We have all heard the advice, “Be careful what you wish for, you may just get it.” This warning often proves true when students move off-campus in search of greater independence and increased freedom. The independence found in renting a home with multiple friends or renting an apartment with one or two roommates, brings with it responsibilities and challenges different from those encountered by students living in residence halls. In addition to meeting your academic obligations, possibly holding down part-time or even full-time employment, and saving some time for personal interests, most students living off-campus have the additional responsibilities of paying rent and utilities (on time!), commuting to and from campus, maintaining (i.e. cleaning!) kitchens, bathrooms, and the rest of apartment or house; you may have to maintain a yard, and you are lucky if you do not have to haul your dirty clothes to a nearby laundromat! When these responsibilities need to be coordinated with four or more roommates you may have quite a challenge on your hands. Then, before you know it, your house or apartment suddenly becomes “the place to be” for friends, friends of friends, and friends-three-times-removed! … while at first this might seem like a dream-come-true, after a while, it’s not all it’s cracked up to be.

The problem with becoming “the place to be” is that very few of your neighbors, if any, will think this is a good thing. They will reach this conclusion long before you and your roommates do. Your neighbors are very likely to be working professionals, possibly with small children or other family members living with them. They are likely to be long-time residents of the area who are investing significant money, time, and sweat-equity in their property and who expect to be able to maintain a good quality of life. They have a reasonable expectation that they will be able to live in their homes and not be witness to or impacted by behavior that is disruptive or which would pose a risk to them or their loved ones. When they experience negative behavior on the part of our students, many of them will contact the university and ask for assistance and intervention. Sometimes Public Safety will respond if the incident is underway, but if the calls are made after the incident (usually the following morning,) these reports are passed along to the Office of the Dean of Students.

When calls are received by the Office of the Dean of Students, students identified will be contacted by email and asked to schedule an appointment with the Associate Dean of Students, Michelle Espinosa. Individual students or roommate groups will meet with Ms. Espinosa, discuss the incident(s), and develop better methods of managing themselves and their guests. Ms. Espinosa will assist in communicating with neighbors if needed, and will make clear the expectations the university has for its students. Paraphrased from the university’s Statement of Common Purpose, we expect students to be thoughtful, responsible individuals both on- and off-campus. It is expected that you will know, understand and abide by the terms of your lease, that you will know, understand and abide by local ordinances and laws, and that, if you choose to host friends at your residence, you will do so in a responsible and lawful manner. It is your responsibility to monitor and control the amount and type of garbage produced at your residence, the noise created by you, roommates, and guests, the vehicle traffic coming and going, and condition of the property where you reside. It is also expected that you be sensitive to and respectful of the evening and nighttime hours kept by your neighbors. Repeated incidents of disruption may result in referral of individual students to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution as allowed within the university’s Student Conduct Code.

Questions about living in the neighborhood successfully can be sent to me directly at: espinosa@american.edu or by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at: 202-885-3300.

I am excited about my new position at American University and look forward to meeting many of you in the coming months! Best wishes for a successful spring semester!
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY STAFF VISIT MOST AU POPULATED OFF-CAMPUS COMMUNITIES

Contributed by Curtis W. Hoover, Director of Conference & Residential Services (Housing & Dining Programs)

On Tuesday, November 9th 2010, 3 members of the American University Campus Life staff spent the day visiting off-campus communities.

Michelle Espinosa (Associate Dean of Students), Curtis Hoover (Director of Conference & Residential Services) and Michael Buckley (Off-Campus & Guest Housing Coordinator) visited 6 off-campus communities that are home to high percentages of American University students. The communities visited included:

- The Avalon at Foxhall
- The Alban Towers
- Connecticut Heights
- The Consulate
- The Chesapeake
- The Berkshire

At each location, Michael and Curtis focused on building partnerships to provide safe, quality off-campus student housing and discussed ways to increase marketing and outreach to students. Michelle focused on the role that she and others at the university can play in addressing issues of off-campus student conduct, as well as methods of seeking assistance for students in crisis. The group also highlighted involvement opportunities for AU neighbors—AU sporting events, Katzen Arts Center, theatrical productions and more.

Each management team reported that they rarely have any serious problems with AU students and went on to say that when problems surface, they are quickly resolved through in-house property security and front-desk staff. Most problems identified consisted of late-night noise (music and/or guests of residents). All indicated that most students are cooperative.

While the number of AU students facing evictions was reported as minimal, one management company wanted AU to help students fully understand the consequences associated with an eviction. Should a student face eviction, it is extremely difficult to find another apartment in the city. Keeping a positive relationship with building management is essential!

The management at The Berkshire indicated that they face more challenges with student visitors who come to their property from campus to visit friends. Michelle discussed ways of addressing these situations and offered assistance to do so if they can provide her (or Public Safety) with names of students involved. Other property managers did not identify visitors as a problem.

It was productive day and an opportunity for AU staff to see where our students are opting to live when they move off-campus. Many of these properties will be represented at the Off-Campus Housing Fair on February 2nd from 4PM—6PM in the MGC.

One building manager was particularly positive about his experience with AU students. As we ended our meeting, he told us ‘AU students make great residents.’

NEW OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES ONLINE!

Contributed by Michael Buckley, Off-Campus & Guest Housing Coordinator

Housing & Dining Programs is pleased to announce the addition of multiple web-based off-campus housing resources, which include the Off-Campus Housing Guide and the ‘Moving-Off Campus’ and ‘Living Off-Campus’ workshop webinars.

American University has recognized the need to have more resources and assistance available to off-campus students. With that in mind, we recently completely the Off-Campus Housing Guide. This 40-page online resource has been online since December 2010, and we believe that it will provide you with valuable information regarding all aspects of living off-campus. This easy-to-read guide includes information about:

- Moving off-campus
- The search process
- Living off-campus
- Being a good neighbor
- Tenants rights

You’ll also find student perspectives, sample letters, and important contact information enclosed.

Additionally, we recorded two workshops, ‘Moving Off-Campus’ and ‘Living Off-Campus’, through Blackboard’s Wimba Classroom. We archived these Powerpoint presentations in order for you to learn more about off-campus housing from the comfort of your own room. Think of it as OCH101 and OCH102 in an online classroom setting.

All of the new resources mentioned can be found at www.american.edu/offcampushousing and will set you up for success off campus and beyond. Please feel free to set up an individual consultation if you need more specific guidance.

We look forward to seeing you at the Off-Campus Housing Fair in MGC on February 2nd, 2011 from 4:00 - 6:00PM.
2. Buy or replace snow shovel, if necessary.
3. Keep vehicles fueled to at least 1/2 tank.
4. Buy new windshield wiper blades, winterize your car and tires.
5. Put 10-pound bag of cat litter, ice scraper and emergency supplies in the trunk.
7. Stock up on batteries for flashlights, radios, battery-powered computer games, toys, lamps and lanterns.
8. Identify alternative parking space(s), either on or off-street, particularly if your street is a Snow Emergency Route.
9. Compile a list of family members’ medications, as well as phone numbers for doctors, pharmacies and emergency rooms.
10. Know your neighbors, especially those who may need your assistance or who can assist you.

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### Declaration of Snow Emergency

The Mayor of DC determines when it is necessary to declare a snow emergency. ALL vehicles must be moved immediately from SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES. Illegally parking vehicles are subject to a $250 fine with additional towing and impoundment fees.
At AU, we take pride in maintaining good relations with our neighbors. Staying in touch with our neighbors and keeping them informed about news, sports events, lectures, and concerts and art openings at the Katzen Arts Center are part of the job of Penny Pagano, Director of Community and Local Government Relations.

Penny, an AU alum and neighbor, came to work at the university in May 2008. Prior to that, she worked as Chief of Staff for former DC Councilmember (Ward 3) Kathy Patterson. Originally from Vineland, New Jersey, Penny majored in journalism at AU, received her Masters’ degree from Northwestern University, and worked in DC as a reporter for several news organizations including the Washington Bureau of the Los Angeles Times.

Penny, an AU alum and neighbor, shares some advice for students: “If you live off campus – whether it’s in a house or an apartment building like the Berkshire, Avalon or in McLean Gardens – remember to say, “Hi,” to your neighbors. Be respectful and try not to make a lot of noise late at night whether you’re leaving a friend’s place, walking down the street or an apartment corridor. You might find yourself with some new friends, an invitation for a home cooked meal, some career advice, or even a job. And remember that lots of neighbors in this area also are AU alums, faculty and staff so you may have a lot in common with some of them.”

In her work, Penny also serves as a liaison for the university with the city government, including the Mayor’s office, the DC City Council and local government agencies. She attends local community and civic meetings and events in the area, and encourages students to come with her. Recently, she arranged for a number of AU students to intern in the transition offices for DC’s new Mayor Vincent Gray. Working with students, she says, is one of the best parts of her job. She also serves as an adviser to AU’s chapter of APO service fraternity.

Find out more about the Community Relations Web page and the monthly electronic newsletter for neighbors, AU in the Neighborhood, at www.american.edu/communityrelations. You can reach Penny at pagano@american.edu or 202-885-2167.

**Contributed by Christy Anthony, Assistant Director of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution**

Sometimes roommates disagree about paying utilities. Sometimes landlords and tenants disagree about whether the fridge should be replaced. Got Conflict? We can help!

AU Conflict Resolution Services offers free, voluntary, and confidential assistance with managing conflict. We provide mediation and conflict coaching. Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process in which an impartial, third party assists people in finding a mutually acceptable solution to their dispute. Mediation can resolve conflicts without legal and/or conduct intervention. Mediation acknowledges that some conflict is natural. Choosing to respect others while working towards a peaceful resolution is the key to a successful outcome.

Conflict coaching assists individuals in finding ways to manage or address individual conflicts in their lives. Generally this occurs in a one-on-one meeting. This service is available if another party declines mediation or if an individual wants to address conflict without a third party, but needs assistance in planning to do so.

Our mediation and conflict coaching services can be adapted for specific conflicts. We generally recommend parties contact us at ConflictResolution@american.edu to learn about options for their specific situation.

We wish you a wonderful off-campus living experience, but, hey, conflict happens.

**Got Conflict? Need Assistance Reaching Resolution?**

**Contact**

Off-Campus Housing Resources for more information: offcampushousing@american.edu
STUDENT HEALTH CENTER OFFERS EXTENDED HOURS

Contributed by Dan Bruey, Director of the Student Health Center

The Student Health Center, in collaboration with the Student Government’s Director of Student Health and Services, the Undergraduate Senate, and Women’s Initiative, now offers evening hours in the Student Health Center. Evening hours will be Monday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM.

Evening hours are provided for students with routine illnesses only (colds, sore throats, flu symptoms, etc.). Students can schedule their appointments online on the health center’s Web site at www.american.edu/ocl/healthcenter.

Evening appointments were instituted to better serve our students (both on and off-campus) whose schedules did not allow them to visit during our normal operating hours of 9:00 am - 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Students with questions on evening hours at the Student Health Center can call 202-885-3380 or email shc@american.edu.

Connections.
peer to peer chats.

Are you looking for a space to talk about LGBT issues? Are you questioning your identity and want a peer to talk to? Are you looking to find community or to connect with others who may identify like you? Are you looking for resources but don’t know who to ask?

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, then the Connections Online Peer Chat Program is for you.

The chats are facilitated by our Peer Chat Advisors, students at AU that have been trained to answer your questions, and resource center staff. In the Spring 2011 semester, the chats are every Tuesday from 6pm-8pm and every Wednesday from 1pm-3pm.

To chat, go to:
http://www.american.edu/ocl/glbta/Peer-Chats.cfm

GLBTARC
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Allies Resource Center

For questions or concerns, contact the GLBT Resource Center at:

For questions or concerns, contact the GLBT Resource Center at:
glbta@american.edu 202-885-3347 www.american.edu/glbta

www.eaglebucks.com
Looking to “Make Your Mark” this summer at American University? Housing & Dining Programs is currently accepting applications for our Summer Leadership Team.

These 12 individuals (six Conference Managers and six Summer Management Assistants) are responsible for assisting in the overall coordination of on-site activities and operations for American University’s active summer conference and intern housing program. We’re looking for students with strong interpersonal and leadership skills.

All Leadership Team members will receive a competitive wage as well as a free single room for the summer. To find out more, visit our website at www.american.edu/housing and click on the “Employment Opportunities” link on the left hand side. Applications are due January 27th by 5:00pm.

We will also be hiring approximately 40 Campus Host staff. These staff work the front desk operations of the residence hall desks, serve in an on-call capacity and serve as administrative support to staff. Campus Hosts provide comprehensive support to all aspects of summer operations.

Like SLT, the Campus Hosts receive a free single room for the summer and an hourly wage. Campus Host applications go live online on Friday, February 4th.

Contact housinganddiningjobs@american.edu with any questions.

**Moving off-campus?**

**Attend a workshop**

> Jan. 26: 7:00 PM in Letts Formal Lounge
> Jan. 26: 8:00 PM in McDowell Formal Lounge
> Jan. 31: 5:30 PM in Anderson Conference Room

**Attend the Off-Campus Housing Fair**

> Feb. 2: 4:00 – 6:00 in the University Club

**Find more resources at**

www.american.edu/offcampushousing