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Juniors!

The Meredith Herald

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BDH Closures During Breaks Cause Strain for Students

By Hannah Taib and Shae-Lynn Henderson, Staff Writers, and Olivia Slack, Co-Editor in Chief

On Oct. 6, Residence Life announced to all residential students on campus that Belk Dining Hall (BDH) would be closed during fall break. For some students on campus, the closure of the dining hall creates difficulties obtaining food during the break. International and out-of-state students at Meredith College, many of whom do not have the option to return home for the short break, were two of those groups.

Meredith College has opened its doors to international students from all over the world and out of state students from all over the country, but during times like fall break when the dining hall is closed, these students say they struggle both financially and emotionally. Accessing food for breakfast, lunch and dinner is difficult for many who do not have a driver's license or a car. Out of state student Emily Wood, '25, commented, "I'm from Florida, and have no car on campus. With BDH being closed, I had to consistently spend money on my meals for the four days [of fall break]. It stressed me out because I had to figure out what I was going to eat, and how I was going to get it."

Although Residence Life provides cooking utensils for students to use in the residence hall kitchens during breaks, students still have to go off campus and buy ingredients at the grocery store to prepare a meal. Fairclough acknowledged that Whole Foods is within walking distance, but said

that shopping there requires her to "spend more money just because it's all [she] can access." Relying on friends with cars may also not work over break if those students return home or go on vacation. According to international student Lauryl Fairclough, '24, "Grocery shopping

is also more difficult for myself as I do not have access to a car... Ordering food feels like a

waste of money and going grocery shopping is a pain when you don't have a fridge and would have to use the communal fridge and kitchen that is shared between the whole residence hall."

The expense of obtaining food can also be a burden on some students. For example, the exchange rate from U.S. dollars to other currencies can be unfavorable to international students. Paying tuition, room and board and other expenses with the exchange rate can already be difficult, and having the safety net of a meal plan helps with this financial burden. However, during breaks, the meal plan is unusable despite the fact that students

pay for it for the entire semester. Fairclough said, "The main thing I have heard a lot of people say, including myself and my friends, is 'we pay so much to go to college here and they can't keep the dining hall open for an extra week?'"

International student Mei

Li Moo King, '23, noted that ordering food, which is often necessary

find filtered water on campus other than the tap from the residence halls' bathroom sinks or first floor kitchens.

For many students, especially international and out-of-state students, the dining hall is an extension of their day-to-day lives. Out of state student Addie Rowells, '25, pointed out that it can already be difficult to live on a nearly empty campus during breaks. "I do not have many other places to get adequate meals," she said. "It's already hard to deal with being one of the only students on campus during breaks, and having nowhere to get a meal is even more difficult to endure."

Fairclough had a suggestion for how Meredith could accommodate residential students who have to stay on campus during breaks: they shared that they were quarantined last semester and had to submit a Google Form of what food they would like during the week. "Something like that would be helpful," they said, "but instead of it being delivered [students could] collect it during a certain time slot, that way [BDH] would know exactly how much food to cook and how many people they are serving food for."

The Meredith Herald reached out to David Penney, Director of Dining, for comment but received no response.



Photo by Olivia Slack

during breaks for students who don't have a car, can be expensive. "If I don't walk to a restaurant across the street, I'd order food from Uber Eats," she said. "However, food costs double on Uber Eats... one time I ordered a chicken strip meal from Chick-fil-a and it was \$17. That's about two hours of on campus work for me as a junior." Moo King also acknowledged that Jones Chapel has a food pantry that students can utilize, although there aren't always a variety of options. However, she did comment that she was grateful to find water in the chapel because with BDH closed, it can be difficult to

Who is Meredith's ELT?

By Shae-Lynn Henderson, Staff Writer

The Meredith community often receives messages from Meredith's Executive Leadership Team (ELT). However, some students may not know who exactly comprises this team. *The Herald* spoke with some of its members to find out more about their roles and what they do for the College.

First taking office as the eighth president and first alumna president of Meredith College in 2011, Dr. Jo Allen, '80, has driven a series of successful projects and accumulated many titles, making use of her experience as a scholar, faculty member and administrator. Dr. Allen leads the ELT according to Vice President for College Programs Jean Jackson, '75. Dr. Jackson is also a member of the team along with Dr. Matthew Poulosny, Senior Vice President and Provost, Dr. Tammi Jackson, Vice

President for Business and Finance, Dr. Lennie Barton, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Kristi Eaves-McLennan, MBA '14, Vice President for Marketing.

The ELT's main job at Meredith is to see how each member's roles "intersect with each other and build the infrastructure for making the best decisions for the entire College," Dr. Allen said. The ELT also oversees how the College's priorities change depending on the year. The team's goals for the 2021-2022 academic year include paying "attention to the College strategic plan, closing out this year and moving into a new iteration for 2022-2027," said Dr. Allen, "[as well as] reducing expenses and increasing fundraising to keep tuition, room and board as low as possible." The ELT will also continue its "renewed commitment to anti-racism and fuller inclusion

of all."

Eaves-McLennan said the best part of being on the ELT is "working alongside committed colleagues." She "appreciate[s] the opportunity to contribute to decisions that help make Meredith a great place to study, live and work." Dr. Jean Jackson stated that the team "work[s] for the greater good and recognize[s] that all that needs to be done cannot be done at once."

Dr. Jean Jackson recognizes that the ELT's decisions "affect students, faculty, staff, alumnae and others who care



Photo by Olivia Slack

about Meredith College." The team takes into consideration that "Meredith's leaders have worked to ensure that Meredith College will be able to meet the changing needs of students and will continue to do so for many generations of students to come."