

COOGS HOUSE NEWS

OCTOBER 2023



2023 COOG CRIBS ROOM DESIGN CONTEST

PRESENTED BY
STUDENT HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL LIFE!

2023 COOG CRIBS ROOM DECORATION COMPETITION

Hey, Coogs! The Coog Cribs Competition is back! Do you have the coolest room on campus? Did you and your roommates deck out your living room? Enter the 2023 Coog Cribs Competition to see how you stack up, win prizes and most importantly, bragging rights. This year, we have introduced four categories to highlight your creativity.

HOME SWEET HOME

This is a judges' choice category. We want to see what makes your space uniquely YOU. Submissions will be evaluated based on use of space, use of color and reflection of personality.

COUGAR PRIDE

"Cougar Pride" is a judges' choice category. Show us how your room embodies the Cougar Spirit. Whether you have incorporated school colors, Houston memorabilia or Weeks of Welcome freebies, we want to see rooms that shout UH. Submissions will be evaluated based on commitment to the category, creativity, and use of space.

BEST LIVING ROOM

"Best Living Room" is a judges' choice category. Your common area is THE space for your fellow Coogs to hang out. If your living space clearly reflects a team effort and is frequently visited by friends, step into the spotlight. This category is for UH residents who share a common living area (Bayou Oaks, Cougar Place, The Quad and University Lofts). Submissions will be evaluated based on creativity, use of space and reflection of group interests.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Winners in this category will be determined by social media engagement. The People's Choice submissions will be posted on Student Housing & Residential Life's Facebook page and Instagram stories (contestants will receive an email when submissions are posted). The room that gets the most combined likes between platforms by 8 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 20 will win.

Submit your room before **11:59 p.m. on Oct. 17**. Visit the Coog Cribs webpage to learn more

https://uh.edu/housing/_contests/2023-coogs-cribs-contest



Student Housing & Residential Life
Division of Student Affairs

WE WEAR RED ON FRIDAYS!

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PRIORITY ROOM SELECTION OPENS IN LATE OCTOBER

Get a jump on securing your room for the 2024-2025 academic year and **save the \$99 application fee** during **Priority Room Selection, beginning Oct. 30 through Nov. 30**. Check out the breakout below to learn when your selection period will open. Rooms fill up fast, so you are advised to complete and submit your housing application during this promo period.

Same Room Oct. 30 – Nov. 5, 2023

Current residents may complete an agreement and select their same room for the 2024-2025 academic year. Cougar Village I, Cougar Village II and Moody Towers - South may not be selected.

Different Room in the Same Building Nov. 6 – 12, 2023

Current residents may complete an agreement and select a different room in the same residence hall. Cougar Village I, Cougar Village II and Moody Towers - South may not be selected.

New Room in a Different Building Nov. 13 – 30, 2023

Current residents may complete an agreement and select a different hall and room anywhere on campus. Cougar Village I, Cougar Village II and Moody Towers - South may not be selected.

**Note: Eligibility requirements vary from community to community. Be sure to review eligibility requirements prior to submitting a housing application.*

Residents who submit a complete agreement by the deadline designated for their selection period will not have to pay the \$99 agreement fee.

To take advantage of the priority sign-up, log in to AccessUH and click on the myHousing icon.

For questions, contact Student Housing & Residential Life staff at 713-743-6000 or email housing@uh.edu.



COUGAR CUPBOARD FIGHTS CAMPUS FOOD INSECURITY ONE POUND AT A TIME

By Jaelyn Lyles, Communications Manager, SHRL

Photos by Anuraag Shah, Videographer & Photographer, SHRL

Food insecurity is defined by the Department of Agriculture as a household's inability to provide enough food for each person to live an active, healthy lifestyle. Moreover, a 2017 study published in the Educational Researcher journal found that up to half of American college students might struggle with food insecurity.

Since its establishment in January 2020, the Cougar Cupboard, University of Houston's on-campus food pantry, has been fighting food insecurity on the University of Houston (UH) campus by providing more than 5600 students with nutritious food completely free of charge. In partnership with the Houston Food Bank, the UH cupboard offers produce, canned goods, dried items and frozen meats year-round. Up to 30 pounds of fresh and non-perishable foods is available to students each week.

Jessica Haney ('21), program manager of the UH Cougar Cupboard, oversees the day-to-day operations of the cupboard. Haney writes and responds to emails, manages inventory and deliveries and tracks data to better understand how to continue adding value to the students utilizing this resource.

When anonymously surveyed, students frequently attribute their use of the cupboard to financial challenges, stating, "I work part time, but I can't cover all my expenses," or "I can't afford to eat more than one meal a day." Additionally, the inability to access a grocery store or familial responsibilities may be the reason for their lack of access to healthy foods.

"The majority of our students are commuters," says Haney. "Most people try to survive on a granola bar and a bag of pretzels for the day while they are on campus, but how does that impact their functioning in class? We can do so much better."

The original Cougar Cupboard, which was located in the UH Student Recreation Center, relocated due to the facility renovation project. Currently, Cougar Cupboard provides their services through a weekly distribution at the UH Student Center, as they build out a new space to be located at University Lofts. Haney is optimistic that the updated location will provide more opportunities to serve students.

"The new location will be about three times the size of our previous space. I am really excited that we will have more freezer and refrigerated space in addition to our dry and canned goods," says Haney. "The larger inventory will also allow us to provide more to those who may need it."

Students interested in utilizing the cupboard can sign up on the Cougar Cupboard website <https://uh.edu/csac/cougar-cupboard/> or follow them on Instagram to learn more at <https://www.instagram.com/uhcupbrd/>



WELLNESS TIP OF THE MONTH: ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

By Juliann Losey, Assistant Director, SHRL

Welcome to October! As the weather cools down, we are inspired to enjoy the outdoors and embrace nature's beauty. As we head outdoors this month, it is a great time to reflect on our impact on the environment and consider how we can adopt sustainable habits.

Embrace Sustainable Practices

Here are some ways to cultivate green habits for better Environmental Wellness:

1. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** Embrace the three Rs of sustainability by reducing waste, reusing items whenever possible and recycling materials properly. Small actions like using reusable water bottles and opting for eco-friendly packaging can make a significant difference.
2. **Venture Outdoors:** Take advantage of the pleasant weather by spending time outdoors. Go for a hike, have a picnic in the park or simply stroll through nature's breathtaking landscapes. Connecting with nature benefits both the environment and your overall well-being. Places like the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, Hermann Park Conservancy and Buffalo Bayou Park provide opportunities to experience nature, without leaving the city!
3. **Sustainable Dining:** Explore sustainable food choices by supporting local farmers' markets and opting for organic, locally sourced produce. Reducing meat consumption and choosing plant-based meals can also contribute to a greener lifestyle.
4. **Energy Conservation:** Be mindful of your energy consumption. Turn off lights, unplug unused devices and use energy-efficient appliances. Small actions can lead to significant energy savings.
5. **Mindful Consumption:** Be intentional about your purchases. Consider the environmental impact of products before buying and opt for eco-friendly alternatives. Support brands that prioritize sustainability.

Cherish the Natural World

October's beauty serves as a reminder of the wonders of the natural world. Take a moment to cherish and protect it:

1. **Nature Appreciation:** Spend time in nature and appreciate its splendor. Engage in activities like birdwatching, stargazing or simply meditating in a peaceful outdoor setting.
2. **Conservation Efforts:** Get involved in conservation initiatives and volunteer for environmental cleanups or tree-planting activities. Directly impacting our surroundings can be incredibly rewarding.
3. **Advocate for Change:** Use your voice to advocate for environmentally friendly policies and practices. Look for opportunities in your residence hall, student organizations, and the class room to make adjustments to improve sustainability. Practicing sustainability and engaging in conversations about climate change promote awareness among friends and peers.

An Eco-Conscious Future

By connecting with nature and adopting sustainable practices, we contribute to a healthier planet and a brighter future. October provides the perfect opportunity to deepen our appreciation for the natural world and take meaningful steps towards preserving it.

So, celebrate the beauty of our planet and commit to nurturing it with love and care. Together, we can make a positive impact on our environment and create a more sustainable world for generations to come.

Happy October, and happy cultivating of green habits for a better planet!

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RHA EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHT

The University of Houston Residence Hall Association (RHA) and National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) support students by providing programming and advocating for on-campus residents. Read on to get to know more about the 2023-24 RHA executive board members. Attend upcoming RHA programming to meet them in person!



Alyssa Green

RHA President, 2023-24
Senior, Liberal Studies – Pre-Law
Hometown: Frisco, Texas
Residence Hall: University Lofts

Why did you seek out a leadership position with the RHA?

I sought out a leadership position with the RHA because I want to be involved with students who are just like me. I want to highlight the diversity of our campus by getting involved in student advocacy and leadership positions. I want a chance to use my platform to highlight other students.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

My favorite memory has been our annual Lunar New Year event. It has been happening for two years now, and every year it has gotten bigger and better. I believe that it is the pinnacle of what the RHA is: an opportunity for student leaders to provide programming for students on campus that showcases the diversity of our campus and creates lasting friendships.

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

To the student that is undecided, I would tell them the quote that is on my wall. "You've got everything it takes, it will take everything you've got." Students often think that they are unqualified for positions or opportunities on campus. Do not count yourself out. You have a unique story to tell and it can impact so many people. Taking that first step is the most important.



Eshal Warsi

President, 2023-24 NRHH
Junior, Political Science
Hometown: Cypress, Texas
Residence Hall: The Quad

Why did you seek out a leadership position with the RHA?

I sought out a leadership position on the RHA because I wanted to make residents feel like they are welcome. As someone who moved to the U.S. only four years ago, I know how isolating it can be moving to a new place. As NRHH president, I hope we can involve residents in service projects that support the Third Ward Community.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

My favorite memory since joining RHA has been our weekly executive meetings. It is so much fun brainstorming ideas and coming up with creative ways to support our residents!

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

College is all about challenging yourself and learning how to navigate new situations. Getting involved is the single best way to learn more about yourself. You learn more about your communication style, make new connections and learn how to work in a team. Not only are these skills applicable to academic life, but they also translate to real-life situations.

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Gabrielle Kostecki

Vice President of Programming, 2023-24 RHA
Mathematical Biology
Hometown: Tomball, Texas
Residence Hall: The Quad

Why did you seek out a leadership position with RHA?

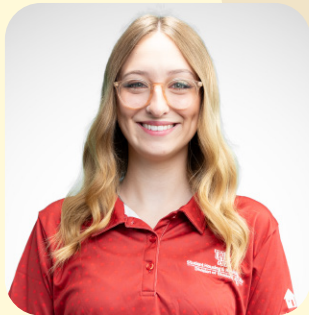
I wanted to get involved on campus during the pandemic, especially since everything was online my freshman year.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

I have made so many friends through the RHA and still hang out with a lot of those people even after they left Hall Council.

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

Do not count yourself out of a position or application because you feel unqualified. Push yourself to apply to leadership roles and programs that are a reach!



Bailey Payne

Vice President of Administration, 2023-24 RHA
Junior, Public Relations
Hometown: Charleston, South Carolina
Residence Hall: Cougar Place

Why did you seek out a leadership position with the RHA?

This is my second year on the RHA Exec board. As an out of state student making a community in the residence hall, I lived in was very important to me, especially in my first year. I joined Cougar Village II Hall Council and became involved with RHA, I created relationships with the executive board and when the opportunity came up to join the board, I knew I wanted to because it meant I could bring that sense of community to all residents and not just the residents in my hall.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

My favorite memory is not specific, but it is the many, MANY Moody dining hall trips that we would take after our exec meetings last year. I made my best friends through RHA and those relationships started by sharing a meal in Moody.

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

Getting involved is the best decision I ever made. Not only does it set you up for success post-grad, it also helps you form relationships and lifelong connections with people who have a similar drive and passion as you. All of my best friends have come from getting involved, and I've met so many amazing people through Student Housing & Residential Life.

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Omar Castanon

National Communication Coordinator, 2023-24 RHA
Strategic Communications
Hometown: Tomball, Texas
Residence Hall: Cougar Place

Why did you seek out a leadership position with the RHA?

I sought this position with RHA because I wanted to continue getting involved on campus and working with a larger student population to ensure students felt seen and welcomed. I wanted to help make an impact on students through my work and be involved as much as I could to accomplish this.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

My favorite memory since joining the RHA is going to the University of Texas to represent the University of Houston at our Regional Conference. Through this conference, I was able to connect with other students from different campuses. This experience allowed me to engage at a regional level while winning in different categories at this conference.

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

I would tell this student to start small by attending events on campus with friends and having them at the events provided on campus. These experiences will ultimately shape your time here at the university. Being involved on campus has opened many doors, allowing me to meet a wide range of students and make new friends.



Kaleb Vu

Vice President of Administration, 2023-24 RHA
Junior, Public Relations
Hometown: Jackson, Mississippi
Residence Hall: Cougar Place

Why did you seek out a leadership position with the RHA?

Coming into my first year, I was completely unsure of what I wanted to do. Hall Council was the first leadership position I ever heard about, so I took the chance to apply. I am grateful for all the doors it has opened for me and the experiences I have gained.

What has been your favorite memory since joining the RHA?

One of the first Hall Council events that my team hosted was a Trivia Night. It was truly amazing facilitating and creating friendships between many new faces while also bonding as a Hall Council team.

What advice would you give to someone who is undecided on getting involved?

Organizations like the RHA help you gain the experience necessary to apply to new positions and roles, so take the chance to apply to what interests you! You will not regret it.

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GET INVOLVED IN YOUR RESIDENCE HALL

Greetings RHA Members!

As an on-campus resident, you are automatically a member at-large of one of the University of Houston's (UH) largest nationally and regionally recognized student organizations: the UH Residence Halls Association (RHA)! RHA and its sibling organization, the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH), are two student organizations aimed at fostering leadership and amplifying resident voices at UH. Between these two organizations, there are a TON of ways to get involved and connected on campus.

"Of The Months" aka OTMs

As you attend events, make new friends and get to know staff, you can give shout-outs and recognize your community! OTMs are one of the ways RHA competes regionally and nationally with categories ranging from various events and programs. You can give a shout out to a student or student staff member, your residential community (aka your hall or floor) and more. There are a ton of opportunities to submit recognitions for the wonderful people and program ming initiatives happening at UH! Connect with your Hall Council Recognition Chair to learn how to write compelling OTM nominations, so that yours is most likely to win!

Hall Council, RHA and NRHH Events

During the school year, your hall council will be facilitating events within the residence halls on campus. Hall councils work closely with all residents in their hall, so if there is a particular event you would like to see in your building, let them know! Additionally, RHA facilitates several major programs throughout the year on campus; and NRHH facilitates service and civic engagement events. There are plenty of opportunities to get involved at UH, in the city of Houston and beyond!

Homecoming

Gear up to join your residence hall community teams this Homecoming—it's time for the epic "Battle of the Halls" showdown! Homecoming Teams compete in several events and each residence hall has a hall council sponsored team to make your community proud! Look out for opportunities to sign up this month.

Town Halls

Each hall council will be facilitating at least one Town Hall each semester, where residents from the on-campus community can provide feedback on events and resources or voice concerns they would like hall council to address.

Connect with your Community Mentor

Are you interested in getting involved in Hall Council, but missed the deadline? Contact your Community Mentor to learn about any possible open positions, volunteer opportunities or other ways to get involved within your hall.

Learn more about RHA, NRHH and Hall Council by visiting

<https://www.uh.edu/housing/get-involved/>

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SHRL STAFF SPOTLIGHTS



Congratulations to **Jerrod A. Henderson, Ph.D.**, Cougar Village II Faculty-in-Residence, for being selected to receive a National Science Foundation CAREER Award. The award comes in recognition of his support of students and the goal of increasing black men's representation from the current 2.8 percent.



Additionally, **Lyle McKinney, Ph.D.**, University Lofts Faculty-in-Residence, recently received the title of full professor at the University of Houston. This promotion speaks to his experience teaching, scholarship and service to the University and College of Education.

Congratulations to them both on these fantastic achievements!

SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS AT THE UH WRITING CENTER



The University of Houston Writing Center is a free resource that offers assistance and guidance to students, faculty and staff who are looking to enhance their writing skills. Visit the Writing Center to receive one-on-one consultations with trained writing consultants who can help you at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming ideas to final revisions. Whether you are seeking support with academic writing, such as essays and research papers, or professional writing, like resumes and cover letters, the Writing Center is here for you!

Schedule an appointment or learn more services provided through the Writing Center visit <https://uh.edu/writing-center/>

RECREATION CENTER UPDATES



Come spend some time at UH Recreation's Outdoor Adventure this fall! As the weather gets cooler, join an outdoor adventure trip to see what Texas has to offer. There is something for everybody!

Sunset Stand Up Paddleboarding on Oct. 6, 2023 in Galveston, Texas. Register by Oct. 4, 2023.

Hiking at Huntsville State Park on Oct. 21, 2023 in Huntsville, Texas. Register by Oct. 18, 2023.

Moonlight Kayaking on Oct. 27, 2023 in Clear Lake, Texas. Register by Oct. 25, 2023.

Along with trips, Outdoor Adventure also hosts workshops and clinics. Check out these upcoming events to learn how to kayak, make your own bug repellent and cook outdoors.

Beginner's Kayaking Clinic on Oct. 18, from 6 to 8 p.m.

DIY Insect Repellent Workshop on Oct. 25, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Outdoor Cooking Workshop on Nov. 1, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Register for these trips and events online through myrec.uh.edu or through the UH Rec app. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Outdoor Adventure office at outdoors@uh.edu

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FOUR WAYS TO FIX IT

Student Housing & Residential Life strives to provide convenient, comfortable, and secure residence halls. If you come across any maintenance issues in your room, suite or residential building, please report it in one of four ways through the university's maintenance system, FIXIT.

Remember, maintenance issues must be reported before an attempt to resolve is made by UH Facilities.

Residents should submit a FIXIT request to ensure maintenance issues are resolved in a timely manner. Staff in UH Facilities are working hard to respond to requests in the order they are received in addition to building emergencies. If you have reported an issue and have not experienced a resolution, please visit the front desk of your residence hall for assistance.

Help SHRL make UH living communities the best they can be!

4 Ways to FIXIT



Facilities/Construction Management
Division of Administration
& Finance

1



Log online to AccessUH and find the **FIXIT** icon

2



Send a text message to **fixit@uh.edu**

3



Send an email message to **fixit@uh.edu**

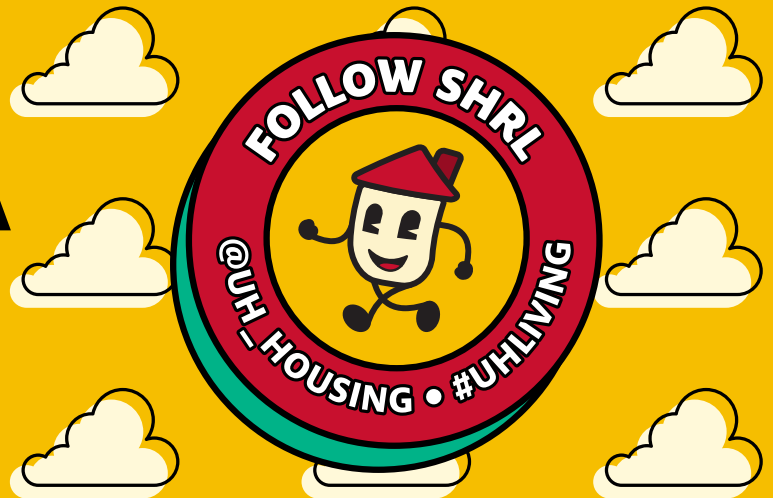
4



Call **713-743-4948** or **3-4948 (FIXIT)** on campus

FOLLOW SHRL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow **@UH_Housing** on social media to stay up to date on news and announcements from Student Housing & Residential Life. Use **#UHLiving** to share your photos, and you may be featured on our channels!



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