Fri., March 6, 2020

Dear Rattler,

As your Vice President of Students Affairs, I am excited to introduce a new program at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), Residential Development Communities (RDCs). Following in the footsteps of our Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) and its successes, RDCs are Office of University Housing (OUH) initiated programs centered around students with similarly themed interest. These students live in the same community with professional/student staff, programming and opportunities dedicated to holistically developing students around their specified area of interest.

We are fortunate enough to deliver two RDCs to our students beginning in the fall 2020 semester under the title of Rattlers RISE. The two themes are Second Year Experience and Transfer Student Experience.

The Second Year Experience is intended for rising sophomores who currently live on FAMU’s campus in a residential facility. This includes students who currently participant in the freshmen targeted LLCs. Second-Year Experience applicants must have no less than 30 credit hours by May 4, 2020 and no more than 59 by August 26, 2020 to participate in this program. The Transfer Student Experience is aimed at newly admitted transfer students who will begin enrollment in either the summer or fall of 2020. Transfer Student Experience applicants must meet all FAMU transfer designated requirements.

While the Transfer Experience will utilize intentional strategies to get the students acclimated to the FAMU community, both experiences are focused on increasing persistence rates, grade point averages, service in the community and professional preparation.

OUH works with a variety of campus partners including Academic Support Services, the Career & Professional Development Center, Transfer Student Services, Office of Student Activities, Office of International Educations & Development and others. Through these collaborations' participants will: have dedicated live-in staff; have peer mentors and tutors, preparation for obtaining internships, leadership and community opportunities, access to campus job opportunities and increased study abroad prospects. We additionally look to introduce “Alternative Spring Break” opportunities to our campus which incorporates a service-learning experience into traditional spring break travel fun.

RDCs align with the University’s Strategic Plan, FAMU Rising, by “intensifying student success initiatives to improve retention and persistence, expanding academic support services, facilitating a seamless transition of AA transfers to the University, increasing the number of students engaged in study abroad or international educational experiences, and creating an Exceptional Student Experience.” Students who live-on campus, work on-campus and participate in programs such as these are statistically more likely to graduate in less time with a higher grade point averages than their counterparts. If this sparks your interest, I encourage you to apply for acceptance to Rattlers RISE. Application information can be obtained by contacting the Office of University Housing at 850-599-3651 or emailing at housingRISE@famu.edu.

With Rattler Pride,
William E. Hudson Jr., Ph.D.