



FROM OUR HOME TO YOURS

HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE NEWSLETTER // AUGUST 2025



WELCOME HOME, BRONCO FAMILIES!

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE



As a double alum of WMU, I know firsthand what a transformative experience this institution can provide. Much of my own journey was shaped by Housing and Residence Life, which gave me opportunities to

get involved through programming, student organizations, and networking. I met lifelong friends who I still do life with today. Like many students, I initially dealt with homesickness and found myself traveling home every weekend, feeling disconnected from campus. But when I decided to spend more time here and get involved, everything changed. The feeling of being valued, needed, and accepted for who I was made me want to dive deeper into campus life. That's exactly what we want for your Bronco.

Housing and Residence Life strives to provide equitable experiences that help students feel connected, grow, build relationships, and focus

on well-being. As a parent myself, I understand your need to know your student is cared for and safe. I also understand that students need to learn and develop in this next phase of life within a supportive environment. You can expect that we will both challenge and support your student. There may be difficult times, but we will work through them together. Whether this is your first student in higher education or not, please know we are here to work with them and support them. We are rooting for them, and we are rooting for you!

Recently, someone asked me, "If you could make sure parents know one thing about Housing, what would it be?" I didn't have to think long about that answer: **I want families to know that we are on your side.** We are in the business of supporting your students. Even when difficult conversations need to happen, it comes from a place of care because we believe development is important. Thank you for trusting us with your student.

Welcome home, Broncos!

Shoni, Director of Housing and Residence Life



Move-in is right around the corner. [Click here](#) for what to do before, during and after move-in.



BEAT THE HEAT!

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOUR STUDENT CAN STAY COOL THROUGHOUT THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AT WMU!

Fans!

During the day, set your box fan to face out your window to pull the heat out of the room. At night, turn the fan around to help bring in cool night air. If you're able, having a second fan or standing fan to circulate the air can also help cool down the space.

Building ACs

Valleys and Henry main lounges have AC. Head down to hang out and meet new people.

Cool Shower

If it's humid, rooms can feel hot and sticky. One way to combat this is by taking a cold shower before going to bed.

Other places to go

If students find their room is still too hot, they can always go explore campus!

- The Student Center and all dining centers have central air.
- Many of our academic buildings are air conditioned and have student lounges or study nooks.
- Take a swim at the Student Recreation Center's pool.

YOUR RES LIFE DREAM TEAM

As your students settle into life on campus, the most important staff members they should get to know are the **Resident Assistants (RAs)**. Each floor or pod has their own RA, who is an upper-level student. RAs are there to help your students integrate into college life. They are knowledgeable of campus resources and can help students find Registered Student Organizations (RSOs), tutoring services, physical and mental health resources, and much more. They also plan two events a month to cultivate community and encourage socialization within the building. RAs are also there to help keep the building safe. They are on call nightly and have crisis and behavioral response training.

If your student is living in one of our apartment buildings, instead of an RA, they will have a **Resident Manager (RM)**. RMs have similar jobs to RAs in that they are knowledgeable

of campus resources and there to aid students. Because there are 1-4 RMs per apartment complex, each RM has a work phone so residents can reach out if they need something.

Another staff member your students will meet is the **Graduate Assistant (GA) Hall Director**. Each building has its own GA who supervises the front desk staff, assists with conduct and restorative justice cases, and helps the RAs with their programming. They are also engaged in the community as they create their own events for the building.

The final housing staff member your student should get to know is their **Hall Director (HD)** or the **Assistant Director** for Apartments. They manage the day-to-day operations of the building(s), supervise all building staff, facilitate conduct or restorative justice cases, and support students in crisis or with the general college experience.



PARENT-TO-PARENT ADVICE

How are you feeling about sending your child off to college? Excited? Nervous? Overwhelmed? That's all normal.

Some parents will hear from their students frequently; some won't hear from them for weeks. Try not to panic! Your student is becoming more independent, and that's what we, as parents, want for them. Our kiddos are advocating for themselves, making new friends, attending classes, and getting involved. We want the best for them, but now is the time to take a step back. Our kids will make mistakes and hopefully learn from them. They need to figure things out for themselves, don't be afraid to let them. Of course we will be there if they need us - we are just a phone call away.

I sent my oldest child, Caitlin, to WMU in the fall of 2022. She is

an Elementary Education major. We live in Portage, maybe 20 minutes from campus, but my husband and I required Caitlin to live in the residence halls for at least one year, starting her freshman year. We wanted her to be more independent, find her path, and fully immerse herself in the college experience. She spent her first 2 years in the residence halls, and last year she moved off campus into an apartment with 3 other girls.

Caitlin had a rough first week her freshman year, and I literally heard from her EVERY DAY. I reminded her she just had to put herself out there, make new friends, and get involved - things will get better. About a month into the school year, she started her own club (Blankets for Bronson). She made friends in her classes and through RSOs she joined. She started to thrive... and then I didn't hear

from her as much as I had the first couple of weeks. She was finding her way and doing it on her own.

Our instinct as parents is to protect and nurture our kids, and sometimes it's hard to let them go. I have found that Caitlin's time in college has tested me, as much as it has tested her. She will be a senior this year, graduating in April, and I couldn't be more proud of what she has accomplished and achieved over the last 3 years.



Caitlin Darrah (senior) with her mom Lora Darrah. Caitlin lived on campus two years.



MAIL AND PACKAGES

WE WILL START ACCEPTING MAIL AND PACKAGES ON AUGUST 18TH

- Building addresses are [here](#).
- Mail is placed in mailboxes by 5 p.m., Monday–Saturday.
- Packages: Students are emailed when a package arrives with detailed pick-up instructions.
- Unclaimed packages are returned after 20 days (or forwarded if a new address is available—USPS only).
- Amazon packages can't be returned. We'll try contacting twice, but if it needs to be shipped somewhere else, the student's account will be charged for the shipping cost.

EMAILS AND FERPA WAIVERS

WMU Emails: Housing contacts students via their WMU email, not a personal email. Students should be checking it several times a week.

FERPA waivers: FERPA waivers don't apply to housing, so we encourage students to reach out to us directly—they can then share any updates with parents or caregivers as they choose. [Read more about FERPA here.](#)