

Special Edition - December 2017

The Wesley House

A Mission Center where students are empowered and prepared to go in ministry to the campus and beyond. A sanctuary to William and Mary students and our community in need.

Max's Musings....

We are dedicating this issue of the Wesley Weavings to the amazing variety of ministries empowered by the Wesley House. The motivation for focusing on the importance of the house was a letter from the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry expressing concern about the significant number of high cost requests they have received from some campus ministries for property maintenance and improvement. Thankfully, this has not included Wesley, because thanks to the generous support of our many partners, and the amazing work of our board, staff, and students, we have continued to keep the Wesley House in great condition with no deferred maintenance. This issue demonstrates how wide and deep the ministry opportunities that the Wesley House makes possible:

- The Residential Program
- "Radical Hospitality" where Deb, students, and I minister to students and community members who arrive in need
- Large Group Dinners and Programs bringing campus and churches together
- Campus Partnerships
- Community Ministries
- Summers at Wesley: residents, community, and campus

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**Wishing You
A Blessed
Christmas and
A Joyous New
Year!**

Residential Program

The residential program is a key component of our mission and ministry. The seven students who live at the house are part of an intentional Christian community based upon building community, growing spiritually, and providing service. Each resident signs a covenant agreeing to share his or her faith, seek to grow spiritually, participate in community life and serve in a way that promotes peace and justice. The residents often serve as the primary embodiment of the part of our vision statement that says, "Through following Jesus, we embrace God's radical hospitality towards all." In addition to being a home and a mission center, the Wesley House is a sanctuary. It is a community where students can come to simply be. They know that when they come to the house, they are going to be loved and accepted right where they are and just the way they are. The house residents are also an integral part of our connections with the community and the wider campus as well. They often welcome and ensure the house is ready for meetings, mentoring projects and training sessions for twelve different campus and community groups that we believe are creating a better community and world.

Meet the Residents!



Shushu BenOmran

Hi, I'm a senior from Falls Church, Virginia, and majoring in Biology. I've always admired how active Wesley is (both on and off campus) in promoting mental health, its support of other W&M faith groups, and in general its acceptance of a diverse group of people. As a Muslim, I am grateful for the opportunities Wesley has offered to express and discuss faith in a warm and caring environment. My hobbies include playing in the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble and cooking with friends in the Wesley kitchen!



Sarah Grace Frary

Hey there! I'm a sophomore from Roanoke, Virginia. I'm planning on studying Psychology or Neuroscience, and minoring in Music. I'm so thrilled to have the opportunity to organize events for Wesley as one of three fellowship chairs! If I had free time, I would spend it backpacking, learning how to whistle, or singing some classic summer camp songs.



James Irby

Greetings! I'm a junior studying history and music. I'm from Richmond, Virginia and love living in the Wesley House! The Wesley family has been an awesome part of my experience here at W&M, my favorite activity this semester has been volunteering at Shalom Farms, helping plant vegetables for nearby low-income areas to eat healthily. Aside from Wesley, I play on the ultimate frisbee team and I'm pretty involved in the Williamsburg concert scene. I work at the Amphitheatre down at Lake Matoaka and I'm also involved in the campus activities board (AMP). We do a lot of different events but I oversee all of the nonstudent concerts and musical events on campus. I'm a big fan of classic rock if you ever want to talk music!

Meet the Residents!



Erin Kitchens

"Hello everyone! I am a junior majoring in Anthropology and minoring in Italian, and I am from Beaverdam, Virginia. I just completed my third year on the student leadership team as Service chair. I love coffee deeply and will spend the spring semester in Siena Italy, after which I will be conducting research for my honors thesis over the summer in Siena. I am also a member of the William and Mary Women's Chorus, and the Financial Chair for Student Partnership for Aid and International Development (SPAID). This summer SPAID will be working with our community partners HCDP Ghana to finish the building of a school block in Fodome Ahor, Ghana."



Leanne Riso.

Hello, I am a senior biology major with a chemistry minor. My hometown is Fairfax, Virginia. I am happy to say that I am a second year resident of the Wesley House. Wesley is an ever-changing community of unique voices. The Wesley House serves as a place where people can stop by and meet new friends, find comfort for their troubles, and grow in faith and strength. Outside of Wesley, I am involved in the Catholic Church on campus, am a member of the Pre-Vet Club - a club for veterinary students, work in a research lab for Marine Invertebrates, and am a member of the William and Mary Metal Music Club. If you love metal music, love animals, or want to chat about what it is like living at Wesley, I am always ready to talk.



Kate Sandberg

Hi! I'm a junior from Leesburg, VA, majoring in linguistics and minoring in psychology. I hope to attend graduate school to get my PhD in linguistics and become a professor. I served as the Communications Chair for the student Leadership Team and I love participating in all things Wesley! In addition, I serve as a copy chief for the student newspaper here on campus and work as a TA for Italian 101 students. I am so happy to be living in the Wesley House!



Emily Xu

Hi! I'm a sophomore from Manassas Park, VA. I'm planning on self-designing a major in Biochemistry and minoring in Philosophy. On campus, you can find me working in my worm research lab or tutoring at the Tribe Tutor Zone. I also enjoy volunteering at Respite Care at Williamsburg UMC and the Hospice House and Support Care of Williamsburg. In my free time, I love reading and listening to movie soundtracks!

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- For content related items, contact John Dunning at: wmwesley-development@cox.net
- For address changes contact, Deb Wixted at: wmwesleyaa@hrcoxmail.com
- Contact the Campus Minister, Rev. Max Blalock at: MWBlalock@wm.edu

Radical Hospitality

Our vision statement says, “We believe God creates a human family; every person is a recipient of God's grace; and God intends for us to be a community that embodies love, reconciliation, and justice. Thus, we welcome people of all races, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, faiths, and theological identities. Through following Jesus, we embrace God’s radical hospitality towards all.” The students who live and spend time at Wesley, Deb, and Max are the front lines of embodying that vision. They are the ones who greet every student, guest, community group, delivery person, and people looking for Williamsburg UMC that come to the house. Because we welcome such a wide variety of people to Wesley, it is imperative that we all not only embrace the vision, but the teachings and actions of Jesus that are foundational for it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

This becomes even more imperative when students who are in crisis arrive at Wesley looking for a place of hope and help. This year two students have arrived at Wesley in crisis. One was active in Wesley, and one was a friend we had not met yet. In both cases, Max was in a meeting in Richmond at the United Methodist Center, and Deb stepped in and gave the student the care and support that they so desperately needed until she and Max could connect them with a local pastor and eventually a professional counselor on campus to provide them the immediate care needed. As a result of this, we are partnering with William and Mary to provide crisis training opportunities specifically focused on campus ministers and their staff to better equip them to help students when they come to us.

We are also a beacon of hospitality and hope to the community. This past spring we decided to purchase and display the sign to the right—> in front of Wesley by our sign. As a result of our displaying it, Temple Beth-El decided to not only purchase one for themselves, but to challenge every other faith community around the campus to do the same. As a result, Williamsburg Baptist and Williamsburg Presbyterian are sharing the signs as well. Radical hospitality is contagious!



Wanted - - Wesley Partners



Please take the challenge and become a Wesley Financial Partner. Our partners sustain the campus ministry through their annual gifts. The Wesley operating budget is dependent on individual donations from alumni and friends. Please help us reach our 2017 Goal of \$26,500. You can provide a tax deductible donation in one of two ways:

On-line by credit card. Go to www.wmwesley.org/donate, or mail a check to:

**The Wesley Foundation
526 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185-4044**

Campus Partnerships

Wesley and the Office of Community Engagement: 7 Generations Program

We partner with the Office of Community Engagement's 7 Generations Community Service Program every August providing housing and hospitality to 10 incoming students who participate in the program. These programs are offered each August to a small group of students. Each program focuses on an important social issue in our area and allows students to learn about that issue while working together on related service projects. This past August our own Wesley resident Emily Xu was the student counselor with the group at Wesley that focused on civic engagement. The relationships built this week were the catalyst for Wesley's trip to the March for Racial Justice in D.C. in October.



Community Partnerships

Wesley and the City of Williamsburg Summer Youth Achievement Program (SYAP)

Each summer the Wesley House hosts this free seven-week program is held five days per week and open to children ages 13 to 15 who live within the city limits. The Wesley Foundation is proud to partner with the city to provide a program which highlights responsibility, respect, role modeling, life skills, academic and career goals, character-building, and being part of and giving back to the community. The students and their counselors utilize the fellowship hall and basement for much of the programming each week, as well as using it for a home base on the days that they are out in the community. This partnership is another unique way to offer the love and grace of God beyond the campus to the community.

Wesley and Narcotics Anonymous

Wesley continues to partner with Narcotics Anonymous to host two meetings each week: Thursday evening and Saturday morning. This is a wonderful partnership for the community and the campus for those who need it. We continue to have a wonderful relationship with both groups that reach a total of over 50 persons each week.

Wesley and Alcoholics Anonymous

Every Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day, the Wesley fellowship hall is a sanctuary of hope and hospitality offered by AA to the community. Having a community with which to spend the holidays and be surrounded by love, welcome, food, and friends is literally a lifesaver for many.

Wesley and Old Time Jams

A couple of years ago, Wesley reunited with some old friends. Now twice a month the fellowship hall is filled with bluegrass and folk music as folks from the community and the college come together to jam.

Sunday Nights at Wesley



There are very few places in our nation where people come together across generations for meals, conversation, worship, and listening to and learning from one another. Sunday nights at Wesley is still one of those places where it happens regularly. As we continue the strong ties between Wesley and local congregations throughout the area, Sunday Night Dinner and Large Group continue to be a wonderful community where students and folks from local churches come together for great food, conversation, worship, and discussion. A beautiful example of this was this semester when Wellspring United Methodist not only provided the food, but also awesome gospel music performed during dinner! It was a beautiful gathering of students, faculty, and folks from Wellspring!

The beauty, conversation, listening, and learning continued with our discussion of Academia and Faith following the meal. We gathered in a large circle with five professors spread out among us to discuss the relationship between academics and faith from the professor as well as student perspectives. When you have so many folks from so many different perspectives coming together for mutual growth and understanding, grace abounds. We had professors representing three different faith perspectives, friends from the Muslim Student Association who joined us, as well as folks from Wellspring who stayed for the discussion. It was a beautiful, immensely meaningful event that was totally planned, implemented, and led by students. Kathryn Weilacher did a beautiful job moderating the entire Q&A and discussion, and several students and professors planned to follow-up on the discussion with plans for a group for students of faith in the STEM fields, as well as other events next semester.



This is just one of many examples of the amazing events that happen on Sunday nights at Wesley. We have powerful worship and discussion that energizes and empowers students to live out their faith and embody the love and grace of God in all that they do during the week.





Wesley Homecoming & Open House



This year's open house was on October 21st from 1 to 6:30 pm. It included a pregame tailgate, a webcast of the game on the "big screen" and a wide assortment of photo albums and memorabilia. Although we had plenty of competition with other tailgates and open houses—as well as the game—we had more than fifty of our alumni, friends and family members present, enjoying the fellowship, the tailgate and recounting Wesley memories. While most had tickets for the game, we catered to those who decided to watch the game on the big screen. We would like to extend a special thanks to the Wesley Board who provided a fantastic tailgate for our alumni and friends. A few of the pictures from the open house are shown below:



Alumni News



Dominique Rowinski '17 will be moving to Shikoku, Japan in the new year to teach English.



Meghan Roth Clayton '08 was appointed on Nov 1st as the Associate Pastor of Williamsburg UMC and will serve on the Wesley Board. (*Editor*)

Jannette Morris - '15 & Andrew Bresson - '15 moved to Durham, NC this past September. Andrew transferred from the Boy Scouts of America's Baltimore Area Council to their Occoneechee Council. As a District Executive, Andrew supports volunteers and manages development and membership for Boy Scouts of America programming. Jannette is serving as an AmeriCorps member through the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. During her service year, she is coordinating stewardship and leading educational programs for the conservation non-profit, the Eno River Association. The photo was taken this summer in San Juan, Puerto Rico during a trip to see family and do some adventuring. (All of Jannette's family in Puerto Rico is safe and recovering from the hurricane.) (*Wesley House Residents 2012-13*)



Lauren Parr Baker '12 - Lauren writes that she is living in Richmond, working as a psychiatry resident at VCU Health. My husband, Mackenzie and I (pictured below with our 1 year old pup, Holly) have enjoyed catching up with fellow W&M alums and visiting the 'burg now that we are just down the road. Max officiated our wedding at the Williamsburg United Methodist Church 1.5 years ago, and it was so fun to have that Wesley spirit

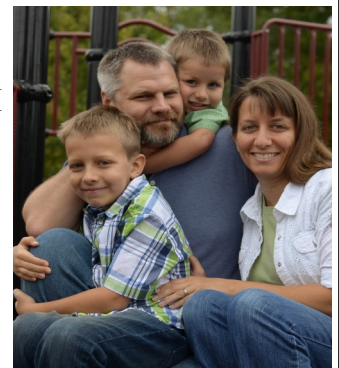


Ruth (Loyer) Myers '05

Greetings from northwest Ohio. I am excited to be living in a college town again! My husband, Luke, and our kids (4-year-old Josie, and 1-year-old Henry) live here in Bluffton. We moved here 2 years ago when Luke accepted a job as Assistant Professor of Physics at Bluffton University, a small, Christian liberal arts college. We are happily busy, though in an exhausting phase of life with a young family. Each night for our evening routine, we enjoy watching our kids run around the dining room table, over and over again. :-) When I'm not running around the dining room table with my kids, I serve in a bi-vocational role as a nurse practitioner and a deacon. I'm appointed beyond the local church to an internal medicine clinic through an organization called Mercy Health, St. Rita's. Additionally, I'm grateful to be able to play viola with the Lima Symphony Orchestra. Although my family doesn't have opportunity to travel to the east coast very often, Williamsburg, W&M, and those lasting friendships through Wesley remain dear to my heart. Wishing everyone *shalom* this Advent and Christmas season! (*Wesley House Resident 2002-2004*)

Kim Geier - '00

I was a resident of the tiny room! These days I am living in Lynchburg, Va (in a house with a bedroom larger than a closet!) teaching science at Lynchburg College. I am married to Bill Geier and am the mom of 2 boys ages 4 and 8. To round out the house we have a dog, some fish, and a cat (although I am sad to say our cat is at the end of her 17 yr life...pray for us especially as our kids deal with her impending death). We are a science nerd family and one of the highlights of our year was when we traveled to Tennessee to see the total solar eclipse. We are already planning on seeing the next one in the US in 2024.



Alumni News

Michelle (Ricketts) Evans '97

My husband (Travis) and I live in Gaithersburg, MD, with our seven (yes, seven!) cats, the most recent addition being a 3-week old kitten rescued in August from under a car in my parking lot at work. I am still a forensic chemist with the ATF, analyzing evidence from explosives and fire investigations, and my husband owns the Just Riding Along Bicycle Shop in Laytonsville, MD. We don't make it to the Burg anymore, since my parents moved from Poquoson to the mountains of VA, but I hope to visit again one day in the future! (Photos - Mabel, our newest addition; the other 6 "adult" cats; Travis and I at the Grand Canyon in 2016)



Lisa Bailey Mackey - '91— writes that two of her Wesley alumni classmates were recently honored: **Marcia Agness Kochel - '91** - was selected by the American Library Association as one of this years "I Love My Librarian Award" recipients as an inspiring leader who implemented strategies to better her community. She received a \$5000 prize at an award ceremony in New York City. Marcia works at the Druid Hills Middle School in Decatur, Georgia. **Cheryl Pace Mackian - '91** recently was invited to hold an art show of her work at Clifton Forge School of the Arts. The School of the Arts provides a two-fold program that is recreational and vocational, promotes economic development, and encourages cultural enrichment and creativity.

Clifton & Laurie (Gentile) Bell - '90 Clifton and I lived in the Wesley House during our senior year from 1989-90. We met at the Wesley Foundation, began dating our senior year, and married in August 1994. After obtaining our masters' degrees and living and working elsewhere in Virginia, we moved back to the 'burg in 1997 to raise a family. Our son, Spencer, is now a freshman at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan and our daughter, Anne, is in 10th grade at Providence Classical School. I have been teaching four and five year olds for 11 years at a local preschool while Clifton works for an international environmental consulting firm. One of our favorite family activities is hiking and biking together either around Virginia or out west.

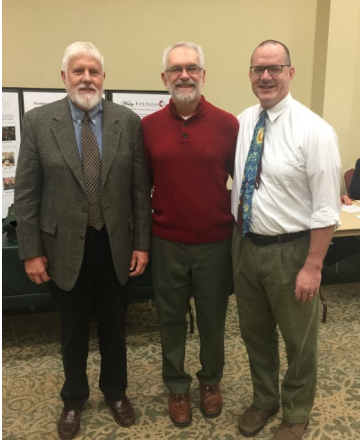
Kent ('87), Amy ('89) and Emma Diduch ('20) on Family Weekend last year.

Here is our "Tribe family" photo. Our daughter Emma is a sophomore history major / biology minor who attends Wesley Sunday evening programs when she can. (She's also very active with UKirk, the Presbyterian group as well as APO, the pep band, and the Spotswood Society). Kent is the sports medicine physician for James Madison University and Amy teaches Economics at Mary Baldwin University.



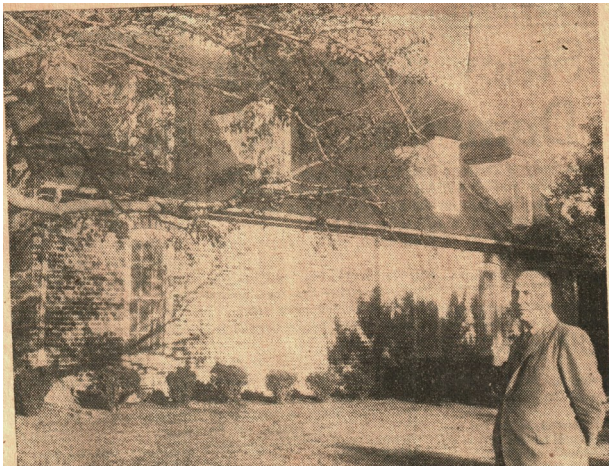
Alumni News

Braxton Allport (1974 - 1988) David Hindman (1988 - 2010) Max Blalock (2010 - Present)



Forty-four years of outstanding Wesley Campus Ministry (Braxton, David & Max) participated in the Annual Alternative Giving Fair sponsored by the Williamsburg United Methodist Church on December 3rd. The fair provides a forum for non-profit organizations to educate about their purpose and encourage the community to make donations to charities as an alternative to traditional holiday consumerism. Our campus ministry had a visual display board explaining how we invite and equip students to explore, engage, and embody an active faith in God. We also provided an opportunity for attendees to purchase a “Love Your Neighbor” t-shirt to support Wesley and as a reminder to live out their faith.

55 Years at The Wesley House!



October 1962 article from the *Williamsburg Journal Tribune*, “Wesley Foundation Buys Home On Jamestown Road” (article excerpt)

The Reverend Rudolph Benesh, director of the Wesley Foundation, announced the purchase of an eight room brick house at 526 Jamestown Road for its future fellowship hall and lodging for students. The actual purchase was made by the Wesley Foundation at Virginia Methodist, Inc., the statewide parent organization. Rev. Benesh stated that he has been looking for a house for over two years and that the location couldn't be better. The ministry will move from their current location in the Education building at Williams-

burg Methodist Church. Rev. Benesh also announced plans for a \$25,000 addition of a multipurpose room in two or three years. This room will have expanded kitchen facilities, a projection booth, and a stage. It will also be used as a chapel. The foundation, in attempting to serve the religious needs of the students, has a full program which includes discussion and fellowship groups and religious services.

The Wesley Foundation is deeply appreciative of the support provided by the United Methodist Virginia Annual Conference for their 55 years of support to enable us to maintain and manage the property. A special thanks to Bill Pike, the current Chair of the Conference Board of Property Mangers, for his guidance and oversight. His G3 inspection initiative that provided a professional assessment of all current and projected maintenance requirements, with photos, has been invaluable for our property committee. We hope to continue this partnership and will strive to meet all best practices in property management.

Wesley House Photos



House Front View



House Rear View



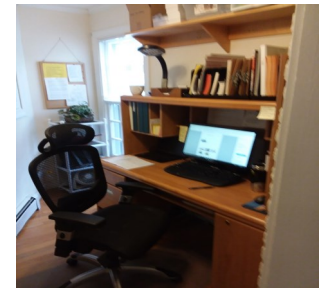
House Deck View



Living Room



Campus Minister's Office



Administrative Assistant's Office



Kitchen



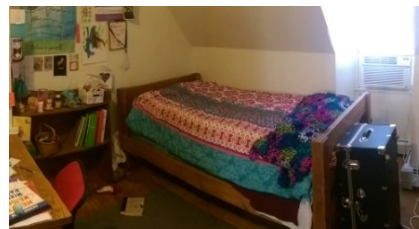
Fellowship Hall



Recreation Room



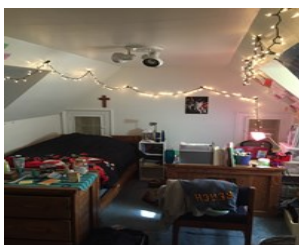
Double above Office



Double above Living Room



Single - The Cloister



Single above Fellowship Hall



Single in Basement



**Rudy Benesh
Peace Garden**

**ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF WESLEY FOUNDATION
AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY**

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WESLEY is
this?

(turn to page 4 — and find out)

