

IN-HAS NEWSLETTER

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IN-HAS

Housing & Ancillary Services
Employee Newsletter

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Calendar

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------|
| December 23 | Residences close at noon for winter break |
| January 8 | Residences re-open for winter term |
| January 9 | Winter term classes begin |
| February 18-26 | Spring reading week |

IN-HAS Newsletter Committee

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Greetings Colleagues,

Like many of us do in December, I take time to reflect on the fall term that was and to anticipate what the winter term will be. In looking back, it has truly been a remarkable 4-months.

As we enter the holiday season, our minds turn to the many gifts in our lives. At the top of my gratitude list is our HAS community. I am thankful for our staff who have weathered the difficult transition back to in-person learning, along with their own individual challenges. Our campus community benefited from your hard work and it is something that I never take for granted and for which I will remain very grateful. We offer our students distinctive out-of-class experiences and I am thankful for everyone in our Division who upholds this commitment daily.

While today's environment is uncertain in many ways, Western is not just surviving but thriving. Demand for on-campus accommodations remains extremely high and our students are engaged in both co-curricular and social activities with new opportunities expanding for them regularly.

This year, Housing introduced a complement of Residence Safety Assistants to reinforce support for students and staff during the overnight hours, which helped reduce the frequency of duty shifts and severity of complex incidents for Dons. Our Dining Halls in residence remained open, as did in-person dining, which brought new life to eating spaces that sat mostly vacant for 2 years. Despite our limited hours of operation in campus eateries, culinary staff continue to provide exceptional customer service and show persistence when faced with throughput challenges. Lastly, The Book Store collaborated with well-known fashion brands, such as lululemon and Roots, which helped us stay current with our demographic and increase general merchandise sales.

Each of you should take great pride in the impact you have made on this campus and the meaningful change you create for students, staff and faculty.

I want to offer you my best wishes for the holiday season and for a happy and healthy new year. I hope that over the break you will make space to do what feels right to you to recharge. I hope you have the opportunity to relax, reconnect with your friends and family, and enjoy this break in the academic calendar.

I look forward to seeing you back on campus in January.

Chris Alleyne
Associate Vice-President



CentreSpot is now Food Hub

Jacqueline Hassall

Associate Director, Hospitality Services

An exciting new look and rebrand is underway for the iconic CentreSpot in UCC. Part of the rationale for this change is that this longstanding name associated with the UCC does not communicate the location as a food destination which offers a variety of unique dining options to the University community. Based on this feedback, Hospitality Services moved in the direction of promoting the food options based on location rather than individual brands for each eatery. After many discussions, CentreSpot was renamed as Food Hub. By incorporating the UCC location and including “food” and “hub” in the naming convention, the destination is more specific and indicates more than one eatery.

The benefits of the rebrand are:

- Highlighting the franchise and location, rather than trying to familiarize the community with a new food court brand
 - Offers the opportunity for consistent branding moving forward across all food court style units in the long-term
 - Highlights the fact there are multiple food options in the unit
- Over the November Reading Week, the first introduction of the rebranding was implemented at UCC with updates to the bulkhead into the eatery. This first phase includes new signage, backlighting and paint work.
- Work began in the Natural Sciences last summer, with removal of the ‘Nucleus’ signage, a new look and logo for Casa Burrito, the implementation of WesternEats and refreshed paint work in the seating areas. The next phase will include improved wayfinding signage, a new wall mural to signify the eatery space and updated look and feel. ●

CHASE

THE GOOSE

An Origin Story

Tegan Pfaff
General Merchandise Buyer

Chase the Goose
is hidden seven
times throughout
this newsletter.
Can you spot
them all?



Since starting my role as a General Merchandise Buyer at The Book Store, I've been on the hunt for a Canada goose plushy that I could Westernize. After hitting dead ends or duds, I decided I was going to start the process of having one made from scratch. To have the perfect Western goose created, I first needed to have an image to provide to the supplier to begin making the first prototype. But what should they look like?

As anyone who has witnessed or been personally "bombarded" on campus by our delightful Canada geese can attest, they are proud and territorial birds. They do not care if it's peak traffic times—they will cross that road right now, and yes, you probably should go out of your way to avoid walking close to them on the pathways. Despite all the above (and the poop), they are part of the Campus Community and certainly part of the experience. I had to get the plushy just right.

Two of our sales associates, sisters Olivia and Laryssa, demonstrated their creativity and artistic talents when they drew a stunning mural inside The Book Store's upper floor. Approaching Olivia one day, I asked her to draw me a goose, providing only a few guidelines. First, it had to have angry eyes. Second, it needed to be Purple and Proud. While I had high hopes, Olivia exceeded my expectations and perfectly captured the right mixture of adorable and grumpy. As one reddit user stated, it's "The only goose that doesn't scare me". Like proud parents, we had to agree on what to name our new friend—initially Chett was proposed, but as a group we decided Chase the Goose would be the perfect name.

Once Olivia's drawing was submitted to the supplier, it entered the prototype stage where fabrics and thread colours were picked and legs were lengthened. We then waited months for our flock to be made, packed up and sent to us from across the ocean. While waiting, Olivia's drawing was adapted into vinyl stickers, enamel pins and keychains.

More recently, we partnered with Canadian clothing brand Peace Collective to create t-shirts that featured our delightful Chase. Peace Collective is part of charitable group Peace Foundation, where every purchase gives back to communities that need it most. Interestingly, their graphic artist who adapted Olivia's sketch for the design, just happened to be a Western Alumni! She knew exactly how important Chase the Goose was to all of us.

Other campus partners, such as Western Alumni have embraced Chase the Goose as well. During Homecoming, they invited alumni to a scavenger hunt. Through the mobile app GooseChase, participants could take part in a campus-wide scavenger hunt with different missions and point values. Winners received Western swag, including the Chase the Goose plushy!

Before the Holidays, The Book Store will also be offering Chase the Goose crew socks. Perfect for stocking gifts or just because! So go on and take a gander at our Chase the Goose collection as it will continue to grow and change over the coming months. ●



Leveraging Functionality:

Using StarRez's myHousing Portal to support students with improved customer service

Laura Langford

Occupancy & Data Management Coordinator



As Western's first-year class continues to grow, the Housing Admissions team looked to automation to improve response times, reduce email communication, provide increased clarity to students and enhance the overall application experience. The StarRez myHousing Portal became a one-stop shop for students to submit their placement questionnaire, submit an accessibility request, keep an eye on their waitlist status, complete their onboarding process, reserve a move-in time slot, request an early move-in, request a room change, submit a withdrawal inquiry and more!

In 2020, COVID-19 brought forward many new challenges including the need for a more physically distanced move-in. We leveraged the functionality of the time slots module offered by the StarRez residence management platform. The move-in planning team determined the number of students we could have moving into each of our buildings daily and time slots were made available for students to book ahead of arrival. The increased organization and reduced traffic during move-in have made this a standard practice that will continue beyond the COVID-related need. The use of time slots also provided an earlier opportunity to identify students who may end up being no-shows, allowing us to process

their cancellation earlier and potentially offer their space to another student from our waitlist.

One of the first processes we identified to automate with the use of StarRez, was the request process for students with accessibility needs. Many students require a specific building placement or room-type based on medical, physical, dietary, religious, cultural, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or financial needs. Previously, a hard copy form was required to be submitted with most sent in via fax! Reducing barriers for these students is a high priority for our housing admissions team. In consultation with Accessible Education and our web team, a request process on the myHousing Portal was developed that allowed students to submit their placement needs and provide additional information. Students can now upload supporting documentation with a form available to download that can be shared with their medical professional. An Accessibility in Residence page was also added to our residence website to provide further information to prospective students.

The automated cancellation process launched on the myHousing Portal in 2022 allowed students who were



no longer planning to attend Western or who no longer needed housing, to complete their cancellation fully self-serve. It has been very successful in providing the clear refund policy to students and reduced the back-and-forth email communication that was previously required prior to confirming a cancellation. The use of dashboards in the StarRez platform allows the occupancy team to delete bookings for these students and the accounting team to process refunds and send communication more efficiently.

Housing Admissions is working with the Residence Life Staff to enhance our withdrawal and room change processes with a self-serve component in the myHousing Portal. An automated process is in the beginning phases with input received from the admissions, accounting and residence life teams with an emphasis on the withdrawal inquiry option on the portal. Students request a withdrawal from residence for various reasons; it may be a straightforward change of universities, or it may be a student in crisis. We want students to be able to easily share their withdrawal plans with us so they can be connected to support if needed or, for a withdrawal more administrative in nature, can avoid an unnecessary meeting with a Residence Life Coordinator. For room changes, allowing students the option to complete a request that lists their building and room preferences provides clarity on their needs and allows them a platform to share the issues they may be having in their current space. The use of dashboards and priority ratings improved the process and turnaround time of high-priority room changes. Looking at the student's preferences submitted on the portal along with comments added by the Residence Life Coordinator allows the Occupancy team to quickly identify

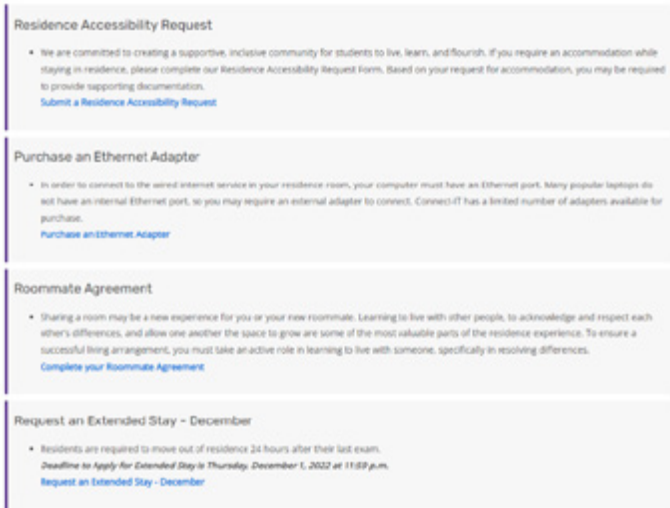
available and appropriate spaces.

The Residence Onboarding Process on the myHousing Portal saw an overhaul for 2022, breaking out optional steps such as dietary needs, a winter break stay request and evacuation assistance to highlight information for students and reduce confusion. This improved the data collected and reduced email inquiries from students and parents. Collecting this information ahead of the students' arrival greatly improves our planning process and the students' peace of mind.

Our web team can change what a student can see and access in the myHousing Portal based on different factors such as if they arrived in residence or their classification as an upper-year or first-year student. The use of profiles also provides a unique view to students on their portal. Adding a room change profile in StarRez allows the room change request feature to be hidden for all students except those who have started the room change process with their Residence Life Coordinator. This prevents review of unnecessary room change requests and provides students the opportunity to feel that their request is being taken seriously as it is not an option offered to all students.

The COVID Meal Pickup request option was previously only visible to students identified by the COVID case coordinator but is now available to all students to more easily opt-in to this physically distanced dining option while experiencing COVID symptoms.

Students are becoming very familiar with all the features now offered on the myHousing Portal and we continue to listen to their feedback to make changes and improvements. Residence Life and front desk staff can refer students to their portal which reduces conflicting or out of date information and allows the student to complete their request or receive information outside of business hours. We built on the features that were first used because of COVID-19 and continue to move away from paper forms and faxes. We look forward to adding features to the myHousing Portal and collaborating with other teams to improve efficiency, reduce workload and enhance the student experience! ●



A snapshot of requests that can be made in StarRez

RESIDENCE ESSENTIAL

Home is where you lay your head on a Western pillow

Jessie Karn

General Merchandise Buyer, The Book Store



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This year during our back-to-school season, The Book Store at Western transformed the old Computer Store into a full-blown Dorm Store. The Dorm Store featured residence essentials such as bedding, pillows, towels and much more—including branded residence merchandise like blankets and shower flip flops.

Having this pop-up store on campus and the collection online made it easier for our first-year students and international students to gather necessary items for their transition into residence. Parents of students moving into residence were thrilled to have this on campus with one parent from B.C. stating that “having a service like this for out of province families makes moving our child way less stressful.” On numerous occasions students would enter the Dorm Store exclaiming that they wish there had been this feature when they were in first year.

The feedback from both students and parents was phenomenal and sales also spoke to the success of the service. The total revenue from the store and web was close to \$34,000! Overall, it was an incredibly positive campaign and one we will pursue again next year full throttle. Some of the top sellers included a mattress gel topper, a bed in a bag set and shower caddies. The Book Store looks forward to having this service for our students again next year.

A team effort—working across departments

It was not only The Book Store that played a role in making our Residence Essentials a success. While we worked on sourcing all the products, the HAS marketing team developed a strong promotional campaign to help push product awareness to the 5000+ incoming students. The collection was promoted in the move-in guide, all-resident emails, and across The Book Store's social channels.

When it came down to distribution, the residence operations team worked effortlessly to get all the orders to the students across 11 residence buildings. Move-in is always a busy time of year, and it was no easy feat to make sure all our students had what they needed to start their new journey at Western.

What's next for the pop-up store

The pop-up store will continue to be utilized for future initiatives that expand our retail services on campus. The next pop-up will be our Relaxation Station in late November or early December featuring Pure Skin Dermatology skin care, Purdy Natural makeup and soaps, On Set and Rhyme candles and loungewear from Apricotton. The sky is the limit for this space and The Book Store looks forward to fun and creative initiatives into 2023. ●





HAS Share Local Love for United Way

Every year, across Western campus, United Way champions find creative ways to encourage giving from employees, students and faculty to show their local love. Here are some of the great initiatives from our Housing & Ancillary Services teams that helped raise much needed funds for the Elgin-Middlesex region!

Showing support with delicious treats—Hospitality Services

Show your local love: Aligning with the official United Way launch in October, the Hospitality team sold freshly made crepes with caramelized apple and whipped cream for \$5 each and raised just under \$950.

Smile Cookie campaign: From September 19–25, all proceeds from Tim Horton’s Smile Cookie sales in the UCC, Natural Sciences, and Health Sciences Building were donated to United Way. Students and staff participated, raising \$2,094, an increase of 170 cookies from last year.

Dollar day for United Way: On October 15 at Alumni Stadium during a football game, Hospitality Services began collecting \$1 donations. This initiative continued during the Yates Cup on November 23, all campus eateries began collecting donations.

Pie day for United Way: Members of the Hospitality Services

team baked more than 300 delicious pies that were sold on campus on November 16. On-line pre-orders included approximately 100 pies with more available for sale at SSB, UCC and in Somerville. Each pie cost \$20 with \$10 going to the United Way.

Sharing local love through community events—Housing

Dress down Fridays: Staff donated \$2 per Friday to “dress down” for the day, or they opted to give \$20 up-front to dress down until Winter Break. About 10 staff members took part, helping to raise funds for United Way. This initiative is running every Friday until December 14. See KD or Mel with your toonies!

United Way TD Stairclimb: Housing sent seven team members to participate in the United Way TD Stairclimb raising over \$1,500.

Professional Photos: On November 23, colleagues in housing donated \$5 to get a professional photo taken.

Upcoming events:

Housing gift basket raffle: Housing colleagues are invited to participate in a gift basket raffle, tickets go on sale the week of December 5.

Giving with purple pride—The Book Store

Western clothing raffle: From November 15–28, The Book Store sold tickets (\$5 each for 3/\$10) for a clothing raffle that included a variety of Purple and Proud merch. All proceeds went to United Way.

Upcoming events:

Holiday bake sale: On December 9, the Book Store will be selling tasty goodies ranging from 50 cents to \$2 to help

satisfy any sweet tooth and raise money for United Way.

Guess the baby picture: An additional fun activity to raise money is the 'Guess the baby picture'. It's \$5 to compete and the winner will get some awesome Western swag! The contest runs December 12–16, with the picture board up in The Book Store boardroom.

Shoutout to all our United Way Champions that have committed to supporting United Way with fun events, treats and contests. ●

Book Store Trailer – New Look, New Feel, Same Community

On the move and ready to spread purple pride—The Book Store trailer is a staple at football games, convocation, open houses and many other events across campus. The trailer sells a variety of Western apparel geared to students, alumni and community members alike.

This past summer, the trailer underwent a redesign to more accurately reflect student life on campus. Whether

it's a varsity athlete giving their all, a student riding their bicycle to class, or a new grad wearing their regalia with pride, the new look of the trailer reflects everyday life and achievements of a Western student.

As we return to more in-person events, we are excited to see a greater presence of the trailer on campus. Once a Mustang, always a Mustang. ●



ENHANCING EDID SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT IN RESIDENCE

Melissa Steadman

Associate Director, Residence Engagement

As issues of equity, diversity and inclusion continue to be salient around the globe, our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization committee within the Residence Life Management Team responded. Recognizing that when students arrive on campus their suitcases are filled with unique lived experiences, the RLM team created a comprehensive strategy of support and engagement for our equity-deserving students and educational programming for students wanting to learn more about global issues and how to be an ally.

This year the committee's goals are:

- Discuss strategies to increase awareness of diversity, equity, inclusion and decolonization issues in residence
- Develop initiatives providing diversity, equity and decolonization education to students in residence and/or serving the unique needs of marginalized and Indigenous student populations within residence
- Examine the role of professional staff and student leaders in diversity, equity and decolonization awareness campaigns within residences
- Facilitate five decolonization, diversity and equity-based initiative/program projects over the course of each academic year

- Serve as an advisory party on diversity, equity and decolonization issues to the Residence Life Management Team

Working closely with student groups on campus such as the Black Student Association, Muslim Student Association, Western Hillel and many more, the committee continued our annual affinity group meet and greets, hosted a Diwali Celebration and are planning programs with our Residence Education Advisors for International Week. Attendance and engagement at these events continue to grow, with more than 100 students at our Black Student Meet and Greet alone. We will keep assessing the needs of our diverse community and design events to best represent them.

Incredible plans are in motion for the rest of the year bringing back events limited due to the pandemic such as Pride Prom and Lunar New Year Celebrations. We are also maintaining our relationships with affinity community groups to support our equity deserving students and the unique challenges they may experience on campus and in the London community. A special thanks to Samantha, Miranda, Jacob, Tala, Paige, Erica, Alisha and Michelle for all their great work this academic year - we look forward to their continued support and engaging events for the remainder of the term. And, of course, we welcome your attendance and engagement should you wish to join! ●







Books to Look For

Stephen Cribar

Associate Director, Sales & Procurement, Retail Services

The Light We Carry

By Michelle Obama

Four years after her blockbuster hit *Becoming*, Michele Obama is back with *The Light We Carry* which promises to dispense advice on staying hopeful in challenging times. The former First Lady, who will also narrate the audio version of the book, has said she'll describe her most beneficial habits, like "starting kind" and assembling a "kitchen table" of confidantes. It's arriving just in time for book clubs to adopt it as their last read of the year.

True Reconciliation: How to Be a Force for Change

By Jody Wilson-Raybould

Drawing on her extensive career in law and politics, Wilson-Raybould presents a guide that seeks to improve relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples at all levels of society.

"From coast-to-coast-to-coast — in various ways and more than ever before — Canadians are wanting to play their part in moving towards true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples."

"This book is about helping change a conversation that has become unnecessarily complicated. We have the solutions, and we know what needs to be done."

On the Ravine

By Vincent Lam

In *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures*, readers met four medical students and were immersed in the challenges and transformations that unfolded as these students became young doctors. *On the Ravine* revisits two of the characters — Chen and Fitzgerald — several years later in their career. The two have remained close friends and have devoted themselves to the treatment of opioid addiction, each in a very different way. But when Claire, a talented violinist, comes under Chen's care, his desire to help her is intertwined with his own past — and the demands of her medical care challenge Chen and Fitzgerald's delicately balanced friendship.

Our Missing Hearts

By Celeste Ng

From the #1 bestselling author of *Little Fires Everywhere*, comes an inspiring new novel about a mother's unbreakable love in a world consumed by fear. It's the story of Bird, a boy in search of his mother, and of Margaret, who is struggling to make the world better for Bird despite the costs to herself. Set in a dystopian future, where a political crisis leads to racism and violence in which Asian Americans are regarded with scorn and mistrust by the government and their neighbors. *Our Missing Hearts* offers a frightening portrait of what our world could become. ●

A Pink Chair is Worth a Thousand Words

Rich Caccamo

Strategic Priorities, Office of AVP, Housing & Ancillary Services

Those of you who have been to the admin offices in Ontario Hall may have spotted a large pink wingback chair nestled into the corner of 3.C.46. That's my office, and that's my pink chair.

I've had a pink chair in my office since joining the Division back in 2014. It was my mother's chair, once upon a time, that ended up in my possession after an untimely furniture purge in my childhood home. At the time I was working with the University Students' Council coordinating special events for clubs, councils and the Executive. I had no plan for my mom's chair so naturally it followed me to work and ended up as the centerpiece of my office in the UCC. Little did I know that this chair was going to be legendary.

Most chairs are no big deal, right? Chairs are probably the most basic, ubiquitous form of furniture. Chairs are literally everywhere – at home, at work, in libraries and malls. It's unlikely that you can go an entire day without laying eyes on at least one. More likely, you'll see dozens, if not scores of them in all shapes and sizes.

So, what makes my mom's pink chair so special?

Maybe you're thinking my chair is super comfortable. Well you'd be wrong. I mean, it's comfy, but it's no La-Z-Boy. The truth of the matter is that my chair is famous by association. I'll let you in on a secret: when working for the USC, I would bring my pink chair backstage for high profile speaker events on-campus, usually in Alumni Hall. What started as a gag soon became a routine addition to the green room for every special event.

I'm sure you're wondering who exactly sat in the chair. Let me blow your mind. Here is the list of famous 'bums' (literal bums) who have sat in my pink chair over the years:

- Maya Angelou
- Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
- David Suzuki
- Frank Warren
- Bill Nye
- Dan Savage
- David Frum
- Margaret Atwood

So ya...my chair is kind of a big deal.

Alas, maybe the heyday of my pink chair has ended and it's time for another purge and another owner. Then again, I could probably get \$200 on Facebook Marketplace for it. If only I had asked all the celebs to carve their initials into the leg <Sigh>. So much for early retirement. ●



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