Disorders (Speech Pathology) here at Valdosta State University in May 2008. She is currently seeking a Master's Degree in Communication Disorders and expects to graduate in December 2009. Samantha has been working with students and RA's the majority of her time at Valdosta State University

and finds that she absolutely loves it! She describes herself as a person who truly finds joy in helping others.

Move-In Day 2008



On August 13th there were approximately 1550 new students who arrived at Valdosta State to begin their college experience. You could tell some of them had planned, prepared and packed every item they thought they would ever need. However, they may not have put as much thought into moving these items.

The moving of packed items can be a rough and tough job and recognition needs to go out to the countless number of volunteers. These volunteers include a number of students, faculty, and administrators. Over the years the organization of volunteers and the planning of how to assist students and parents on this day have been discussed. As a

result there is a Move-in Day Committee that meets and attempts to plan the best way to assist new students and parents as they move-in on this day. These plans include a variety of issues concerning parking, traffic flow, assisting students in moving items, removal of trash, offering of ice water, and much more.

Upon the many hours of planning and volunteering this year proved to be a success! However, we recognize that every one may not feel the same way about Move-in Day. Therefore, we welcome positive and negative feedback, as well as ideas for the future. You may send your ideas via email to housing@valdosta.edu, or call (229) 333-5920 and speak with a staff member.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What if my student cannot come home during breaks?

Converse and Centennial Halls are the only buildings that will remain open during the Thanksgiving and Winter Break. If your student can not 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 department of Housing and Residence Life is not responsible for loss or damage to these possessions. Please encourage your student to take home valuables if there is concern.

When if my student want to change rooms or move to another residence hall?

The open room change process began on Tuesday, September 2. 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. During these two weeks no reason was needed to move and no roommate mediation was needed. After this two week period, students will be able to continue to request moves on a closed basis, but they will need to have a valid reason and show attempts at working out the issues with their roommate before approval.

Can my student break his/her housing contract to move off campus?

The traditional hall contract is for the academic year, while Converse and Centennial Hall contacts 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% 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 Department employs students as Resident Assistants and Front Desk Workers.

If I send my student money in the form of a check, will the University cash the check?

Yes. The Bursary will cash checks for a maximum of \$50 with a VSU ID and a driver's license present.

Where can my student go for medical attention if he/she gets sick?

Valdosta State offers Farber Health Center for students taking 4 or more semester hours that need medical attention. At Farber there is a full staff of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, two nurse practitioners, a medical technologist, a pharmacist and a physician. Students have already paid a fee at the beginning of the semester, so the visit and most medication are free. Please encourage your students to take advantage of this service, especially during the cold/flu season. To ensure that all students can be seen in a timely and orderly fashion, students will need to call ahead to make an appointment with a provider at (229) 333-5886.

Community Phone Numbers

FD=Front Desk | HD=Hall Director Office

Housing	333-5920	
Brown	FD 333-5918	HD 249-4985
Centennial	FD 333-5269	HD 245-3792
Converse	FD 269-6189	HD 245-4364
Hopper	FD 333-5916	HD 333-5152
Langdale	FD 333-5915	HD 333-2194
Lowndes	FD 333-5914	HD 249-4984
Patterson	FD 333-5913	HD 245-3736
Reade	FD 333-5912	HD 333-5405



Office of Housing & Residence Life
Valdosta State University
1500 N Patterson St
Valdosta GA 31698-0400

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Valdosta, GA

Important Dates

August 13, 2008

Hopper Hall opened

October 13 - 14, 2008

Fall Break

October 17 - 18, 2008

VSU Homecoming

October 24, 2008

Pumpkin Coloring Contest entries due

November 14, 2008, 1-3 p.m. in Palms Quad

The Big Hallabaloo

November 14, 2008

Contract Release Deadline for Spring Semester (freshmen cannot be released unless they qualify for inclusion in the freshmen residency exemption policy)

November 25, 2008, 5 p.m.

Traditional Residence Halls close for Thanksgiving Break (Centennial and Converse Halls will remain open)

November 26 - 28, 2008

Thanksgiving Break

November 30, 2008, 10 a.m.

Traditional Residence Halls re-open

December 1 - 4, 2008

Traditional Residence Hall Closing Meetings (dates/times determined by RA)

December 13, 2008, 12 p.m.

Traditional Residence Halls close for winter holiday (Centennial and Converse Halls will remain open)

December 13, 2008 - January 11, 2009

Winter Break

January 8, 2009, 10 a.m.

Traditional Residence Halls re-open

January 12, 2009

First Day of class for Spring Semester

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