

Daily Campus Update: 11.01.21

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Division of Student Affairs

November 1, 2021

Dear Howard University Community,

As I have stressed in previous communications, the health and safety of our student body is the foundation upon which our University is built. Any action that we take, any good that we do as an institution is driven by our motivation to prioritize the physical and mental wellbeing of our students.

Here are today's updates.

Board of Trustees Student Representatives

This week, the Board of Trustees will officially have students serve at the committee level.

- Kylie Burke, Howard University Student Association president; and
- Ashley Grey, Graduate Student Council president.

We thank these students for dedicating their time and efforts to represent their constituents to the board. Committee level meetings are vital opportunities for viewpoints to be discussed and proposals to be recommended. Since the board routinely accepts the recommendations of the committee position of the committee, these individuals will have tremendous influence on the board's decision-making.

As a reminder, the board regularly looks for opportunities to hear from a wider group students and other stakeholders. Continue to monitor your

communications to ensure that you don't miss a chance to share your vital perspective with the board.

Hyper Care

In recent weeks, you may have noticed that there are many vendors on campus who are working to improve our students' housing experience. The additional systems, structures and processes we have put in place to ensure residential problems are reported and addressed in a timely manner has improved. After implementing the Hyper Care initiative, where we directed additional staffing and resources to our residence halls, problems are being identified and fixed more quickly. Perhaps most importantly, our aim is to create better lines of communication between students and staff. We have been having good conversations with students and with concerned parents. This enhanced communication is designed to improve outcomes and greater satisfaction among the students living in Howard's residential facilities.

Impact of the Student Building Occupation

Many of the changes the University has made in recent weeks have come as a result of the students concerns. Calling attention to the issues students have experienced in their Howard residence halls has positioned the University to investigate, review and more effectively respond and repair where necessary. However, it is important to note that the continued occupation of the Blackburn Center has negative side effects for our students and other members of our campus community. In particular, the shutdown of the Blackburn dining hall as a result of the building's occupation by student demonstrators has numerous consequences.

- Students and parents have raised concerns that the meal plans they have paid for are not being fulfilled because of the limited current dining options on campus.
- Sedexo, our on-campus dining partners, has had to lay off at least 15 of their employees so far because the dining hall has not been operating.
- Student employees have not been working or getting paid because the café has been closed.
- Students continue to experience difficulty accessing food on campus, which could lead to food insecurity.

The student concerns have facilitated informative, important, and fruitful conversations and those conversations will continue on an ongoing basis. But it is worth noting that occupying the Blackburn Center is impacting the students it was intended to help. Many of our other campus community members have

been negatively affected as well.

Dining Dollar Rollover

The University will mitigate any issues that have arisen as a result of the protest to the best of our abilities. We will now allow dining dollars to carry over to the Spring 2022 semester since students were restricted in their ability to use those funds this semester. While this does not address the food access issues that continue during the occupation, we hope this helps students and their families from a financial perspective.

Excellence in Truth and Service,

Cynthia Evers, Ed.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs



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