

McMurtry College

PicassO-Week

2025





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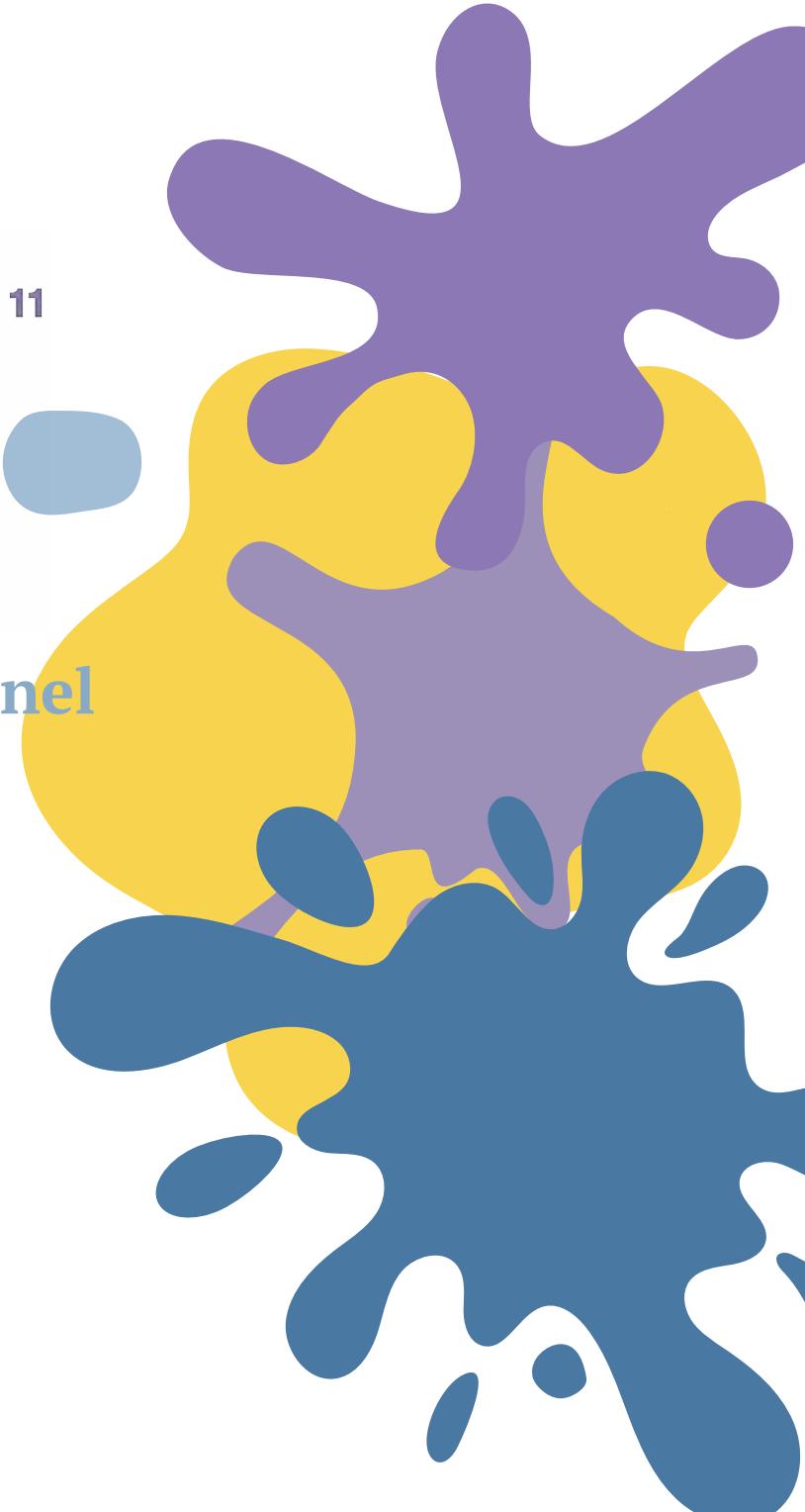
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Section 1. Introduction to O-Week





Welcome to McMurtry!

Welcome to the studio! We're Cara, Carlos, and Yazmine, your 2025 McCoordinators! We are beyond thrilled to draw you into the masterpiece that is Rice University, specifically McMurtry College!



First of all, congratulations on making it to the best residential college on campus. Whether your journey was a whirlwind of color or sketched slowly over time, we want you to know how proud we are of the artwork that is you. You've arrived with a blank canvas and boundless potential, and we're here to hand you the palette.

This year's orientation, PicassO-Week, is all about helping you find the brushes, tools, and inspiration to start painting your unique Rice experience. Just like in any great work of art, no two brushstrokes are the same, and that's what makes your presence in our McMurtry gallery so special. From bold expressionists to quiet minimalists, every Murt adds a vital hue to our vibrant community.

We've curated this week to help you feel at home on campus, build authentic relationships, and get comfortable with the medium that is college life. Expect events bursting with color, conversations that spark creativity, and plenty of opportunities to frame the first moments of your Rice story.

Throughout this booklet, you'll find essential information about move-in, McMurtry, and everything in between. Think of it as your orientation sketchpad, something to reference as you navigate the exciting days ahead. And if questions still linger in the margins? Don't worry! More updates are coming soon. Your PicassO-Week crew are always just one brushstroke away.

At McMurtry, we believe in inclusion, creativity, and spirit, values we hope will become foundational to the piece you create over the next four years. So go ahead: dip into every color, mix boldly, and don't be afraid to paint outside the lines. You're not just part of the class of 2029, you're an artist-in-residence in the gallery we call home.

Here's to fresh canvases, fearless creativity, and a week full of joy.

With love and vibrant hues,

Cara, Carlos, and Yazmine

what is O-Week?

Orientation Week, affectionately known around campus as O-Week, is Rice University's signature way of saying: Welcome home. It's a week-long introduction to your life at Rice, designed to help you start this new chapter with confidence, support, and a strong sense of community.

While many schools have orientation programs, Rice's O-Week stands out for its depth, energy, and personal touch.



Every new student is assigned to one of Rice's eleven residential colleges, which will serve as your community and support system for the next four years. You've been placed into *McMurtry College*, a vibrant and close-knit group of students, faculty, and staff who are excited to welcome you. Each year, a team of student O-Week Coordinators (that's us!) works all summer to plan a week full of activities, information sessions, and bonding opportunities to make your transition as smooth and meaningful as possible.

During McMurtry's O-Week, PicassO-Week, you'll be part of a small group of fellow New Students led by 4-5 upperclassmen Advisors. These Advisors are current McMurtry students who will be your go-to guides throughout the week and beyond. They're here to answer your questions, share advice from their own experiences, and help you feel at home both academically and socially. You'll also be introduced to the McTeam, our Core Team of dedicated faculty, staff, and adult leaders who are an integral part of the McMurtry community.

O-Week goes beyond just scheduling classes and learning campus maps. It's a deep dive into Rice's academic culture, available resources, and the broader Houston area. Through advising sessions, social events, late-night talks, and moments of reflection, you'll begin to build connections that will carry you throughout your college journey. This week is designed to help you find your place, feel supported, and get excited about all that lies ahead.

Whether you're feeling excited, nervous, curious, or all of the above, just know that *you're not alone*. Every student here has been through this transition, and you have an entire team ready to walk alongside you.

Welcome to Rice.

Welcome to McMurtry.

Welcome to PicassO-Week.

MISSION STATEMENT

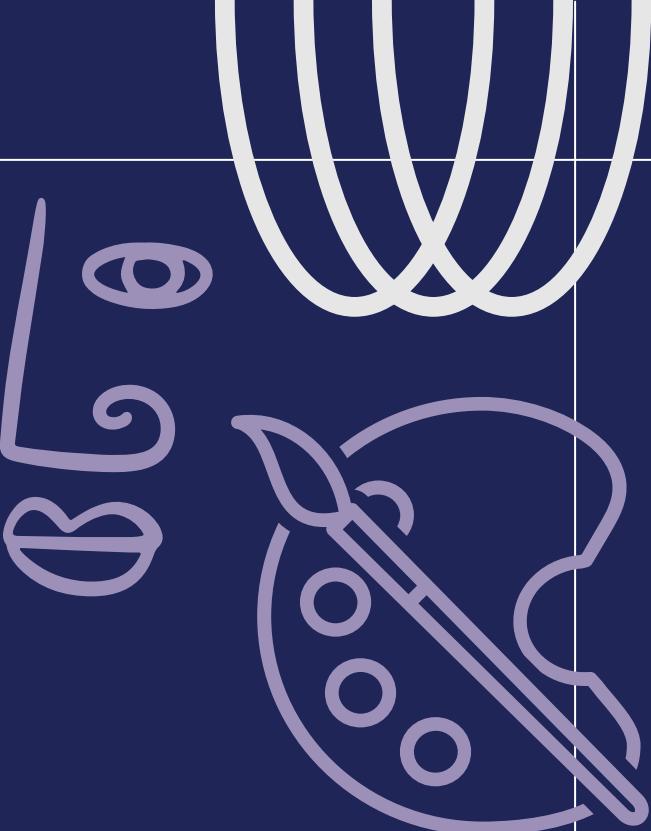
In the exhibition of 2025, New Students will enter Rice with a clean slate and the newfound freedom to decide how they wish to paint their future. Our mission for McMurtry's PicassO-Week is to equip our incoming painters with the palette to transform their blank canvas into an eventual masterpiece - a collage of academic and personal successes that they can treasure for years to come.

To create an artwork from scratch, an artist needs to have a plethora of tools at their disposal: a vibrant palette, a diverse array of brushes and pens, and most importantly, an open imagination. These instruments of success are analogous to the values we hope to instill in our new Murts during PicassO-Week: spirit, inclusion, and creativity. Just as we marvel at artworks from across continents, movements, and time periods, we are so excited to admire the variety of beautiful students from all backgrounds curated together in our McMurtry museum.

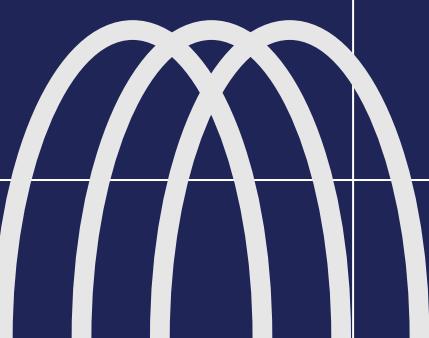
Here at McMurtry, we can't wait to see the first brush strokes on your canvas of memories, and we hope that the connections and celebrations of O-Week provide inspiration for your artistry. As PicassO-Week begins, don't forget that your studio is filled with hands-on helpers. A diverse and enthusiastic team of Advisors, Affiliates, and A-Team members are waiting to model McMurtry's characteristic spirit and inclusivity.

Although only you can decide how to make your mark at Rice University, remember that you will now always have a place in the gallery we call home: McMurtry.





Section 2. **Move-In**



Move-In Day Instructions



Plan to arrive in the morning on Sunday, August 17th. When you arrive at Rice, please enter through Entrance #1 (the main entrance), take your first right, and follow the signs for McMurtry. After you unload, you will be given directions for where to park for the remainder of the morning. As you get closer to McMurtry, Advisors will be holding signs, yelling your name, and welcoming you to the college. They are super excited to meet you!

Your Advisors, and maybe some helpful football players, will empty your car and start moving your stuff into the building (that's right - you don't have to do ANY work). In the meantime, you and your family will be introduced to our wonderful College Coordinator, Jackie, who will give you your keys and other important information. After you check that all your belongings are in your room, you will meet the McTeam (our amazing Core Team), who will welcome you to McMurtry and Rice. They are so excited to meet you and you can read more about them later in this book! You will also have some time to unpack and begin setting up your room.

Around noon, there will be lunch for you, your family, and your Advisors. Soon after lunch, it will be time to say a final goodbye to your family, and head off to join your O-Week group for the first time. While your family and loved ones stay behind for a New Families Orientation, you will be starting one of the most jam-packed and fun-filled weeks of your college career!

*Please only mail or ship things to arrive after August 17th. Our space is limited and not secure, so bring important items with you.
There will be time to shop for other things after O-Week!*

Important Contact Information

O-Week Coordinators

mcmurtryoweek@gmail.com

Cara Brown

cb116@rice.edu
(480)-341-9841

Carlos Cruz

cc211@rice.edu
(832)-878-1009

Yazmine Miles

yam1@rice.edu
(928)-304-4418

McMurtry College Magisters

Elizabeth Vann

evann@rice.edu
(713)-348-4908

Jeffrey Fleisher

jfleisher@rice.edu
(713)-348-4908

McMurtry College Coordinator

Jackie Carrizales

jjc3@rice.edu
Office: (713) 348-4583
Fax: (713) 348-3135

Directions to McMurry

Arriving By Car:

From the West on I-10 East:

Take 610 South to 59 North and exit at Greenbriar. Follow Greenbriar and turn left at Rice Boulevard. Follow until it becomes Sunset Blvd. Turn right on Main Street and take an immediate right into Rice campus using Entrance #1.

From the East on I-10 West:

Take the US 59 South exit. From US 59 South, take the Fannin Street exit and travel south on Fannin until you reach Sunset Boulevard. Take a right on Sunset and an immediate left onto Main Street. Turn right onto Rice campus using Entrance #1.

From the South on US-59 North:

Exit at Greenbriar, stay on the frontage road, and turn right (south) on Greenbriar. Follow Greenbriar to the light at Rice Boulevard. Turn left onto Rice Boulevard. Stay on Rice Boulevard until it becomes Sunset. Turn right on Main Street and take an immediate right into Rice campus using Entrance #1.

From the North on US-59 South:

Take the Fannin Street exit and travel south on Fannin until you reach Sunset Boulevard. Take a right on Sunset and an immediate left onto Main Street. Turn right into Rice campus using Entrance #1.

Arriving By Plane:

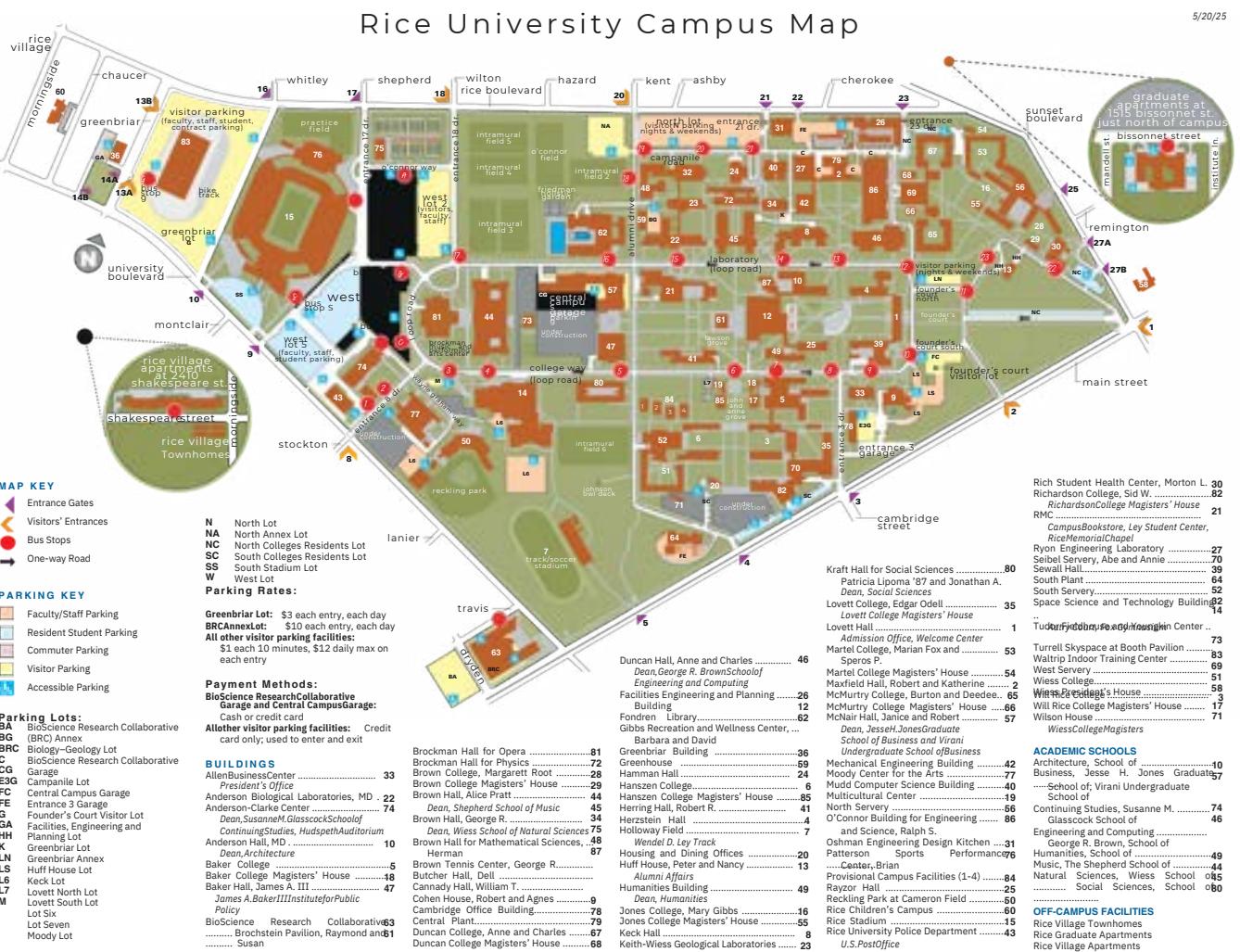
George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH):

Supershuttle (713-523-8888 or supershuttle.com) provides services to and from Intercontinental and the fare is \$27. All departures are from the lower level baggage claim (southside area) where they have agents on duty. The shuttle departs every 30 minutes beginning at 6:10 am and takes 45 minutes to an hour. The express will take you to a Holiday Inn in the Medical Center (about five minutes from Rice). Normal Supershuttle can be requested to stop at Rice. Another option is Uber. Depending on what time of day you arrive, Uber will cost around \$40 and can be called at any time.

Houston Hobby Airport (HOU):

The Airport Express also runs to the Medical Center and also leaves every 30 minutes starting at 6:10 am. The fare is \$20 and will take 30-45 minutes. Supershuttle is also available at Hobby Airport and costs around \$20. Another option is Uber. Depending on what time of day you arrive, Uber will cost around \$40 as well and can be called at any time.

Campus Map

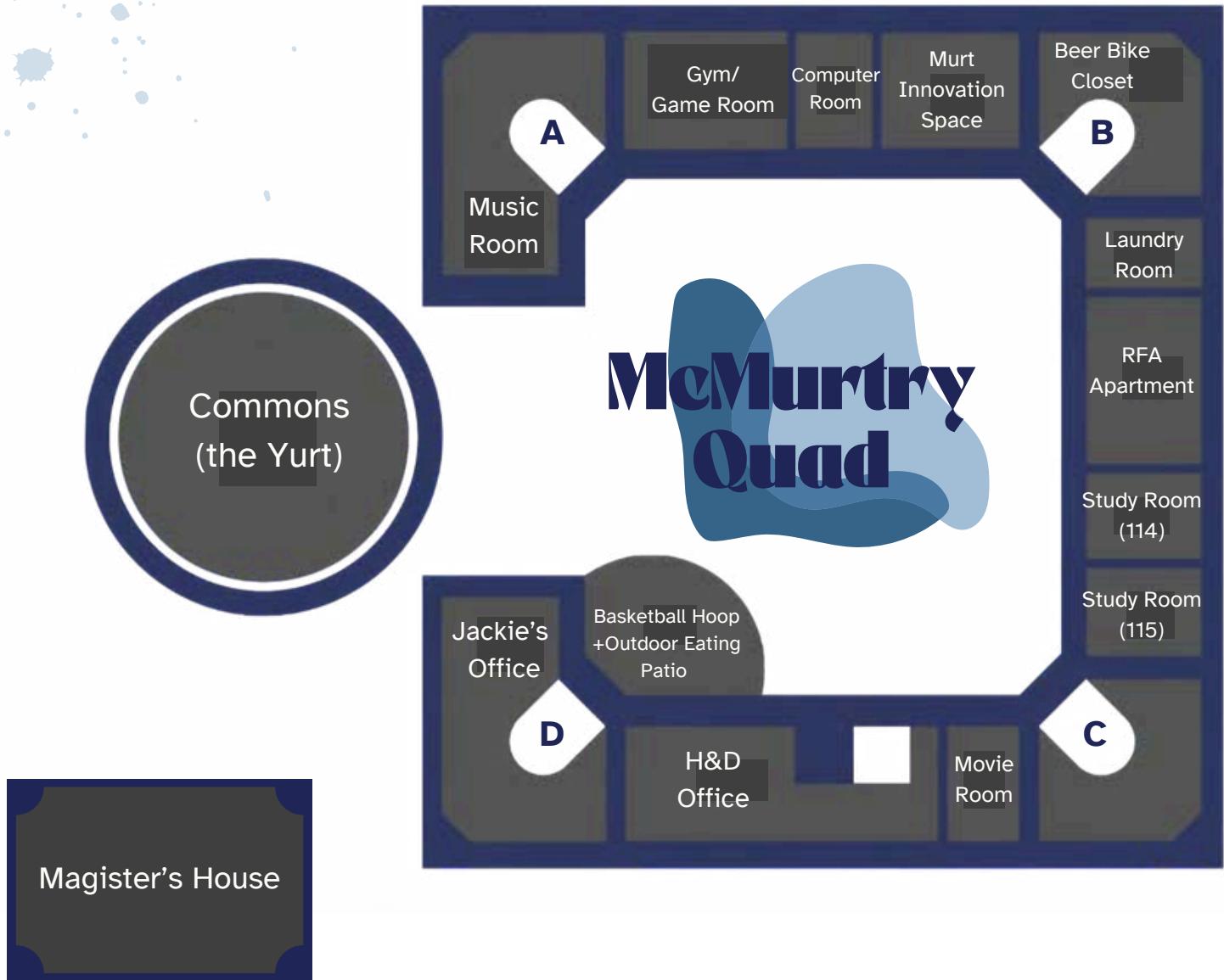


Here's a link to Rice Campus Maps, including Google Maps, a printable map, and an interactive map of campus!

<https://www.rice.edu/campus-maps>

Map of McMurtry

First Floor

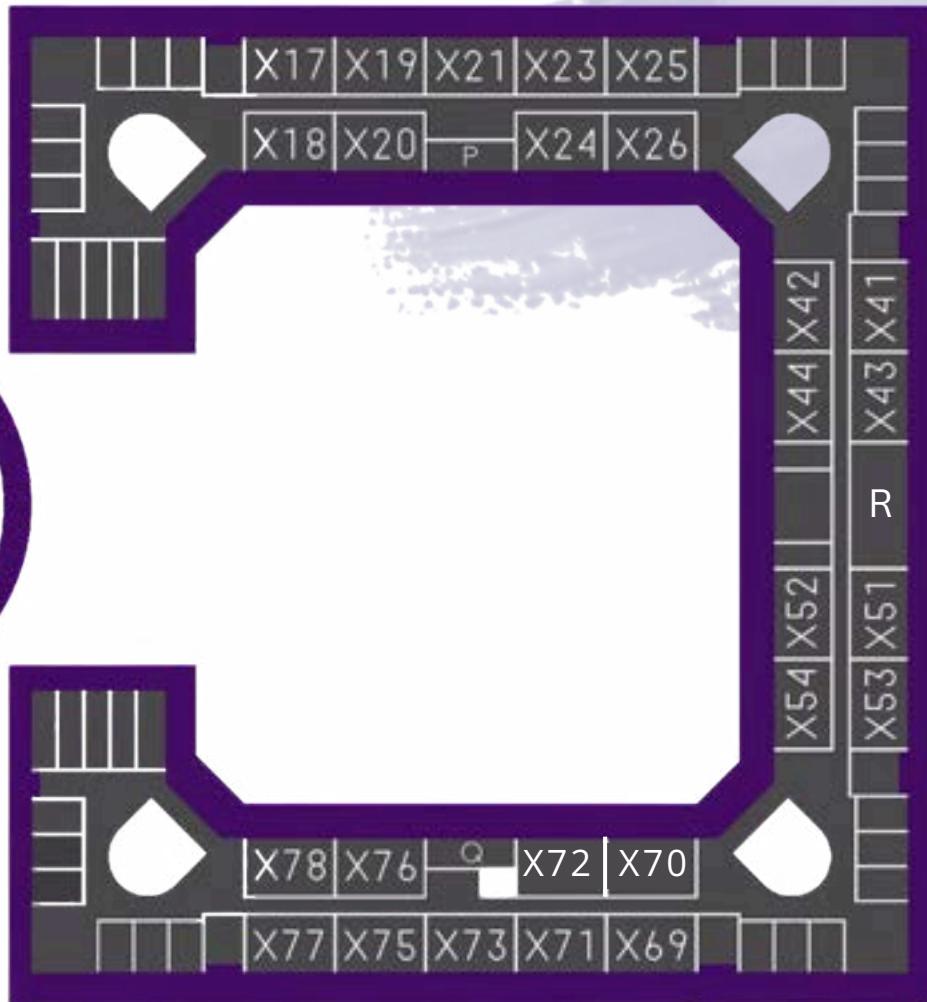


A,B,C, and D denote our four stairways. You will often hear Murts say things like "meet me by stair B" or "leaving from stair D."

Aside from some RFAs, no one lives on the ground (or 1st) floor. You will find essentials like our Laundry Room, Study Rooms, and Jackie's Office!

A few steps from the main McMurtry building is our Commons, the Yurt, connected to West Servery. You will always find Murts eating meals, studying, and hanging out here; many Murt events also take place in the Yurt!

Map of McMurtry



McMurtry: 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors

Replace “X” with your floor to find your room on the map above!

All incoming Murts living on campus will be assigned to a room on the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th floor.

P - denotes a small communal study room-type space where there is a table, chairs, and a whiteboard.

Q - denotes a kitchen space containing a stove/oven, sink, microwave, and fridge!

Anyone is welcome to use these at any time as long as they clean up afterward.

R - denotes an RA apartment on the 2nd and 3rd floors (Tamara and Deirdre, respectively)

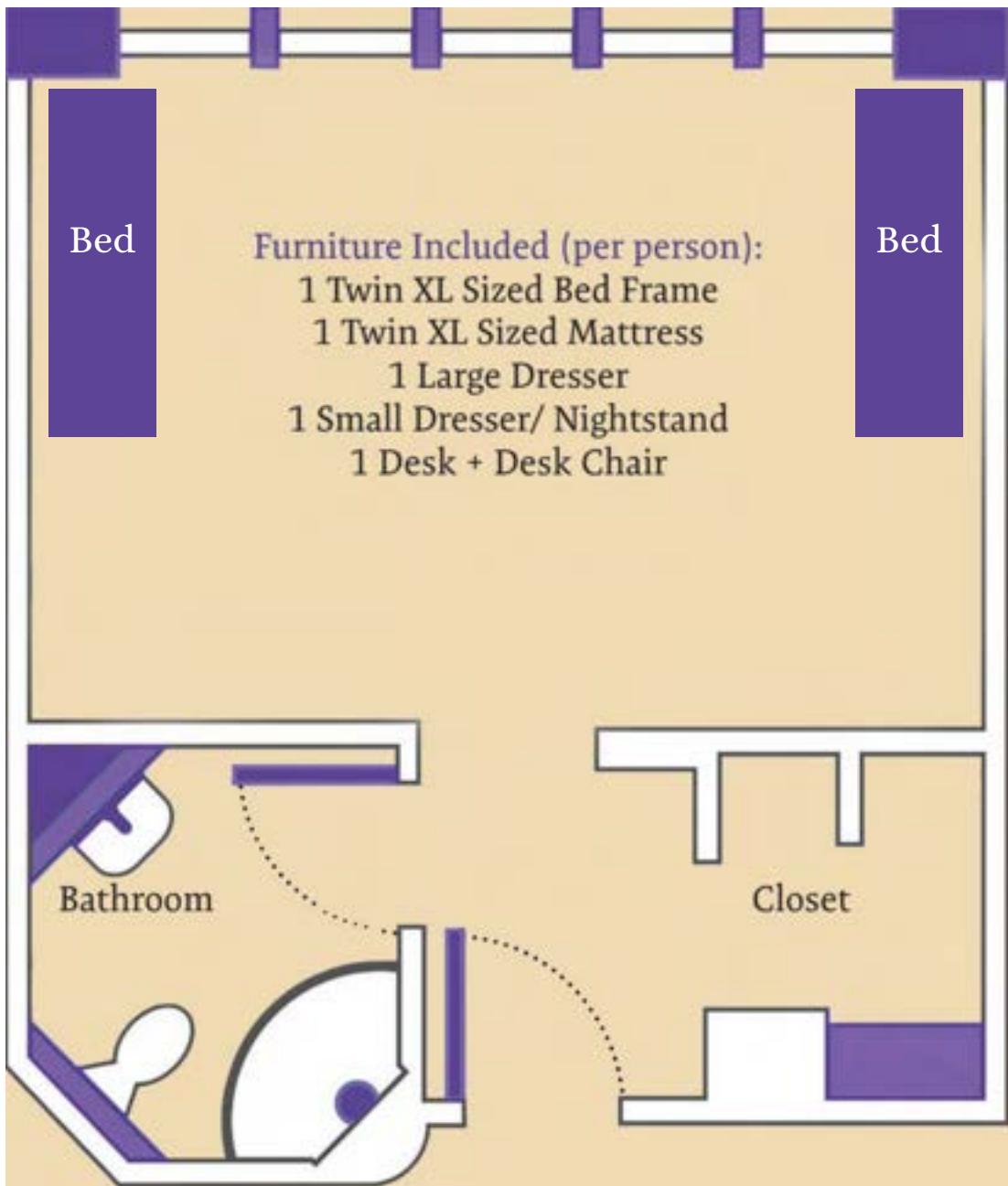
McMurtry 5th is a sundeck where some upperclassmen live and are also home to 2 more communal lounge spaces, and sometimes Murt-wide events are hosted up here!

Hall Culture - Rooms above the A & B staircase (x17 - x44) are “O” halls (stands for Orange), and rooms above the C & D staircase (x51 - x78) are “Y” halls (stands for Yellow).

Your Room

Coming in as New Students to McMurtry, you will most likely be placed in a double (one room shared between two people) with your roommate.

The diagram below is a floor plan which should give you an idea of what your 18'x18' room will look like!



What to Bring

Every Room Has:

- Bed
- Dresser
- AC/Heating Unit
- Desk & Chair
- Ethernet Port
- Private Bathroom
- Built-in Closet
- Cable TV Outlet
- Towel Racks
- Trash Can & Recycling Bin
- Shower Curtain

Supplies to Bring/Buy:

- School Supplies
- Desk Lamp
- Shower Accessories
- Storage/Organizers
- Power Strips/Extension Cords
- Backpack
- Computer & Chargers
- Clothing Hangers
- Hand Soap/Hand Towels
- Bath Mat
- Twin XL Bedding & Pillows

Personal Items:

- Medicines
- Laundry Detergent
- Toiletries
- Towels/Washcloths
- Clothes Hamper (we recommend one that's easy to carry)
- Clothing — make sure you have a week's worth of comfortable shorts and shoes for O-Week
- Identification (i.e., Driver's License, Passport, etc.)
- Up-to-Date Insurance Card

Optional Items:

- Mattress Pad
- TV
- Water Bottle
- Iron/Ironing Board
- Carpet/Rug
- Brita Filter
- Mini Refrigerator
- Wall Decorations
- Full-Length Mirror
- Furniture
- Mounting Tape / Command Strips
- Broom or Vacuum

What NOT to Bring:

- **TOO MUCH STUFF** — there will be plenty of time to buy stuff you didn't bring. We recommend starting out small with just the essentials and adjusting when you are here!
- Candles or other flammable materials





Section 3. **PicassO-Week Personnel**



O-Week Roles

Your McCoordinators

Hopefully you all know who we are by now. We (Cara, Carlos, and Yaz) are your 2025 PicassO-Week Coordinators! We have been working on planning O-Week for you all since January and we are super excited for you to finally be here. We are in charge of selecting the advising team, placing you into an O-Week group, and planning all the events that will be happening during O-Week.

Your O-Week Group

Your O-Week group consists of 3-4 Murt Advisors, 1-2 Co-Advisors, and potentially another O-Week affiliate (such as a Community Facilitator), as well as all your O-Week ‘siblings’ (10-13 other New Students in your group!). These people are there to form close bonds with you and help you through anything, academically related or not. You will be spending a lot of time with your group during O-Week.

Your Advisors

Your Advisors are a group of Rice students that are enthusiastic about welcoming you to McMurtry and helping you adjust to college. They are there to support you with anything you may need. Your group will include Advisors who are from McMurtry as well as Co-Advisors, who are advisors from other colleges and may introduce you to Rice culture outside Murt.



O-Week Roles

Peer Academic Advisor (PAA)

Student experts on Rice academics who will help you with all your class scheduling during and after O-Week!

Max Lai (he/him) | ml155@rice.edu

Safee Baig (he/him) | sab21@rice.edu

Steven Zhang (he/him) | steven.zhang@rice.edu

Kef Nkosi (he/him) | kn35@rice.edu

Rice Health Advisor (RHA)

They're your resource on well-being at Rice and how to be the healthiest and happiest self you can be!

Charlie Maxson (they/them) | 404-580-4724 | cm112@rice.edu

Chief Justice (CJ)

They're your resource on the justice system and other regulations such as the Alcohol Policy!

Carmine Steiner (she/her) | 713-261-9602 | ccs1@rice.edu

Divisional Advisor (DA)

The DAs are members of various academic schools that will be available during O-Week to answer any questions you may have regarding academics.

Deirdre Hunter (she/her), Engineering
hunterd@rice.edu

Gary Woods (he/him), Engineering
gary.woods@rice.edu

Tim Schroeder (he/him), Humanities
timothy.a.schroeder@rice.edu

Laura Kabiri (she/her), Natural Sciences
laura.kabiri@rice.edu

Krista Kobylianskii (she/her), Natural Sciences
kristakobyl@rice.edu

Dogus Aktan (he/him), Social Sciences
dogus.aktan@rice.edu

Colette Nicolaou (she/her), Social Sciences
colette.nicolaou@rice.edu

Ginger Vaughn (she/her), Business
ginger.vaughn@rice.edu

Community Facilitator (CF)

They run educational diversity workshops and are here to make sure you feel comfortable being yourself. They are great resources throughout O-Week and the school year - don't hesitate to reach out!

Denise Lundu (she/her) | 786-823-4151 | dgl3@rice.edu

Eriyana Woolfolk (she/her) | 708-580-3220 | ew73@rice.edu

Sohani Sandhu (she/her) | 480-868-6438 | sks15@rice.edu

President

The President of McMurtry College for the upcoming school year!

Berny Guerra Arthur (he/him) | 214-742-0506 | bgg1@rice.edu

Athletic Liaison

A student-athlete Advisor who ensures our athletes' experiences, both during O-Week and after, are understood and accommodated!

Ava Casperson (she/her) | 832-696-3530 | ac321@rice.edu

Student Maintenance Representative (SMR)

Go-to person if you need your bed lofted or have any other issues with your room.

McTeam

The McTeam is the group of adults here at McMurtry who are advisors and mentors for all students in the college.

Elizabeth Vann (she/her) | evann@rice.edu
Jeff Fleisher (he/him) | jfleisher@rice.edu

Jackie Carrizales (she/her) | jjc3@rice.edu

Matt McCary (he/him) | mm160@rice.edu

Priscilla Martinez (she/her) | pm82@rice.edu

Tamara Jones (she/her) | tamarajones@rice.edu

Deirdre Hunter (she/her) | dnh1@rice.edu

meet the
McCoordinators





cb116@rice.edu
(480)-341-9841

C
A
R
A



You're walking down the Inner Loop. You see someone wearing a stylish outfit listening to Brat by Charli XCX (with wired headphones, of course) walking to Dell Butcher Hall. You think to yourself, "Who is that?" The little Carlos on your shoulder whispers, "It's THE Cara Brown!" As the first Ca in CaCaYa, Cara is from Phoenix, AZ, but was born in Austin, TX, so she's a Texan by birth. As a dual Chemistry and Art History major (you know she had to double it), Cara can do it all: take really aesthetic pictures in Houston's museums for your Instagram, invent new molecules, and add then drop ANOTHER major in Biosciences.

When she's not dazzling the academic world or running Sunday Sundaes and Fun with Chemistry like the icon she is, you can catch Cara curating a god-tier Spotify playlist, doing elite hauls at Trader Joe's, or wandering the The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston like she owns the place (she does spiritually). From chemistry research to Powderpuff, she's got range, and a keen eye for the vibes. If you're lucky, she'll take you on a museum date and tell you about her favorite TJ's snacks on the way.

Cara's energy is something that everyone should experience. She really knows how to bring out the best in you and was tied with Yaz for the first overall pick in the "Someone You Want to Be Friends With" draft in 2025. Whether it be someone to laugh with, confide in, or cry with, Cara is your one-stop shop for it all. Set a timer on your phone until August 17th and put in your Google Calendar "Meet Cara" (and get ready for O-Week while you're at it). She physically cannot wait to meet you and welcome you to your new home - just like the kind, non-soccer mom caretaker energy she provides!

- Carlos Cruz (McMurtry '27) and Yazmine Miles (McMurtry '27)



Somewhere off 610, a Buc-ee's pajama set just hit the pavement with a volleyball in one hand and a Chipotle chicken al pastor bowl with no toppings in the other. "Who is that?" you may ask. It's Carlos Cruz radiating main character energy on a casual Tuesday. The middle Ca in CaCaYa (and the heart of the group), Carlos reps Houston (more specifically, Sugar Land) with pride - even though he'll tell you he's from New York - and is a walking masterclass in how to be the kindest, chilliest person alive. He's the best volleyball player on this side of the net and the friend who will drop everything to make sure you're okay, probably while handing you a Chaus drink.

When he's not being a Murt icon or dominating the volleyball court on our men's club volleyball team, Carlos is either boarding a plane for his next adventure, saving lives as an EMT working 911, going to the gym (sometimes), curating a vibe-checked playlist featuring Malcolm Todd, Peach Pit, and Dominic Fike, or making a spontaneous Panda Express run that somehow turns into a core memory. He's a connoisseur of good times and great convos, with a sixth sense for knowing exactly when the group needs a laugh, a Just Dance session, or a spontaneous hang.

Carlos is your hype man, your safe space, and the reason O-Week will feel like home before you even unpack. Whether it's a 2 a.m. heart-to-heart, Love Island watch party, or a spontaneous trip to get fries from Whataburger and talk about life, Carlos is always down, and you'll be so glad he is.

- *Yazmine Miles (McMurtry '27) and Cara Brown (McMurtry '27)*



yam1@rice.edu
(928)-304-4418



A hot new bombshell just entered the villa, and her name starts with Y and ends in azmine! Yaz "Lil Puff" Miles is the Ya in CaCaYa, and she comes all the way from Yuma, a border town in Arizona. Speaking of towns, Yaz is also a dual-citizen of FunnyVille - Population: 1. When you're blessed with her presence, count down the seconds it will take for you to burst into laughter. Even though she's not as funny as Carlos, she is probably better in every other possible way! As a Sports Medicine major, Yaz's kindness shines as she hopes to take care of her co-coords when we're older. Right, Yaz?

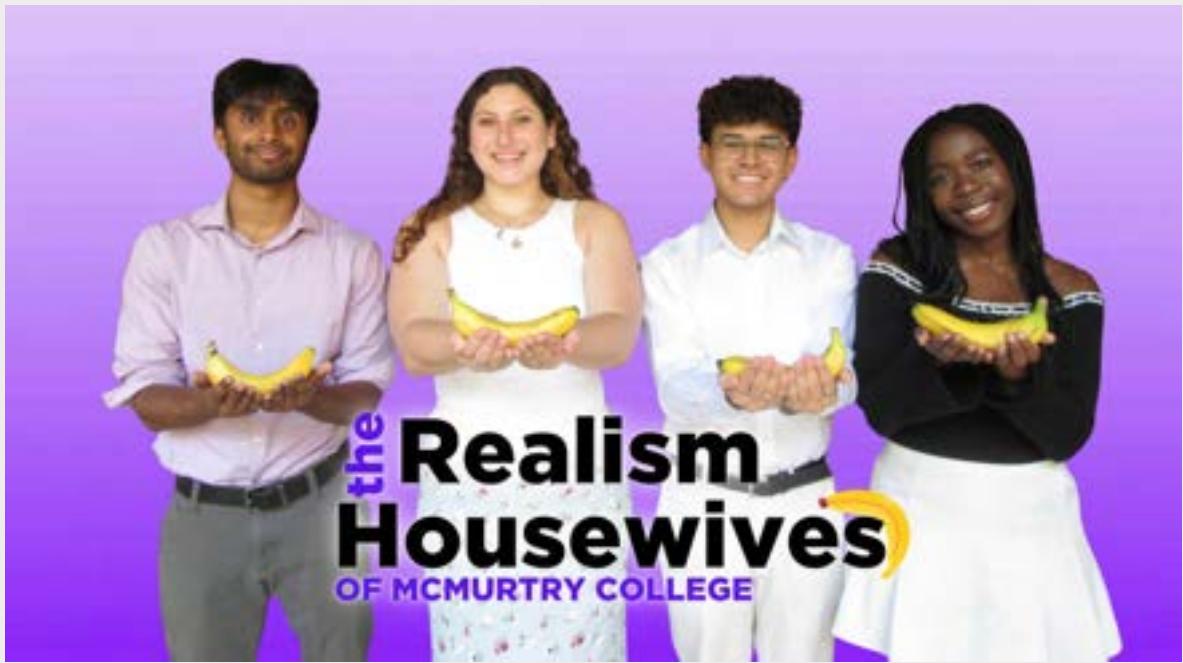
When she's not saving the world one Rice 360 project at a time or running Murt like a boss (seriously, she is the McMInistry), you can find Yaz rewatching Dance Moms with Olympic-level passion and generating perfect PicassO-Week graphics with ChatGPT. She's got J. Cole in her ears, fire in her soul, and sunglasses on her face (do y'all want to see the 0.5 pictures??).

On move-in day during BistrO-Week 2023, we remember seeing someone confident, hilarious, and kind - an immediate friend crush. You truly are not going to meet someone else with as big of a heart as Yaz (unless their names are Cara or Carlos). We are so excited to see you meet Yaz because she is someone you cannot and don't want to forget. Yaz is unbelievably ecstatic to see y'all, so start packing for O-Week!!!

- *Cara Brown (McMurtry '27) and Carlos Cruz (McMurtry '27)*



meet the
Advisors



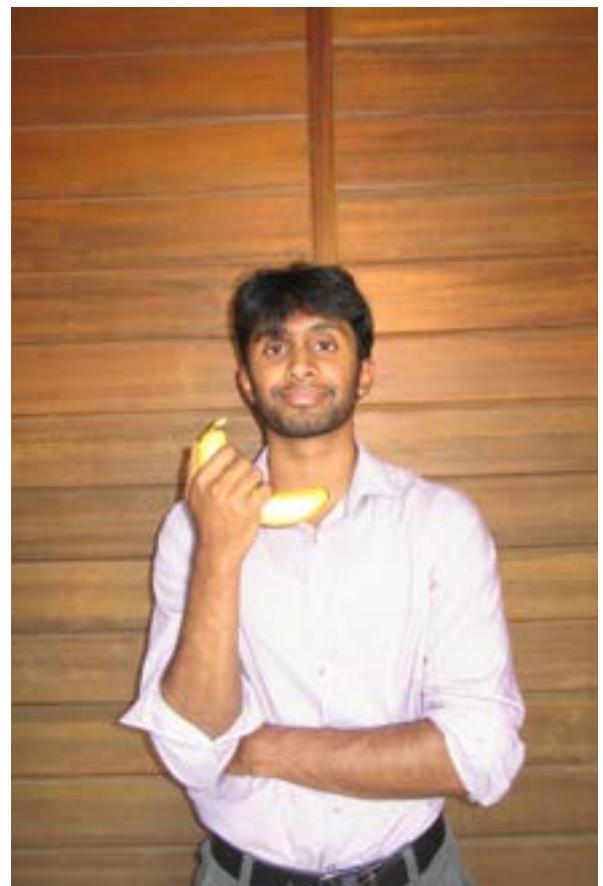
The Realism Housewives



Adarsh Gadeppalli

Hailing from Baltimore, standing at a vicious 5'2.5", Adarsh Gadeppalli, senior Computer Science, boasts tremendous basketball skills: Last year, Adarsh took Murt's IM Basketball team to a championship, putting up a vicious 0 points, 1 rebound, and 2 assists in the finals, giving him his 3rd ring. Adarsh currently lives in Bastrop, Texas, where he doesn't have many friends, so please hit him up if you also happen to be from rural Austin. In his free time, Adarsh enjoys damaging his roommates' auditory senses with his new hobbies: guitar and DJing! In all seriousness, if you ever need someone to talk to, Adarsh might be there for you! And when he is there, he's the epitome of trustworthiness. His calm-headed and surprisingly wise demeanor will make him a great mentor for most of you!

- Akshat Shah (McMurtry '26) and Shashank Aitha (McMurtry '26)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Computer Science | Minor: Operations Research | Bastrop, TX

Ann Antwi-Boasiako

Teen Beach Movie. Early 2000s TV shows. The Central Dogma. Bibble. To learn more than you ever thought possible about each of these and so much more, all you have to do is spend a day with Ann Antwi-Boasiako. She's a runner, she's a track star. She's also a certified EMT, so don't let her unserious side fool you - she is quite the academic weapon and will not hesitate to do the Heimlich on you if the intense laughter goes too far. Whether it is some serious 4-year planning or giggling till you fall over at random TikTok sounds, Ann has your back. She will stick with you through the highs and lows and make your day with her contagious laughter and sincere compassion. She will never fail to brighten your day even during the toughest moments with her extensive knowledge of the Hamilton soundtrack. When she is not TA'ing, chilling on the Murt swing at 1 AM, or locked in at Fondy basement, catch her on a golf cart riding around campus (I'd stay off the road though). With Ann as your O-Week parent, get ready for a lifetime of smiles, wisdom, and true Murt spirit!

- Akshara Sankar (McMurtry '27)

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences | Minor: Neuroscience | Richmond, TX



Lilly Dembo

Do you like getting coffee, matcha, or boba? Do you like to learn random facts? Do you like to spend hours upon hours laughing with people and having an all-around good time? Well congratulations! Lilly Dembo is the perfect Advisor for you! Lilly is a sophomore Art History and Business Management double major from Los Angeles, California. While she hails from the mighty tower of Sid Richardson College (SRR DFA), Lilly is about to go BANANAS at Murt. Lilly is one of the most comforting presences in the world and will never fail to make you feel important, loved, and empowered. Get hyped for the best O-Week in the history of ever with Lilly as your Advisor! She can't wait to meet you!!!

- *Claire Collier (Sid Richardson '28)*



Sid Richardson '28 | Co-Advisor | Major: Business Management, Art History | Los Angeles, CA

Collin DeSoto

If you want to get to know Collin DeSoto, just follow the sound of hype music on fourth floor. When you finally make it to his dorm, you'll see that it's always full of people having a great time- and the door is always open! Coming all the way from Dallas (really an hour away from it), he will always step up to the plate when no one else will-whether as a Biker for Beer Bike or a competitor in Murts Finest, you know you can count on him (even if it's against his will)! If Collin is not on that Pre-Med, Psychology Major (with a Biochemistry & Cell Biology minor) grind, he likes to be involved on campus as a member of HACER and the Latino Medical Student Association or, as an External Socials Head, he's probably planning for McMurry's Y2K, the highlight of every year and one of Murts' most beloved events! A matcha latte in one hand, a Red Bull in the other, Collin is also at every McMurry town hall proudly taking notes in the role of secretary. And I swear he is single-handedly bringing back commons culture, always getting his work done and looking mysterious for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, sometimes playing music in the Yurt for everyone to enjoy. With a wall of his dorm covered with Polaroids of everyone who visits, he never fails to capture the memories you share with him- one shot at a time. But beyond the caffeine-fueled mornings and hype nights, without a doubt, Collin is one of the most selfless people you will ever meet. Whether you need a laugh to lift your spirits or need someone to be at your side, he is a ride or die that goes above and beyond to help those around him. Consider yourself lucky enough to be blessed with the most supportive, loving, and baddestttt O-Week parent you could ever ask for!

- *Stella Shrinsky-de Armas (McMurtry '28), Eriyana Woolfolk (McMurtry '28), and Crystal Valtierra (McMurtry '28)*

McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Psychology | Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology | Alvord, TX



The Brushlorette: One Lucky Murt



Tina Huang

As Tina Huang's #1 fan, I guarantee you will be in good hands during O-Week and long after. A senior at Murt and a true Texan, Tina is from the Woodlands, just north of Houston. Studying both Business Finance and Biosciences, you can always count on her to answer both your Orgo AND Accounting questions. PSA, that's cracked behavior. In addition to her rigorous academic aspirations, she is also minoring in Asian Studies. At Rice, her favorite ritual is getting her double-shot iced Americano at Chaus before heading to Fondy to lock in. While focused and dedicated, Tina is always ready for a quick yap while taking breaks from intense study sessions. If you're looking for a friend who will show up for you no matter what, Tina is your new best friend. All that's pretty impressive, but to focus on the important things, she is always down for a good meal. Even though she may be the most indecisive person ever, she does have consistently good dinner recs and knows the restaurant scene. AND she knows the true value of an outing: that you can never go home without an obligatory sweet treat. To add on that, she's an avid shopper. Look forward to O-Week because she is about to make it a blast (trust). If Tina and I's friendship is any indication of her ability to welcome you all to campus, there's no doubt in my mind she'll be your #1 fan this year ;)

- Will Marsden (McMurtry '26)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Business, Biosciences | Minor: Asian Studies | Woodlands, TX

Cameron Badiey

Meet Cami! A meh cornerback for the McMurtry flag teams, excellent shooter of the basketball, die hard Lakers, suffering A's, and for some reason Browns fan, and Wes Anderson fanatic, Cam is a man of many interests and talents. When he isn't obsessing over his "sunshine" Lebron James, you can always depend on Cam to be a loyal friend in every way. He will be dependable through and through, and you can always count on him to be there for you.

- Theo Au-Yeung (McMurtry '27)



McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Sports Management, Sports Analytics | Minor: Statistics | Belmont, CA

Shawn Michael-Ferguson

Hailing from the great Country of Jamaica, Shawn-Michael Ferguson is THE goofiest rising sophomore at McMurtry College.

He's also the greatest Robotics specialist on campus, sports the nastiest windmill dunk you'll ever see (on a 3-foot rim), and is carrying the Caribbean Student Association. He's also a goat at Mario Kart, so if you're not the type to go to parties, you can spend all night long playing on the Switch with him! If you have him as an O-Week Parent, you'll have a great time laughing at his ridiculousness.

- Zach Simien (McMurtry '28)



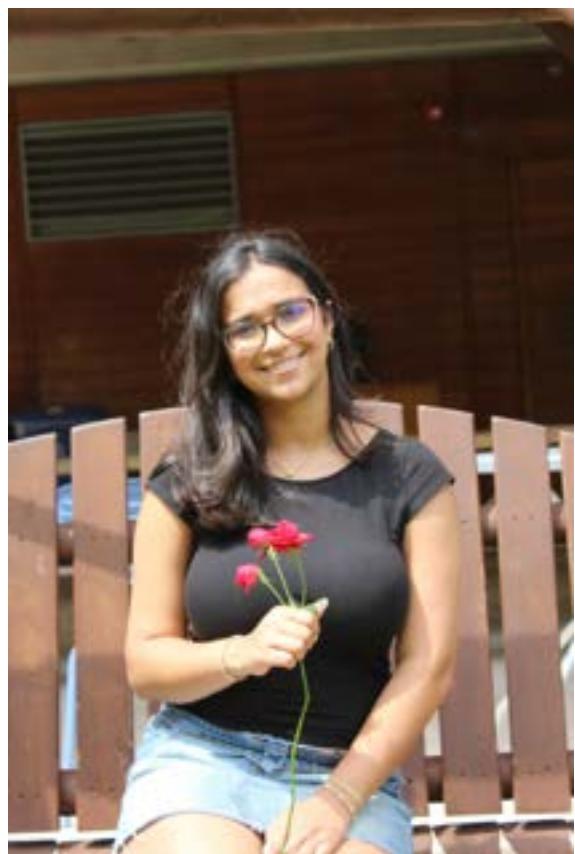
McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Mechanical Engineering | Kingston, Jamaica

Riya Keswani

Meet Riya Keswani, a junior studying Finance, affectionately known as "peepee" by her friends. Hailing from Houston, just fifteen minutes away, she continues to proudly not have her driver's license (but hey, this summer for sure). These days, you're most likely to spot her camped out at Sharetea, "studying" while sipping her usual wintermelon tea with fresh milk, half boba, 0% sugar—the baristas don't even ask her order anymore. When she's not there, she's probably on the beach volleyball courts or exploring new food spots around the city like it's her part-time job. A proud fruit hater, Riya wouldn't touch a banana (sorry Murt) or a grape with a ten-foot pole. She's also a massive Hamilton fan, a diehard New Girl watcher, and has an unhealthy fear of scootering that we may never understand. Don't tempt her with a sweet treat, because she'll take you to milk + sugar for ice cream immediately. You've officially lucked out with Riya as your Advisor. She's Co-Advising this year from Sid Rich (south colleges on top), and she's ready to make your O-Week unforgettable.

- Fiona Guo (Sid Richardson '27)

Sid Richardson '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Business | Minor: English | Houston, TX





The **Murtropolitan** **Museum** **(McET)**



Mikeal Graham

If you're looking for an absolutely goated Astrophysics major, a Roblox warrior, and a Yerba mate specialist (Yerba plz sponsor him)look no further. Hailing from Lubbock, Texas,

Mikeal Graham is a rising junior who will make your O-Week the best experience ever! Highkey cracked at physics, lowkey cracked at the cello (licherally the definition of aura), he can do it all! Mikeal's the type to make you feel instantly welcome, and if you ever need a good laugh or a friend to lean on, he's your guy. Chill, smart, and always down for a good time - O-

Week with Mikeal? Mmmyeah, you're in for a good time.

- Denise Lundu (Brown '27)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Astrophysics, General Physics | Lubbock, TX

Catey Thomas

The one and only CAITLYNN (Catey) THOMAS, is a junior genius at McMurtry studying Neuroscience and your future doctor in the making! A Texas native who's as country as cornbread, hailing from the panhandle and the legendary small town of P-P-P-TOWN (a.k.a. Perryton)! With one of the best and most diverse music tastes on campus, you'll catch her vibing to everything from SZA to Carti or Yeat to Zach Bryan. Beyond the aux, come to Catey if you ever need to know if your milk is 1%, 2%, or skimmed, since she was once a legendary Milk Taste Tester in a past life. Also, you can probably spot her whipping her green Bronco Sport to a niche Houston coffee shop. But she ain't no slump either, she's helped plan the best public Y2K, while absolutely demolishing (and mentoring) kids as a Rice Powerlifting board member & coach! As Head Academic Fellow, she is always down to help a Murt out and pep talk you through a tough class. Sure, she may have bad eyesight, but trust her vision when it comes to giving clear advice. Catey's one of the most supportive, dependable, easy to talk to, and caring people out there. So if there's one person you can count on to be there for you as a friend, peer, and Advisor, it would be Catey. :)

- Santosh Areti (McMurtry '27)

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Neuroscience | Minor: Sociology | Perryton, TX

Olivia Gonzales

Wow, how lucky are you to have Olivia Gonzales as an O-Week Advisor! One of the sweetest, funniest, and most talented people you'll meet Olivia will be sure to make O-Week a time to remember. A vocal performance major (WOW), not only does she have a sweet, sweet voice, but also immaculate music taste. Hailing from our very own Houston, Texas she is a lover of sweet treats and will always be down for a Rice Village run, so make sure to ask her for local recommendations. When she's not singing, you'll find her sitting in the grass (literally), or playing volleyball with Lovett's intramural women's team. Always down for a fun time, Olivia is THE life of the party I mean, how many people do you know that can sing in six different languages and went to the same high school as Beyoncé. Did I mention that she went to a fine arts high school? A city girl at heart, missing out on her spontaneous adventures is heartbreak on its own (except for the time when she lost her voice for weeks and communicated via a translation app). Wherever your final destination is, hanging out with Olivia is always a blast!

- Brooklyn Freeman (McMurtry '27)



Lovett '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Vocal Performance | Houston, TX

Abbie Ha

What's LPAP? How many credit hours do I need again?? What's an SN2 reaction??? Fear not, because you're in the safest and most qualified hands! Meet Abbie Ha, your one-stop shop for any questions you might have!! Abbie's a Pre-Med Biosciences major hailing from a not-so-small town called Dallas, Texas. Whenever she's not in meetings or being a STEM boss, you can catch her dancing with Rice Lions or at a Rice VSA event! Boba? Crawfish? Free stuff? She's there and she knows all of the tips and tricks when it comes to maximizing your resources here at Rice and making the most of your time at Rice. You truly couldn't have gotten a better O-Week Parent!!

- Eric Huynh (McMurtry '28)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences | Minor: Certificate in Civic Leadership | Dallas, TX



Bohemian Tapestry: I See a Little Silhouette of a Murt



Lauren Verthein

So you're lucky enough to have Lauren as your O-Week mom!

She might fall down and twist her ankle at the most inopportune times, but she is the most driven and ambitious person I know. She is a Political Science major who does it all

from Rice Dance Theater to Mock Trial. Somehow, she manages to be both funny and supportive at the same time (which is rare to find). Lauren knows how to have a good time and is always there for people. You will find her on the hunt for

Cane's late at night or chowing down on multiple kids' quesadillas from Velvet Taco. Ask her about her study abroad semester in Spain- she literally just went to the Picasso museum, so she is more than ready for PicassO-Week!

- Shaanze Haroon (McMurtry '26)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Political Science, Spanish | Minor: Environmental Studies and Politics, Law, and Social Thought, Latin American and Latinx Studies | Naperville, IL

Theo Au-Yeung

Meet Theo! A star wide receiver for the McMurtry flag teams, Letterboxd patron member, analytics whiz, superb whistler, sports fanatic, karaoke host, and "Guess that Movie" savant, Theo is a man of many talents. But even more important than that, Theo is a great friend—always a joy to be around, dependable, and trustworthy. Theo's reliability may be his greatest asset, as you can always count on him to make time to host a Jackbox games session, spend hours watching Impractical Jokers clips, or join you for a late-night movie marathon. I'm proud to call Theo my friend and you'd be lucky to have him as your O-Week Advisor.

- Nate Dominitz (McMurtry '27)

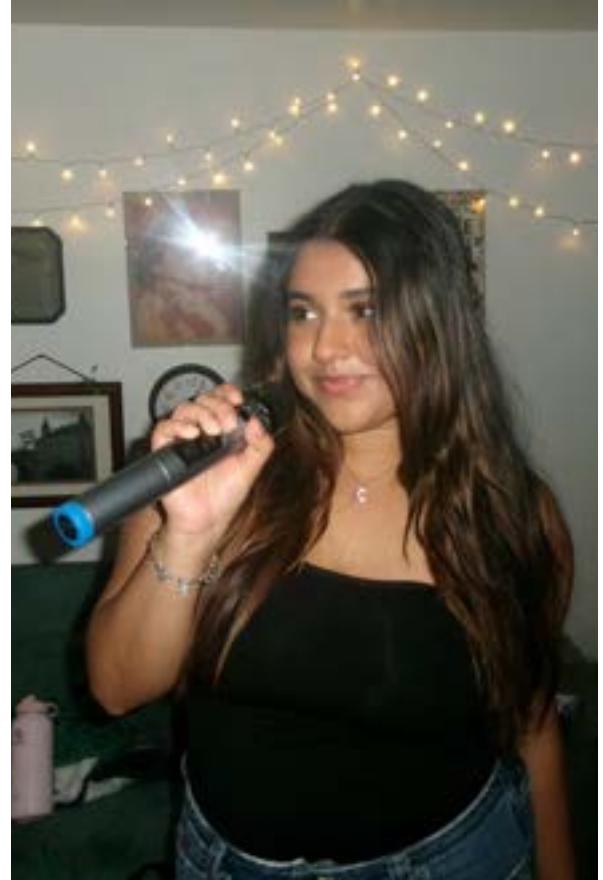


McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Sports Analytics, Statistics | Minor: DSCI | Burlingame, CA

Samvita Gautham

LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, we are pleased to introduce the one and only SAMVITA GAUTHAM! This Cali-Girl is a friend to all (seriously, just sitting with her in Broch, she's bound to run into at least 30 people she knows). When Sammy is not with friends, you can find her locked in on her pre-med studies, picking out the perfect outfit, or dazzling all nearby ears with her enchanting voice at a Basmati Beats performance. Also known as her alter ego, Samzcams (follow @samzcams on Insta!), she is the designated digital camera friend for all outings and the biggest advocate of the motto "phone eats first." Hailing from the Bay, this pre-med machine is one of the sweetest friends you'll ever have. She will be there for you whenever you need it (LITERALLY, her and her broken sleep schedule are always a text away). If she takes your breath away when you first meet her, no worries, because as an EMT, she can easily resuscitate you with CPR. Hit her up for the best Houston food recs, juicy debriefs, and Instagram caption ideas. You are in for the best week of your life with Sammy as your parent!!

- *Dyllan Lozano-Lomeli (Jones '27) and Ismail Tambawala (Will Rice '27)*



Jones '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Biosciences | Minor: Medical Humanities, Spanish | San Jose, CA

Stella Shrinsky-de Armas

You can try pinching yourself, but no- you're not dreaming. You have THE Stella Shrinsky-de Armas as an O-Week Advisor! All the way from La Cañada, California, she's a Visual Arts major with Spanish and Art History minors. When she's not off in the studio working on her next masterpiece, she can be found all around campus as an OwlGuide, volunteering in the Rice Women's Resource Center, in Fondy working as a Fondren Fellow (not studying) and even over the air DJing for KTRU, our student-run radio station. Stella is so passionate about the things she loves- just ask her about her being an undercover musical freak, her favorite bands (don't get her started on Radiohead), her affection for movies, or her travels around Europe, and she could seriously talk for hours. In her free time, she loves to play her guitar and scribble in her journal. Or, she's with her amazing friends trying different foods (no meat tho) and drinks (she looooves matcha), and hitting the thrift for clothes or trinkets. On top of all that (yes, there's more), she has a heart for community. Whether it's through stepping up to help Murt stay on top by planning the best jacks or being Sophomore Rep, she's always finding a way to add to the McMurtry experience. And through her kind, supportive, and funny nature- you'll see exactly how she will add to your experience here too.

- *Collin DeSoto (McMurtry '28)*

McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Visual and Dramatic Arts, Art History | Minor: Spanish | La Cañada Flintridge, CA



Guardians of the Gallery

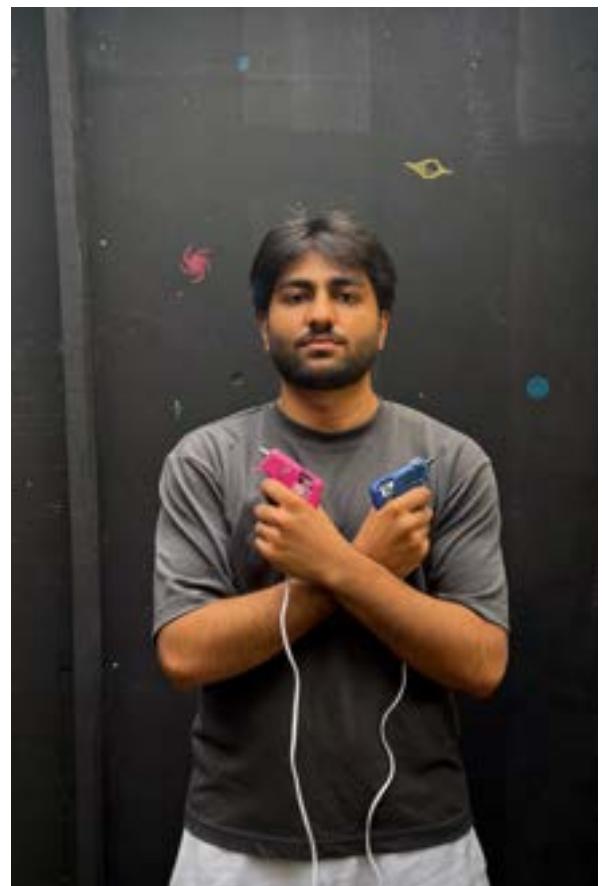


Akshat Shah

Known by many names: Finance bro, Dropshot, the man of the house, Akshat Shah means business- quite literally. Hailing from New Jersey, Akshat embodies the East Coast lifestyle!

When he's not violently raging while playing FIFA at 4 AM, losing games of Catan, or losing his step while doing the Bhangra boogie, you can find him at munch (the meal time between lunch and dinner). You might also find him fanboying in the background of literally any one of Dave Blunt's music videos! He's a unit on the soccer field for the McMurry Intramural team, and in the words of Lamine Yamal: "I hope to have half the career that Akshat has had". However, don't let his serious, corporate 5'6" demeanor fool you: he's a warm little honeybun at heart (you are what you eat)! From career advice to life lessons, Akshat will always drop his plate in a heartbeat to help anyone - as long as there's no food on it.

- *Shashank Aitha (McMurtry '26) and Adarsh Gadeppali (McMurtry '26)*



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Business | Minor: Statistics, Financial Computation, and Modeling | Plainsboro, NJ

Zabrina Sidhu

Introducing the one and only, life of the party, queen of bhangra, nostalgic music icon... Zabrina Kaur Sidhu. Each night, Zabzab will scream to tracks like Hollaback Girl, immediately followed by belting out the saddest Noah Kahan songs known to man from her 86-hour long 'All Songs' playlist, and then pull you into an impromptu dance-karaoke sesh. When you're sad, you can count on her to show up at your door with a Sprinkles ATM cupcake (as she sings you the iconic jingle of the machine), drag you to Chinatown to acquire bread in her sexy Dodge Charger named Anastasia Serafina Medianoche, and casually switch between three languages mid-conversation. She's always at the heart of the action, whether that be pretending to be a professor to get through studying, begging you to play sand-volleyball, concerningly rearranging her room every other week, or notoriously giving you a personalized nickname never heard of before. You can count on Zab to make sure everyone feels uplifted and included, sing until her heart literally gives out, and bring laughter to every corner of Rice.

- *Haaniya (Han-Han) (McMurtry '26)*

McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Health Sciences | Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology, Medical Humanities | Houston, TX

Ryan Ginn

If you're lucky enough to be reading this and THE Ryan Ginn is your Advisor—congrats, you just won the O-Week lottery. If not... well, there's always grad school. What exactly does Ryan do? Well, he's double majoring in Business Finance and Biosciences—which is insane—but still finds time at 2 AM to watch Breaking Bad with friends. A Chaus warrior by day and ping pong menace by night, Ryan's also a master of the world's worst dad jokes. And his music taste? He can put you on the best new songs you've never heard of (though you will never admit it). He may be a gym bro, but he swears he's still locked in with STEM. We don't question it. We just believe. Ryan's the kind of person who'll offer a walk, a deep question, or real advice—sometimes all at once. Thoughtful, steady, and always down to help, he's the guide you didn't know you needed (but you're lucky to have).

- Saanvi Mukkara (McMurtry '28), Sebastian Molina (McMurtry '28), and Kyle Chen (McMurtry '28)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences, Business | Los Angeles, CA

Denise Lundu

From Miami to the Congo, Denise's aura spreads across the globe. While she might not say much at first (which is rare cause she lowkey yaps), if you hear a chuckle in the distance, chances are you're in the premises of the Brown College (but Murt loyal) Baddie Denise Lundu! When she's not crashing out over physics or Python debugging you can often find Denise on the Neuroscience grind, TikTok (chronically online queen), thrifting, binge watching Netflix, or taking her daily 2-hour naps. While she's 90 parts unserious, she's 100 percent WOKE, and as a Community Facilitator, she does her part to make sure everyone at Murt feels welcome and seen. Denise is very down-to-earth, funny, and would love to chat about anything – especially music and food! Icl ts girl is the best fr rn, so ngl if you're looking for a great O-Week Advisor look no further than Denise!

- Mikeal Graham (McMurtry '26)



Brown '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Math, Neuroscience | Minor: Statistics | Miami, FL

Aigerim Zhadikbay

YOU HAVE AIGERIM AS YOUR O-WEEK ADVISOR???!!! Consider yourself the luckiest person everrrrr. Aigerim is an OR and Computer Science queen who somehow manages to be both the smartest and funniest person in the room and the embodiment of "doing it all". You can spot her either on her gym grind, at a coffee shop, at munch, coding the next app, cheffing up the most innovative servery desserts, or yapping with anyone and everyone. When she's not in Fondy grinding COMP or CMOR, she will always be down for walks to Rice Village or other spontaneous activities like going to IHOP at 3 am!! The more you get to know Aigerim, the more you realize what a kind and loving person she is-- a top-tier listener, advice-giver, and friend to everyone. She'll hype you up when you need it, keep it real when it matters, and always make you laugh. Aigerim is genuinely one of a kind, and if you ever need advice or a shoulder to lean on, she is your go-to advisor!

- Karina Shah (McMurtry '27) and Snikitha Kassey (Martel '27)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Operations Research, Computer Science | Minor: Data Science | Katy, TX



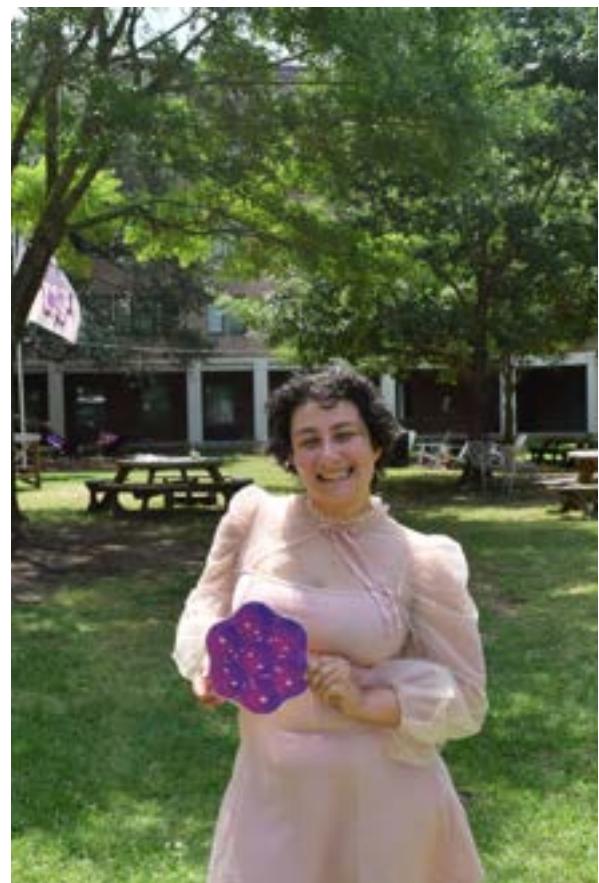
Candy Brush



Nevaeh Jammer

Welcome New Murts! If you are out and about and see a girl curled up with a book and a chocolate freeze (with coconut milk!!) from Chaus, then you probably just ran into the best possible O-Week Advisor you could ever have. It's Nevaeh Jammer! Hailing from Houston, Texas, this Biosciences and Psychology double major is always ready to have some fun. As a cat mom, this class of '26 senior is always ready to show you her camera roll of cat pictures. Love nature? Well, Nevaeh is a plant lover and would love to go on a walk through Hermann Park. You just have to make sure to stop and identify each plant while walking by. Don't forget about the adorable baby ducklings too! She is one of the most genuine and caring people you will ever meet and is so ready to help start you along on your amazing Rice journey.

- Alex Gonzalez (Jones '26)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Bioscience, Psychology | Houston, TX

Gage Baldassaro

Say hello to Gage Baldassaro! From New Orleans, Louisiana, Gage loves Rice, and he is eager to share the same welcoming experience he had as a freshman with other new Owls. He wasn't always the outgoing guy he is today, but he has the Rice community to thank for helping him develop the character he has today. As a double major in Astrophysics and Computational Physics, he has settled in well to the academic climate at Rice and enjoys engaging in his studies. The small tight-knit community at Rice has provided him with ample opportunity to create lasting friendships and explore new adventures and hobbies like rock climbing and biking. The comforts of Rice have allowed Gage to make this college experience his very own and grasp all the opportunities that await. O-Week was a great time for Gage, and he is ready to give what he received in experience to others like him just starting on their college journey!



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Astrophysics, Computational Physics | Belle Chasse, LA

Rhea Ray

Rhea's your O-Week mom? Take a trip to the nearest gas station and get a lottery ticket because you couldn't get luckier! A true "Ray" of sunshine, Rhea is the friendliest and sweetest girl you'll ever meet. With her cozy, chill energy Rhea instantly makes everyone feel at home. She's got grandma-level skills (in the best way!) crocheting adorable projects, crafting artsy masterpieces, and puzzling. Her playlists? Immaculate. Perfectly made for literally every mood you could be in. She's also proudly got that Duncan Dawg in her and loves her chaotic golden retriever pup back home- she's a California girl through and through, repping the Bay Area with effortless cool. Rhea loves a good thrift find and more than anything loves to relax with a cup of chai and watch a comfort show, after paying a visit to Trader Joe's of course. But don't let the chill fool you, as a Neuroscience and Social Policy Analysis double major on the pre-med track (yeah, she's impressive), Rhea is super passionate about today's social issues and isn't afraid to dive headfirst into researching and fighting for what matters to her. Y'all are gonna have an amazing O-Week with our girl Rhea!

- Ana Budimlic (Duncan '27), Elizabeth Craig (Duncan '27), and Radhiya Bharmal (Duncan '27)



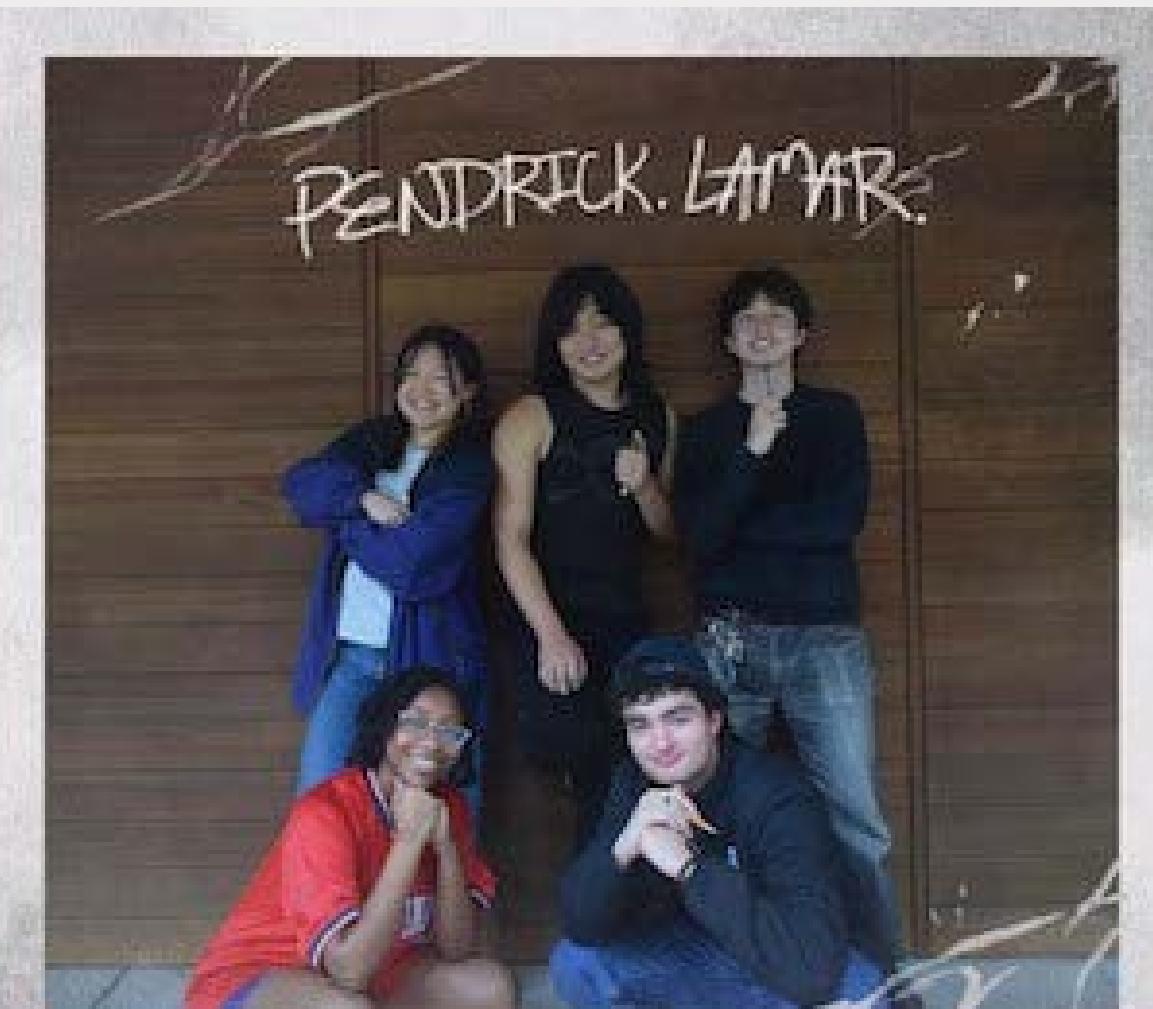
Duncan '27 | Co-Advisor | Majors: Neuroscience, Social Policy Analysis | Fremont, CA

Chad Federico

HEY MUUUUUURRRRTTT! (HEY WHAT?) Let me tell you a little bit about Chad Fed. First of all, Chad rhymes with Dad for a reason. He's the #1 enthusiast of bad dad jokes, and he will take his kids to sports games, catch them a baseball, and buy them a hot dog (even if they're vegetarian). But, do not fret, he's also someone you should profess your eternal gratitude to if he turns out to be your O-Week Parent. This Long Islander will help you with any problem you may have, from dealing with 9 AM calculus classes to defending the Yankees. He's the kind of person who approaches every single thing with unbridled enthusiasm, whether it's being one of the only IM cross country runners or going on midnight sidequests across Rice. When he's not working Rice baseball games (basically doing whatever it is that sports analytics majors do, idk), you can find him locking in at a Fondy study room or professing his love for FE!N. (DO NOT PLAY FE!N AROUND HIM, PLEASE!) To any parents who may be reading this, know that your kid is in his good left left-handed hands. To the kids, please call him Chaddie Baddie >:). Peace out Candy Brush <3

- Carmina Andrade (McMurtry '28), Bela Jotwani (McMurtry '28), Ananya Nair (McMurtry '28), Rani Sooda (McMurtry '28)

McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Sport Analytics, Statistics | Minor: Data Science | Sag Harbor, NY



ETCH.DON'T KILL
MY.VIBE.

PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT

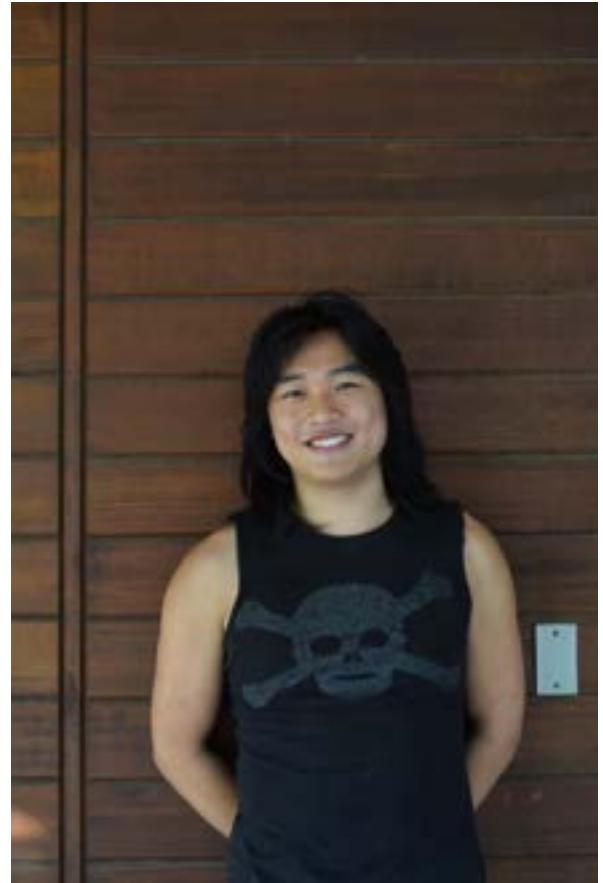
Pendrick Lamar: Etch Don't Kill my Vibe



Jack Lee

Jack "Double Dragon" Lee is your fearless O-Week Advisor by day and slayer of soul-stealing demons by night, especially when blessed by the sacred power of fermented honey. When sober, Jack roams the land as a Paleolithic scavenger, able to sniff out a mulberry tree from a mile away, though he once "accidentally" served his friends slightly poisonous field peas in what was probably a test of evolutionary fitness. His foraging judgment may be questionable, but with his elite jestermaxxing you'll still get an unmatched aura for the ages.

- *Medha Fotedar (Brown, '27)*



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Physics, Chemical Physics | Houston, TX

Ashley Zhang

McMurtry's finest, Ashley Zhang, is basically the next van Gogh. If you want a billion-dollar masterpiece, you'd better start being nice now. And if you ever find yourself in a minor car crash (or, you know, just dramatically fall down the stairs), don't worry, Ashley's an EMT who can literally save your life on the spot (if the GCal allows for it). In the meantime, she's plotting how to bring cell therapy to the world as a Biosciences major and running 5Ks like it's a walk in the park. Moral of the story: she's going to save your life, your grades, and possibly your future child's genome. Whether it's zooming across campus on her bike (BEER BIKEEE) or going on a run at 9 PM, your future Advisor is always on the move, so keep an eye out because she might accidentally run you over! (Joking...maybe). As a plant lover, artist, baker, percussionist, movie enthusiast...wow the list goes on...she's just the right person for a chill, relaxing time. With her positivity and creativity, Ashley is sure to help you plant a bright future and find your true colors!

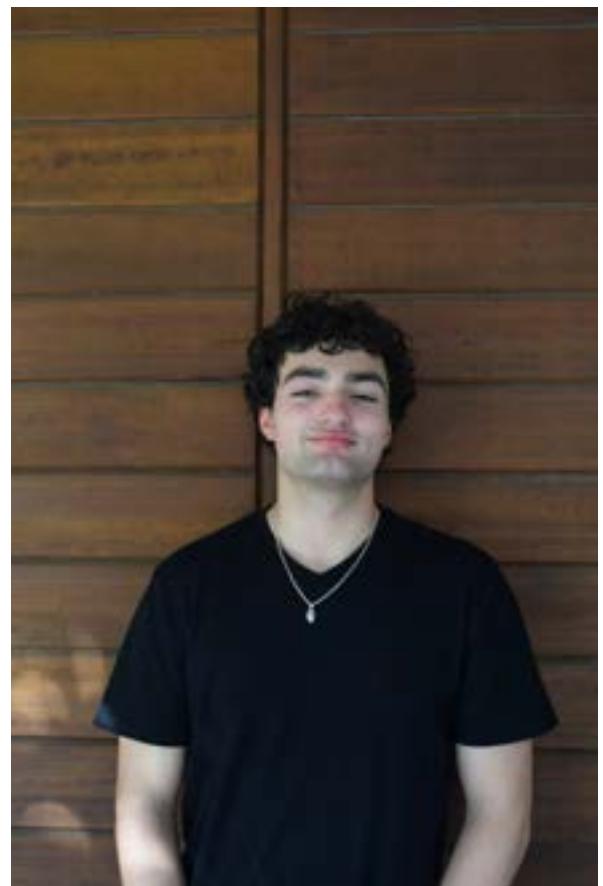
- *Aisha Khemani (McMurtry '27), Carmine Steiner (McMurtry '27), and Chelsea Burnett (McMurtry '27)*

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences | Minor: Environmental Studies | Dallas, TX

Jacob Williams

If you're having a good day, it's about to get even better. Word around the Inner Loop says that you just lucked out with having the best O-Week Parent at Rice ever! As a former Mr. Olympia finalist, Jacob "Jacked" Williams is an exuberant 5' 9 and 3/4" junior from Jones College from Gresham, Oregon (ask him about it - he will ALWAYS mention it), a town just outside Portland. As a Spanish and Portuguese major and Biochemistry and Cell Biology minor, Jacob knows how to keep it classy en Español, Português, AND en la laboratoria. Didn't understand that? It's alright, since he can sing ALL the songs at Latin Pub bar for bar and quite literally taught himself the language. When he's not moggling people at the rec by repping 315, saving lives on the ambulance, or listening to SZA's discography for the 34th time, you'll find him being an exceptional mentor and friend. Whether it's him sharing his wisdom as a B-tier premed, lending an ear and shoulder to lean on in tough times, or even indulging in a sweet treat with you even when he wants to eat healthy (I can testify), you're not going to meet a more caring, thoughtful, or hilarious friend for a while. He knows how to make you feel right at home, and I'm confident he'll help you feel at home not just in your O-Week group, but also at McMurtry. Get so HYPE for O-Week because he's getting hype for YOU!

- Carlos Cruz (McMurtry '27)



Jones '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Spanish and Portuguese | Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology | Gresham, OR

Joel Jeon

Congrats on getting Joel Jeon as your Advisor! Every day, you can find Joel Jeon wearing one of three things: his Clairo concert tee (because of all the matcha drinking and museum watching he does), his single-woven Levi's made in the 1980s stitched in Mexico, or his vintage gatekept underground basketcase hoodie. Joel Jeon's special move is moving in the shadows – a talent he acquired from the third-largest island, Oahu, in his hometown state of Hawaii. One might ask, how does Joel acquire his self-proclaimed "opium" nature? Answer: creating endless NBA scouting reports and watching unfathomable amounts of clips. If he's not doing either, he's on the Rec courts as the "Hawaiian Devin Booker."

- Nicolai Mendoza (McMurtry '28)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Sport Analytics, Sport Management | Minor: Data Science | Honolulu, HI

Eriyana Woolfolk

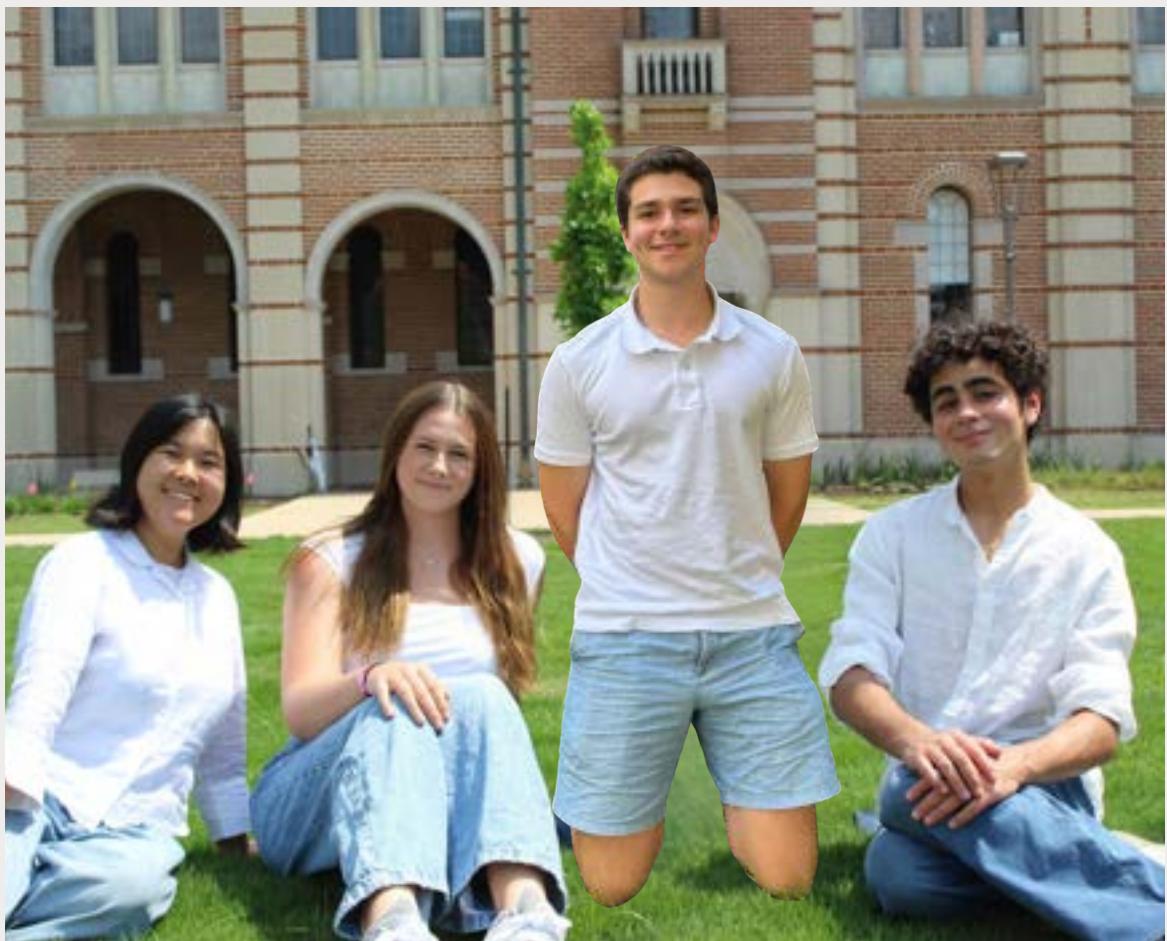
BOWWWW – make way for the baddest girl in town! Straight outta Chicago (though catch her bundled up when it hits a "frigid" 70 degrees), Eriyana is here to serve looks, laughs, and vibes. As a Business Finance major, she knows her way around the (Google) Sheets and yes, she's a freak in them. As for books? Let's just say you might have better luck getting her to do your taxes than finish one. When she's not crunching

numbers or avoiding books, you'll find her hyping up the vibes as a Community Facilitator for PicassO-Week. Her mission? To make you feel welcome, keep the energy high, and ensure Murt stays the best college on campus. By night (and honestly, every hour in between), you'll find her securing free food, first in line for Sunday Sundaes like clockwork, repping her Rice pride at sporting events, and allegedly locked in studying (lol). But beyond the jokes, Eriyana is all heart. Feisty and fierce, her cackling "laugh" echoes through the halls of Murt, and her energy lights up every room. Whether she's your O-Week Parent, hype squad, or new favorite person, just know this: she's got your back and is going to make your time at Murt unforgettable.

- Elijah White (McMurtry '28)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Business | Minor: African and African American Studies | Country Club Hills, IL



**Kahlo Me by
Your Name**



Anna Nguyen

Anna is a rising senior double majoring in Computer Science and Statistics with a minor in Data Science. She's originally from Seattle, Washington, where she's a ray of sunshine in the midst of constant clouds and rainy weather. When she's not on the academic grind, Anna can usually be found crocheting, dancing with BASYK (Rice's K-Pop and hip hop dance club!!), reading memoirs, watching TikToks, or exploring beyond the hedges. Anna loves Kpop—you might hear her humming to BTS, Seventeen, or NCT, and if you play "Sticker" for her during O-Week, she will think you're the coolest, most iconic person ever. Need help with your 4-year plan, want to vent, or have a presentation or performance? She will be there no matter what to support you (Mbappé who? We only know Anna Nguyen). Genuinely, Anna is one of the sweetest people we know, and you're going to be in great hands!

- *Erin Kang (McMurtry '26) & Mana Vale (Will Rice '26)*



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Computer Science, Statistics | Minor: Data Science | Seattle, WA

Ava Casperson

Ava Casperson is from Kingwood, Texas, and brings big energy, big heart, and big team spirit to McMurtry. As a member of Rice's swim team and McMurtry's O-Week Athletic Liaison, she's all about hyping up others, whether it's on the field, in the stands, or during a casual late-night hang. Ava's competitive in the pool (and in Mario Kart), but she's also one of the easiest people to talk to, always ready with a joke, a snack, or just someone to listen. Whether you're looking for a workout buddy, a funny time, or a chill conversation that turns into a deep one, Ava's the kind of person who makes everyone feel like they belong.

- *ChatGPT (OpenAI '27)*



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Business, Political Science | Kingwood, TX

Xavi Gallart

I doubt you will ever meet anyone as loyal as Xavi Gallart. Whether it's his unconditional friendship, his absolute pride for his residential college, or his borderline obsessive support of football club Barcelona, you can be sure that Xavi puts all of his love into everything he does and doesn't mess about the people and communities he cares about. You will feel (more like hear) him coming from a mile away with his infectious laugh and Mickey Mouse giggles. If you ask anyone at Wiess who has the most pride, you will hear Xavi's name being thrown around a lot. If you're looking for him, you may find him battling it out on the intramural flag football field, playing his heart out at orchestra or jazz, munching down at Chipotle, doing cancer research at the BRC, or struggling as a BIOE pre-med student in Fondy. I mean it when I say that you are the luckiest incoming student if you get the chance to have Xavi as your O-Week parent because his generous and passionate heart will make sure that you never feel alone here at Rice.

- *Tos Aldam-Tajima (Wiess '28)*



Wiess '28 | Co-Advisor | Major: Bioengineering | Minor: Medical Humanities | Houston, TX

Azahir Lebron-Torres

Hailing from the lush tropics of Puerrrto Rrrricoooo (you're meant to roll your R's while you read), this sickening bombshell brings the wet, tropical heat to the YURT. Azahir, or Aza out of love, is a piping hot double threat, majoring in Civil Engineering AND Art History. What more can you ask for? PSSSSST! I heard a rumor that he is the reincarnation of Leonardo Da Vinci... He has a knack for pulling off some of the most unique clothing items together. Who said bandanas can't go with trench coats? Call him Oppenheimer cause his cracked, witty humor will make you explode in the best and worst of times...literally. But do you know what's also on fire??????? His Duolingo streak!!! If you hear someone mumbling in French at 11:59 PM in Chaus, I'll bet you someone's degree it's Aza. Whether it be with jokes or a wholesome yap session, he has a knack for cheering anyone up, and you best believe his motivational Ted Talks will have you tackling the day with a grit like never before. If you're reading this, you should buy a lottery ticket because you really lucked out with Aza as your Advisor.

- *Chloe Diehl (Lovett '27) and Ashley Chun (McMurtry '27)*

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Civil Engineering, Art History | Toa Baja, PR



MoMA Mia! Here We Gogh Again

Avery Janenda

Avery Janenda: rising senior, Mechanical Engineering major, and probably the most organized "definitely not Type A" person

you'll meet. She's from West Palm Beach, Florida, which makes sense when you realize she treats every pool day like a sacred holiday. This summer, she's interning at Stryker in Michigan, trading acai bowls and iced lattes for medtech and... whatever people do in Michigan. Avery's just as comfortable in the machine shop as she is on stage. She was president of

Rice Dance Theatre, so when she's not modeling in SolidWorks, she's probably modeling on stage and dancing her heart out. She somehow still finds time to bake, explore new coffee shops, hit up puppy yoga, and document everything on her digital camera. She's the biggest Noah Kahan and Hozier lover, and has a playlist for everything from journaling in the woods to road-tripping along the coast. She's also one of the most reliable people I know. If Avery's your Advisor, you'll be in good hands -- she'll show up with snacks, hype you up, and probably have a Google Sheet ready before you even ask.

- Jenna Shi (Brown '25)

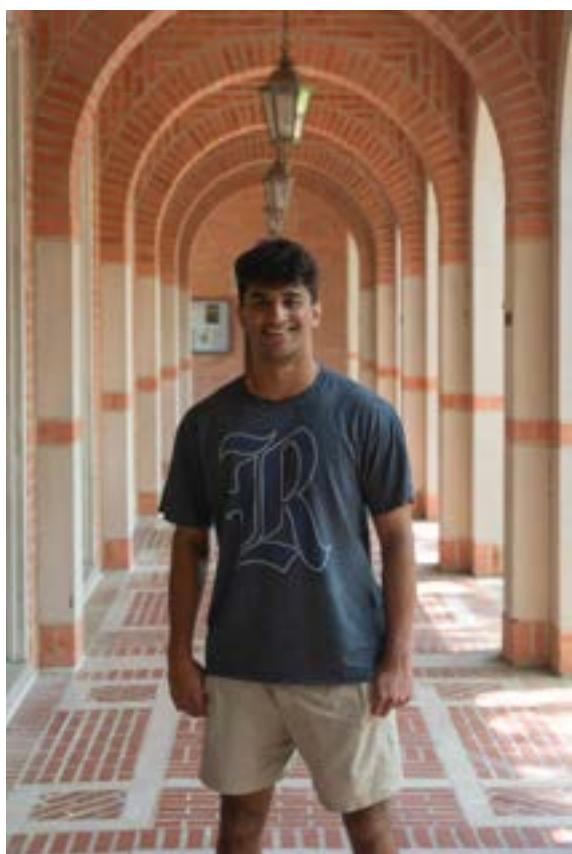


McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Mechanical Engineering | Minor: Engineering Design | West Palm Beach, FL

Rahul Prakash

Coming from the Nation's capital, Washington, DC, Rahul "Rahoo" Prakash comes biking at full speed to bring some new colors to the palette. Whether it's on the tennis courts or in the kitchen, Rahoo is always cooking up something crazy. But wait, that's not it - he contains an abundance of wisdom as he's been around the block when it comes to switching majors! The one thing he never switches is whatever song he's obsessing on at the time, so if you want to make his roommates listen to the same song for 2 weeks straight, give him some recs during O-Week! If you are lucky enough to hit the lottery and get Rahul as your O-Week Parent, not only are you getting a master chef and a tennis stud, you'll gain the wisest, most loyal McAdvisor to help you spread your wings!

- Adarsh Gadepalli (McMurtry '26)

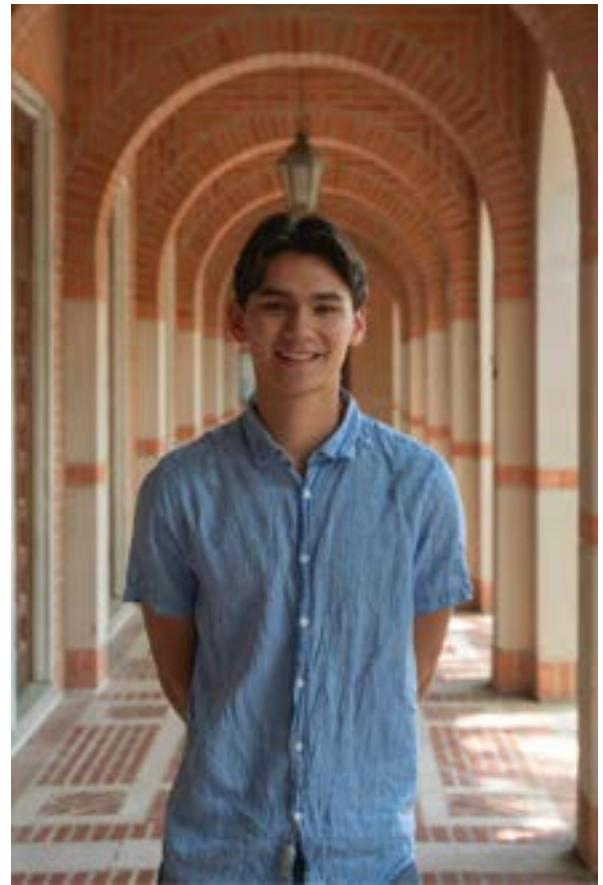


McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Operations Research | Minor: Data Science | Chevy Chase, MD

Nate Dominitz

Meet Nate Dominitz! A star quarterback for the McMurtry flag teams, Letterboxed *pro member and doomscroller, die-hard Eagles and Phillies fan, Al Pacino fanatic, and expert Footloose line dancer, Nate is a man of many talents. But above all, Nate is someone I am honored to be able to call a friend - quiet but thoughtful, caring, and dependable. Some of the best moments with Nate are spent having casual conversations about literally anything, as you can always rely on him to be a great listener. To quote Pulp Fiction, one of our favorite movies: "That's when you know you've found someone special. When you can shut up for a minute and comfortably share silence." Consider yourself lucky to have Nate be that person for you as your Advisor.

- Theo Au-Yeung (McMurtry '27)



McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Mathematical Economic Analysis | Minor: History | Portland, OR

Alexandra Rousset

You just got yourself the ultimate side-quester as your O-Week mom. Meet Alex – chaos incarnate, comfort in crisis, and your certified guide from breakdance to breakdown. She's the kind of legend who'll take you on a 3 a.m. Insomnia Cookie run and then immediately pants you in front of a giant glass door, just to keep things interesting. Weekly climbing? Check. Daily sport? Of course – squash, pickleball, you name it. late-night deep dives on literally any topic (seriously, five-hour tangents are her specialty), Alex knows something about everything. Especially Italian brain rot. Hailing from Paris, she brings main-character energy; she'll be front and center at even the worst party, yelling "SHAKE YO DREADS" and dancing till the DJ leaves. With Alex around, nothing is normal, and everything is fun. O-Week with her? Unforgettable.

- Veda Subiah (Will Rice '28)

Will Rice '28 | Co-Advisor | Major: Philosophy, Art History | Minor: Museum and Cultural Heritage | Paris, France



Total Drawma Island



Charlie Maxson

Good news! Or should I say... The Backpage news? (An owl hoots in the distance). Flip to the back of any Rice Thresher, and you'll see your O-Week parent is a resident writer of the legendary student newspaper satire section. Hailing from

Atlanta, Georgia, Charlie is a senior Cognitive Sciences major full of Southern charm (ask them how to pronounce "pecan") and sweet Zumba moves. And as a Rice Health Advisor (RHA), co-captain of the Murt Powderpuff team, and parent to an adorable cat named Tiger Lily Scarface, color them so hyped to get artsy during PicassO-Week.

- *Cal Mascardo (McMurtry '26)*



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Cognitive Science | Minor: Spanish and Portuguese, Sociology | Atlanta, GA

Angela Benitez

Just like the name of her hometown suggests, it's gonna be FortWORTH getting to know Angela Benitez! Whether she's out for a run, watching Law and Order, or crashing out over her Biosciences or Health Sciences work, this queen stays BUSY! But even with her hectic schedule, she always makes time to be a supportive and encouraging friend. I've truly never met a better listener in my life, and Angela is truly someone who will always be there for you when you need it! Not to mention her thrifting game is unmatched, and you can always find her wearing a cool or silly vintage t-shirt. So, no matter if you need fashion advice, a Lorde fan or Swiftie to jam out with, a good workout buddy, or just a shoulder to cry on, never fear because Angela is here!

- *Mikeal Graham (McMurtry '26)*



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences, Health Sciences | Fort Worth, TX

Elijah White

RAHHHH! Hide your snacks, y'all, because this diva doesn't play when it comes to food! Elijah always knows the best eats in Houston faster than you can say "coffee"! A Business and Cognitive Sciences Major (with an Entrepreneurship Minor), Elijah brings the brains, the vibes, and the tea (body tea)! You will never fail to find Elijah rapping "WAP" bar for bar at every pre-game or throwing it back on top of tables at the function. He is literally the ultimate party animal if you ask me! When he's not scouting for

the next coffee shop or going on a random trip to the Zoo, Elijah is probably going on one of his daily walks around the inner loop that always gets everyone asking "where is his WAISTTT?" But he's not only an adventurer; he is also deep into McMurry. Internal Socials Head? Check.

40 hall rep? Yup. FLI Affinity Group Head? Of course! Elijah knows practically every little thing about Murt. When he's not going on random side quests, you can catch him around Murt either "locking in" or helping out in the mailroom- but never on the stairs. Mr. Elevator really lives up to the name! Still, what makes Elijah truly the best isn't just his taste in food or his charisma- it's how much he cares. Whether you're out having fun, ranting, or just want someone to hang out with, you can count on Elijah to be there. With Elijah as your O-Week Parent, you're sure to have someone who'll hype you up, walk with you (or take the elevator), and make sure you're not alone!

- *Eriyana Woolfolk (McMurtry '28) and Crystal Valtierra (McMurtry '28)*

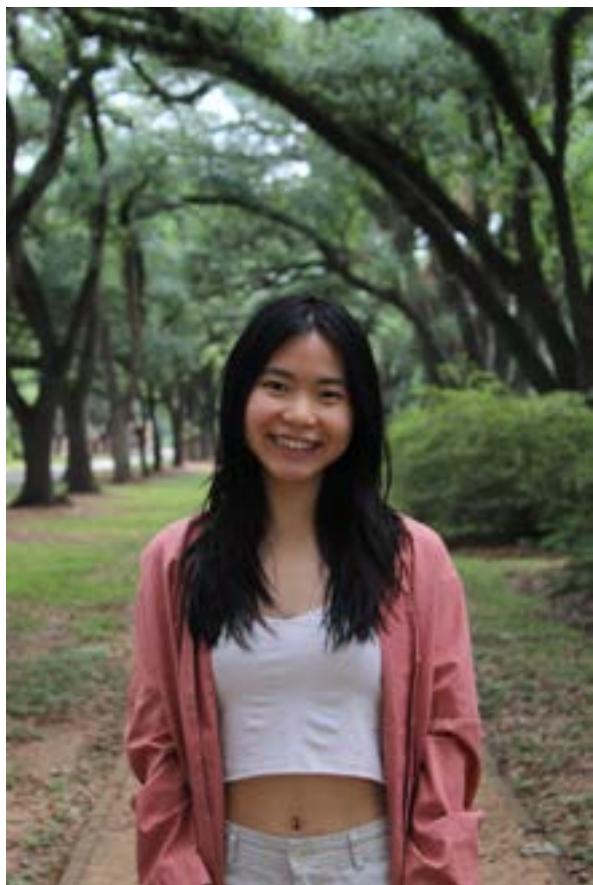


McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Business, Cognitive Science | Minor: Entrepreneurship | Atlanta, GA

Katie Voong

YOOOOO you're looking at the best O-Week Advisor!! Hailing from the largest and most relevant state of Connecticut, Katherine (Katie) Voong is a sophomore majoring in Health Sciences and minoring in Global Health Technologies on the pre-med track. When Katie isn't studying for O-Chem (@ 5 AM), she's watching Tzuyang mukbangs or playing Cooking Fever. My fav memory w/ her was trying the chamoy pickle kit, so you already know Katie is a big foodie. Katie is also in BASYK (K-pop/hip hop dance group) - so you'll always see her in the center of the mosh pit. She's also in Rice EMS and will drive her golf cart to any part of campus to help you out whenever you need it. More importantly, Katie is gonna be a cornerstone of your Rice experience because she's also part of Cornerstone Christian Fellowship (CCF)! Real talk - Katie is the sweetest person ever and the best roommate I could ever ask for. You are so so lucky to have her as an O-Week Parent!

- *Abigail Chang (McMurtry '27)*



McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Health Sciences | Minor: Global Health Technologies | Cheshire, CT

Eliza Ekyem-Mensah

McMurtry has just been blessed with a hot new bombshell! Meet Eliza! Hailing from the best African country, Ghana, and Baker College, this Mechanical Engineering major is the realest person you'll ever meet.

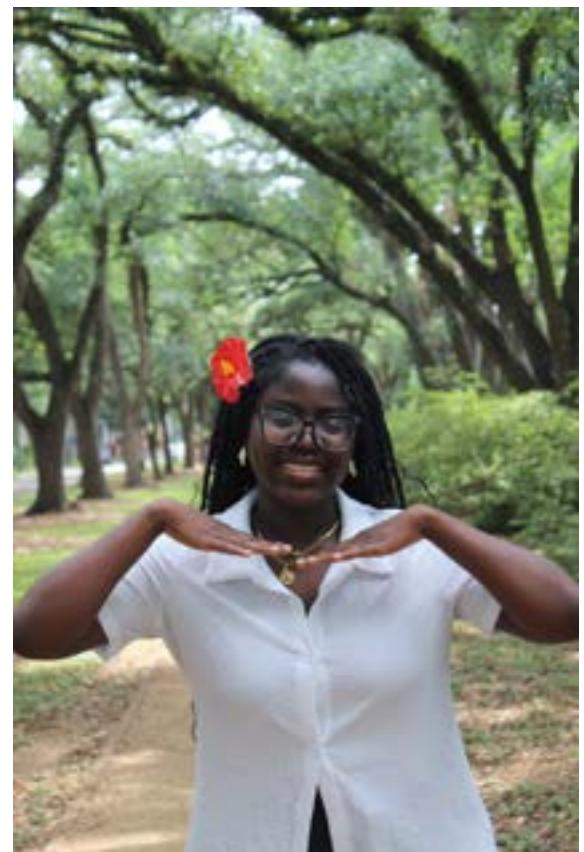
Originally from Ghana, she brings flavor, flair, and fashion to the function. Her style is actually immaculate and her hair always eats (probably because she spends hours finding inspo on Pinterest). She is a

pro at locking in at Fondy while also taking several TikTok breaks in between studying. If you're on a time crunch, avoid talking to her AT ALL COSTS because you'll end up yapping for hours and won't get any work done. With the fins of a shark, she'll blow you out of the water with her

swimming skills. Her mechanical engineering skills means shes equipped to fix everything. Trust me, she fixed my broken heart ;). Don't let her initially quiet, calm demeanor fool you, she's a firecracker once you get to know her. Her radiant, positive outlook on others is sure to

rub off on you. Whether you need a hype woman, a reality check, or someone to take your Insta flicks, Eliza's your girl. You're so so lucky to have Eliza as your Advisor and you're set for an incredible first year!

- Ashley Niu (Baker '28) and Milka Folly-Gah (Baker '28)



Baker '28 | Co-Advisor | Major: Mechanical Engineering | Minor: Business | Accra, Ghana



Tyler the McCraeator: Call Me If Hue Get Lost

Sohani Sandhu

Introducinggggg Sohani Sandhu, an incoming senior majoring in Biosciences and Philosophy on the pre-med track. On any given day, you can catch this bubbly Arizona native shivering in the Houston heat (not something you'll see very often from others), destroying someone in tennis, screaming to horror movies, having her heart melt to rom-coms, crocheting, or yelling the lyrics to rap music. She also just loves yapping about literally anything, so she's always down for anything from late-night rant sessions to philosophical debates. Just be warned - she has an almost too-cheesy-to-handle jokester side to her that she is not afraid to show. Although her height is small, she has infinite passion for the things she loves, and this includes her dedication to others. As her O-Week sister, I know that Sohani will put everything she has into helping other students feel like they're part of a family too. <3

- Pearl Zhang (McMurtry '26)



McMurtry '26 | Advisor | Major: Biosciences, Philosophy | Minor: Medical Humanities | Gilbert, AZ

Brianna Schulstad

Coming all the way from Saddle River, New Jersey, Brianna Schulstad is a Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering major with a minor in Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences. Bri is a junior passionate about Murt powderpuff, Trader Joe's energy shots, taking photos for McMurtry's Historian Committee, and super random exercise classes. Despite her busy schedule, Bri always makes time to see her friends and listen to their problems. You can find Bri trying to pet the Lovett cat, on one of the intramural fields representing McMurtry, in O'Connor studying, or going to Waygood Coffee at 7 AM (not sponsored). No matter where she is, though, Bri will always run to help a friend in need (about academics or life) with a coffee in hand. You are so lucky to have Bri on your side this O-Week!

- Maddy Whelley (McMurtry '27)

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering | Minor: Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences | Saddle River, New Jersey

Nicolai Mendoza

Reigning from the (streets) of New Jersey, we have Nicolai Mendoza. This matcha-sipping, Clairo-listening gent, who probably has his lanyard sticking out of his pocket right now, is majoring in Business on a pre-law track. If you get unlucky and end up in his O-Week group, like how I did, brace yourself for O-Week dinner because Nicolai is the slowest eater you will ever meet. If you're ever at Chaus or Teahouse, there is a 75% chance you'll find Mr. Mendoza lurking in the shadows. He's actually a decent guy when he's not rotting on Pokémon TCG or Block Puzzle, so make sure to give him a big up and ask to see his dance moves whenever you see him around campus.

- Joel Jeon (McMurtry '28)



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Business, Philosophy | Minor: Politics, Law, and Social Thought | South Plainfield, NJ

Justin Zhang

BANG! BANG! The KING of New York has arrived. Meet Justin Zhang, a sophomore Architecture major, die-hard New York Knicks fan, and an even BIGGER foodie. When he's not cooking up insane designs and building detailed models in the architecture studio, you can find him on his massive rainbow gaming laptop playing League of Legends. This video game demon is also the biggest New York Knicks fan you will ever meet. Ask who he thinks is the best point guard in the East: JALEN BRUSON. If you're ever looking for someone to grab food with at all hours, Justin is your guy. Fueled by Dave's Hot Chicken, Justin is the funniest person you will meet, making everyone in the room laugh like it's the hardest they've laughed. He is an incredible person to be around, and you're in great hands having him as your Advisor. GO NEW YORK GO NEW YORK GO!

- Nicole Lee (Sid Richardson '28) and Yang Wang (Duncan '28)

McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: Architecture, Sociology | New York City, New York



Jewel Moore-Young

You'll hear Jewel coming before you see her—whether it's the soft hum of her Jewel-mobile (aka her beloved bike), the clink of her comically large water bottle and carabiner, or the muffled sound of her hyping up her latest cooking experiment like it's a Michelin dish. A certified plant lover, Jewel will drag you on a midnight stroll during your mid-semester meltdown and somehow make it feel like therapy. She's the type to say something super profound and then immediately ask if you want to go on an adventure to find a swingset on campus with her (answer: yes).

Don't be fooled by the chill vibe—behind that soft smile is a wicked-smart Biochem major and a brain that's memorized an insane amount of chemical reagents and reactions. During midterm season, catch her in her natural habitat: Fondren first floor, slumped over a table, listening to music that's way cooler than anything I could find (ask her to curate a playlist for you—she'll definitely find your new favorite artist).

This Midwest Princess is a certified cool girl™ who somehow juggles studying amino acids, doing research, being super fashionable, and completing gardening side-quests like it's all in a day's work. She loves the rain. She loves music. She loves plants. On a rainy day, you'll catch her sitting outside her apartment with her houseplants—she needs a little watering too. She might love you if you like chai freezes and existential conversations that start with "what is consciousness, really?" and end with "also I just made banana bread – do you want some?" Jewel is the kind of person who makes Rice feel like home without even trying. She's the funniest person you'll meet, chronically (moderately) online (in a very cool way), and there's not a meme, reference, or niche joke she won't get. New students—you lucked out.

- *Sophia Burbano (Hanszen '27) and Kalina Peneva (Hanszen '27)*

Hanszen '27 | Co-Advisor | Major: Biosciences | Minor: Global Health Technologies | Peoria, IL





The PiCostco Guys: We Bring the Hue



Eric Younger

Murts - get ready to meet the most handsome, charismatic, and exciting Co-Advisor yet - THE Eric Younger! This Scorpio has only the best qualities: loyal, passionate, and with an all-around great vibe, Eric has it all. Hailing from Austin, Texas, this Senior at Sid Richardson College is an always-locked-in academic weapon, majoring in Political Science with a focus on Latin American trade. He stays chasing that bag too, optioning his intellectual prowess at the Baker Institute for Public Policy.

Eric's sense of style is unmatched; his infectious excitement unparalleled. When he's not repping his massive triceps at the Rec, you can catch Eric the (basically) polyglot practicing his Mandarin or enjoying a night out. Truly one of Rice's best, Eric is such a caring force. Even if your paths don't directly cross, each and every one of y'all will have the time of your life at PicassO-Week while he's around.

- Brandon J. Fantine (McMurtry '26)



Sid Richardson '26 | Co-Advisor | Major: Political Science, Transnational Asian Studies | Minor: Politics, Law, and Social Thought | Austin, TX

Ashley Omwoyo

Introducing ASHLEY OMWOYO, a junior at McMurtry that's originally from The Woodlands (pretty much a Houston native). Even though she's on the pre-med track and carrying the neuroscience community on her back with her talents, she still has time to be manager of the Rice Women's Track and Field team. If she's not grinding for her next midterms, you'll probably find her in her natural habitat: at a concert or a music festival listening to Zach Bryan, Role Model, or SZA. Whether it's bingeing reality TV (Love Island scholar) or finding the best places for a sweet treat, Ashley's got elite taste and knowledge. She is one of the most spontaneous and adventurous people at Rice, and is always down for a new experience - just ask her about her random road trip to Seattle. As long as she gets her power nap in, her energy and positive vibes are unmatched. If there's one thing to know: Ashley follows through. She's reliable, relatable, and one of the easiest people to talk to. If she isn't giving you the best advice out there, she's probably making you laugh by making a TikTok or internet reference. Ashley's the kind of Advisor you can count on and look up to. Seriously, just go talk to her, and thank me later!

- Santosh Areti (McMurtry '27)

McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Neuroscience | Minor: African and African American Studies | Woodlands, TX



Katherine Niu

Blessed child, you just hit the O-Week jackpot with the sweetest, bubbliest, most PERFECT O-Week Parent: Katherine Niu!

If you're nervous about being at Rice, don't worry—this Bay Area kid is ridiculously affectionate. One conversation with Katherine and her big, beautiful eyes will calm your fears, her soft voice will soothe your troubles, and her iconic meows will chase away all negativity. (It's a gift. Don't question it.) So if you're ever in your feels at 2 a.m.,

Katherine's your girl. Therapist? Bestie? Parent? She's all three. Katherine struts through Duncan Hall and O'Connor for her Electrical and Computer Engineering classes by day. By night, she's logging 60

hours a week (okay, maybe not 60, but close) dancing at the Rec with Rice Dance Theater, BASYK Dance Club, Studio Z (the K-pop dance team she founded!), and even practicing Chinese traditional dance from her childhood in Shenzhen, China. When she's not being an academic weapon or full-time dancing queen, she's binging K-pop comeback music videos, hunting for new snacks on Weee, or practicing the five Korean phrases she knows like her life depends on it. Whether you bump into her at the Rec, catch her dazzling on stage, or chat on a random walk across campus, any encounter with Katherine is guaranteed to make your day 10x better!

- Alondra Franco (Duncan '26)



McMurtry '27 | Advisor | Major: Electrical and Computer Engineering | San Jose, CA

Rafael Sharpe

Put your screens and devices down and get ready to be graced by the Cobra of Rice University—Rafa Sharpe. The 6 foot 6 soccer star had 14 D1 offers, but because he is so humble and loves Rice so much, he came here to focus on his studies. Rafa is a respected commander. He is the leader of the most prosperous Clash Royale Clan on campus—Rice Univ 2024 (Invite Only). When he is not clashing away, he is busy building his toned muscles or being nonchalant planning his next big quest. Rafa is a movie and TV show connoisseur. He is a long time member of both Capital Club and Hustlers University. As a Houston native, Rafa knows the ins and outs of the city and where to get the good stuff; he would love to try new restaurants with you. He wants to live on a sailboat.

- Gianni Chung (McMurtry '27) and Mehmet Acikel (McMurtry '27). Censored by Rafa Sharpe



McMurtry '28 | Advisor | Major: History, Philosophy | Houston, TX

A stylized illustration of a classical bust of a man with wavy hair, wearing a toga, positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a light blue with two large, abstract, organic purple shapes on the right side.

meet the
Peer Academic
Advisors

Max Lai

As a Computer Science major from Naperville, Illinois, meet the one and only Max Lai, who spends his days battling code that refuses to work until he throws his laptop out of the window. When he's not debugging his own dilemmas, he's a COMP TA who gets paid to pretend to understand your error messages and give you solutions more complicated than your original issues. But Max isn't just about the binary life—he's also an ice-skating talent with a kind heart bigger than his own debugging problems to help those in need! However, NEVER ask Max about his sleep schedule—it's a myth. If you ever need tips and tricks on life, how to procrastinate, or need to rant, please schedule via his gcal.

- Tina Huang (McMurtry '26)



McMurtry '26 | PAA | Major: Computer Science | Minor: Business | Westmont, IL

Safee Baig

Safee is probably the smartest person at Rice, and no, that isn't an exaggeration. For example, he's majoring in Math, Physics, Biochemistry, and learning 2 whole other languages all while being Pre-Med!?!?!!.

Just when you thought it stopped there... he's also minoring in unc studies, so free to call him unc. You won't be lying, since he also has a niece! And he loves her very much too.

Oh my skibidi, Safee, Safee where do I even begin (*Д ` *). Pookie bear is smart, handsome, and that goatee doesn't lie. Truly, absolutely, genuinely one of the smartest, and nicest around at Rice, Safee will do whatever it takes for you to succeed. He's McMurtry's unc, and trust, he lives up to the ideal.

- Zain Rahman (Brown '27), Zakariya Hashmi (McMurtry '27), Huzaifa Afzal (Jones '27), Zahin Rahman (Lovett '27)

McMurtry '27 | PAA | Major: Mathematics, Physics | Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology | Spring, TX

Kef Nkosi

Live from Marietta, Georgia, it's Kef Nkosi!!! He is an outgoing and adventurous person who's always looking for a fun time with his friends. He is truly a jack-of-all-trades as he is an amazing O-Week Advisor last year, a Rice Health Advisor (RHA), a Martial Arts Master, a Certified Yapper, and, of course, a world-renowned Peer Academic Advisor (PAA). Aside from all those amazing things, which are only a few that could come to mind, Kef is also a certified people lover and will say hi to more than half of the campus on a single day, so feel free to add to his never-ending list of friends! You could even make the grave mistake of challenging Kef to an air hockey game (You will not beat him) and have deep conversations about literally anything that comes to mind. Kef is someone you can 100% rely on for almost anything, from late night crashouts because you have 5 projects and 3 exams due on the same week or just need to rant about literally anything, Kef is there to listen and give very much needed advice, or even just be a shoulder to cry on. All in all, Kef is much more than your friendly neighborhood PAA, he is a true and loyal friend who will put aside their whole day to help you figure out what classes to take/figure out your entire life in a single late-night sitting. Kef's kind heart is truly unmatched, and you are very lucky to have the best PAA at McMurtry!

- Ricky De Quevedo (Lovett '28)



McMurtry '27 | PAA | Major: Psychology, Spanish and Portuguese | Atlanta, GA

Steven Zhang

From Carmel, Indiana, Steven Zhang is a one of a kind CS... pre-med???(yeah, we're just as confused as you are on this one).

Hang around Rice long enough and you're bound to see him sleeping in random public spaces, or more likely catch him still awake at breakfast following his trademark Celcius-fueled last minute cram sessions that truly live up to the name "all nighter." Watch out though, he may try to make you ramen in *unconventional* dishware he picks up along his travels (This man once shared ramen out of a pyrex measuring cup (o_0))

But have no fear, you'll hear him long before you see him as the stentorian sounds of Auld Lang Syne followed closely by the smell of Tiger Noodle House will warn of his presence. Whether it's pulling up late to his morning classes with a plate of cinnamon rolls or inviting friends on a post exam burger binge, you can't go wrong with this iconic McMurt as your O-Week PAA.

- Grant Xu (Will Rice '28)

McMurtry '28 | PAA | Major: Computer Science | Minor: Biochemistry and Cell Biology | Indianapolis, IN

McMurtry College

Affinity Letters

These letters, written by our Advisors and Co-Advisors who hold certain marginalized identities, are focused on helping ease any worries you may have about being at Rice, no matter who you are!

To our Black Students:

Dear New Black Students,

Welcome to Rice, and more specifically, to McMurtry! As an Advising team, we are so excited to extend you the warmest welcome as you enter a new phase in life and embark on your time here at Rice. Your admittance is truly a reflection of your effort and potential to thrive at this institution. We know your presence alone has the ability to improve the existing vibrance of Rice's community.

There are a range of emotions that can come with entering an unfamiliar space navigating new experiences. We know how daunting it can feel starting college, but there are so many people at Rice that are eager to support you in your transition into college life. We recognize the unique challenges that come with being Black at Rice, and students and faculty alike are devoted to ensuring that you feel valued, heard.

Rice is host to a thriving black community that is committed to uplifting you with guidance while fostering opportunity for you to grow and reach your full potential. There are a plethora of resources on campus to connect with you people who have similar backgrounds and perspectives and can provide academic support and mentorship.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Black Student Association, and the Rice African Student Association, the Caribbean Student Society are a few of the student organizations that host social and precessional events on campus. They are a great way to socialize and network with black students and faculty. Getting connected is one of the best ways to aid your personal growth and academic success.

You're also in luck because McMurtry is home of objectively the best Black Caucus at Rice! The Black Caucus hosts events twice a month which are a fun way to socialize and bond with your fellow black Murts. We have recurring Sunset Soirees, movie nights, and off campus outings to look forward to throughout the school year. I am one of the Black Caucus heads so please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions about upcoming events or suggestions on how you want to get connected with your fellow Black Murts.

Ultimately I hope that this letter reminds you that there is an entire community at Rice that wants nothing more than your success. Your life experiences and perspectives are what makes Rice diverse and unique, so remember to embrace what makes you different.

Again, please contact me or any other black members of the advising team. We are here to answer any questions and just to talk if you need it. We would love to share our experiences and get to know you better so that your time at Rice is as special as possible.

We are so stoked to welcome you to our McMurtry family. We hope you enjoy your O-Week and that you feel well equipped to make a lasting impact here at Rice.

Peace & love,
Ashley Omwoyo, McMurtry '27

To our Student Athletes:

Dear New Student-Athletes,

Welcome to Rice and McMurtry, hands down the best residential college on campus! Choosing to continue your academic and athletic journey here is a huge accomplishment, and you should be incredibly proud of all the hard work it took to get to this point.

As a student-athlete, you'll quickly realize that Rice is a place that challenges and supports you in equal measure. Between early lifts, late-night study sessions, and everything in between, you'll grow not just as an athlete but as a scholar, leader, and person. McMurtry is here to be your home base, a place where you can recharge, be yourself, and find people who'll be cheering you on every step of the way.

Your resilience, time management, and dedication have already carried you far; those traits will help you thrive here. You were chosen not just because of your athletic skills, but because you bring something special to this community. So don't be afraid to get involved beyond your sport, whether it's clubs, college events, or just hanging out in the commons, there's a place for you here.

O-Week is just the beginning. It's the week where strangers become teammates and teammates become friends. Some of the strongest bonds you'll make at Rice start right here, and I can't wait to watch your journey unfold.

Know that you're never alone in this. I, and the rest of the McMurtry family, will be here cheering you on in and out of the pool, field, court, or track. Don't hesitate to reach out, we've got your back.

Can't wait to see all you'll accomplish. Hoot 'em!
Ava Casperson, McMurtry '28

To our Latine Students:

Bienvenidos a Rice!

Coming from a high school with almost no representation for my heritage, I was worried that Rice would be limited in its appreciation for what I brought to the table. I was so happy to learn that here, Latine heritage is not only respected, it is celebrated. Our cultural showcases are big- with music, good food, and friendship between and across different cultures being shared in such a beautiful way. We're also lucky to have amazing faculty leaders and instructors that remind us that we belong in academia and who's excellence drives us to continue achieving.

Some of our most active and visible clubs on campus are HACER (Hispanic Association for Cultural Enrichment at Rice), SHPE (Society of Hispanic Engineers), and Mariachi Luna Llena among many other organizations who give us community and a space to work in our passions with like minded people.

I have found that whether or not you come from a place with little Hispanic background, speak Spanish, have immigrant parents, or feel “connected enough” with your identity as Latine, the people here will meet you where you are, and you will find community just by showing up. I hope you have an amazing O-Week and the best time at Rice ever!

See you soon,
Collin DeSoto, McMurtry '28

To our Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Students:

Dear Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Murt,

Congratulations and welcome to the best residential college at Rice! We're so excited for you to become part of our McMurtry family, and even more excited to welcome you into the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community on campus ;)

Whether you've grown up deeply connected to your AANHPI culture or you're still figuring out what that means to you, know that there's space for you here. College is such a unique time to explore your identity, and Rice is filled with opportunities to do just that. Rice has one of the most diverse student bodies in the country, and you'll meet people from all kinds of backgrounds, with some who share similar experiences and others who'll introduce you to new perspectives. I personally came from a predominantly white community with a small Asian population, so finding an AANHPI community was really important to me, and one of the big reasons I chose Rice. Since then, I've been able to reconnect with my Vietnamese culture and learn so much from others along the way.

There are so many cultural organizations on campus to help you celebrate your identity and build community, including the Chinese Student Association (CSA), Vietnamese Student Association (VSA), Filipino Student Association (FSA), and Korean Student Association (KSA), just to name a few (trust me, there are plenty more!). McMurtry even has its own East Asian Affinity Group, which hosts monthly events like hot pot dinners, mooncake making, to Mahjong night! If you're into performing arts, check out groups like BAYSK (K-pop/hip-hop dance), Rice Lions (lion dancing), and Rice Chinese Theater Club. Some of the biggest annual events hosted by these clubs include the Lunar New Year Festival (LNY) and Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander (SEAPI) Night. All these clubs are open to everyone, no matter your background, so don't be afraid to try something new :)

When you register for classes during O-Week, be sure to explore what's offered through the Asian Studies department! You'll find courses on topics like the rise of K-pop, the Silk Roads' impact on Asia's geopolitical landscape, and the portrayal of martial arts in popular films. New classes are added every year, so don't miss the chance to take one that piques your interest.

If you're looking for off-campus opportunities to engage with your AANHPI identity, there are many organizations in the greater Houston area eager to welcome you. The Vietnamese Culture and Science Association (VCSA), OCA Greater Houston, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), HOPE Clinic, and the Asian Chamber of Commerce all host frequent cultural events while also offering volunteer opportunities. And don't miss Bellaire (home to Houston's Chinatown and Little Saigon), just 20 minutes from Rice. You'll find some of the best Asian cuisine in the city (Kim Son is my personal favorite!). Many cultural organizations even organize group outings to restaurants in the area!

If you ever want to engage with your AANHPI heritage while at Rice, you don't have to look far. Everyone engages with their culture differently, and it might take time to find your place, but know there are countless opportunities, events, and organizations here to support you. Rice's AANHPI community is truly special, and I hope you find your home within it. Congratulations again, and we can't wait to see you during O-Week!

Murt love,
Abbie Ha, McMurtry '28

To our South Asian Students:

Dear South Asian Murt,

Congrats and welcome to Rice! I'm Sammy, a junior from California, and I'm so excited to be one of the first people to welcome you!

Coming from the Bay Area, I had a lot of South Asian friends before college, and I was a little worried I wouldn't find that same community here. But honestly, everyone at Rice was super welcoming — whether I was attending a mixer held by the South Asian Society (SAS), going to a Bhangra performance to support my friends, or even just chilling and eating samosas during an event, Rice's South Asian community ended up feeling like one big, comforting family pretty quickly. Even some of my friends who came into Rice as the only South Asian student at their high schools said they were able to find people here with similar backgrounds, and that they've really enjoyed having that opportunity.

Some of my favorite events are Dhamaka (our big cultural showcase with dance, music, and performances), the Mango Lassi Mixer, and Holi, where we basically take over the quad with water balloons and colors. Even though I'm from your neighboring college, Jones, I've always heard great things about Murt's Chai & Chaat nights at the Magister's House, and all the other amazing affinity events that happen at McMurtry. It truly is a great place to feel welcomed by a new community.

So, whether you're here to get involved in the SAS and plan events year-round, or just looking for familiar faces to hang out with, you'll definitely find your people. Looking forward to seeing y'all!! Welcome to Rice :)

Sammy Gautham, Jones '27

To our FG/LI Students:

Hey FG/LI Murts!

I want to be among the first people to welcome you to Rice and McMurtry! The FG/LI community at Rice is extensive and full of people who are genuinely rooting for your success. You will encounter many FG/LI students excited to help you transition into Rice, give advice regarding academic success, and be with you during any financial, social, or academic issues you may face. We hope you find solace in the fact that you are welcomed and accepted not only within the FG/LI community, but at Rice as a whole. It's so easy to fall into the mental trap of impostor syndrome, but we hope you know that the plethora of resources available here (including us!!) will help you with your transition into a potentially scary new journey. These resources include the Student Success Initiatives (SSI) Office, the McMurtry FG/LI Affinity Group, FLI Ambassadors, the Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP), the Sustaining Excellence in Research (SER) Scholars Program, and so many others! You may sometimes feel lost and without guidance, but trust that the goal of these resources is for you to succeed! There are also so many events where you can connect with other FG/LI students, learn about opportunities geared towards FG/LI students, or have a safe space to talk about your story.

As for potential monetary needs, you have access to the Magister's Fund (through McMurtry for non-emergency purchases), the Access and Opportunity Portal (through Rice for non-emergency purchases), and funding through the Dean of Undergraduates (emergency funding). The Financial Aid Office is also helpful if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Rice Investment and the amount of aid you receive. If all of this seems a little overwhelming, don't worry. It did to me, too. But I promise you will figure things out. You belong here! You have accomplished so much, and we are so proud of you! And you are absolutely not alone. One last piece of advice: remember that college is also a time to explore and have fun! Don't be scared to take some time off from academics to explore Houston, hang with friends, or enjoy weekend nights. The college experience is for everyone, regardless of socioeconomic background! Good luck and feel free to reach out at any time! <3

Sincerely,
Catey Thomas, McMurtry '28

To our LGBTQ+ Students:

Dear LGBTQ+ Murts,

Congrats and welcome to the best college on campus! My name is Charlie and I'm a senior here at McMurtry. I'm also one of the heads of McPride, the college's queer affinity group. I'm so so so glad to have you here at Murt, because in my humble and clearly non-biased opinion, we have one of the best and most active LGBTQ+ communities out of all of the residential colleges.

Each new student comes from a different background, and this is especially true for LGBTQ+ students. Maybe you come from an accepting community and family, or maybe Rice will be your first time being out. There will be support for you no matter what! In my experience, I found Rice to be welcoming immediately. I legally changed my name two (2!) days before matriculating in August 2022 (although of course you don't need a legal change to use a chosen name - we will have your back in all cases), and starting college was the perfect fresh start I needed with respect to my name and pronouns. Here, I can just be Charlie; not "Charlie who used to be XXXXX," no qualifiers, no baggage. Rice allows me to feel confident in being who I am. I also have friends who have had good experiences with changing their names while at Rice. The support for queer students goes beyond peer networks: there is infrastructure in place to ensure LGBTQ+ students have all of their needs met.

Naturally, my personal favorite resource is McPride. We host events about every two weeks to foster community and have fun; most of them are game nights or craft nights involving awesome snacks. (Let me know if you're interested in doing a particular activity for an event! I will make it happen.) I think the best events we hosted this school year were cookie decorating and pumpkin painting. There will also be events during O-Week where you can meet other queer new students and advisors. Outside of McMurtry, there's Rice Pride, which runs the Queer Resource Center (QRC). It is a room in the RMC (I promise you'll learn all the confusing campus acronyms eventually) where you can find physical resources, such as condoms, binding tape, and cute stickers, alongside advice on legal name changes in Texas and navigating coming out on campus. It is open seven days a week!

If you ever need anything, like help with professors who mess up your pronouns, please reach out to me (charmax@rice.edu), and I will be happy to advocate for you.

Rice is my favorite place on Earth, and I sincerely hope for the same experience for you. I hope your O-Week is the best ever! Have so much fun!!!

With love,
Charlie Maxson, Murt '26

To our Transfer Students:

Dear Transfer Students,

Welcome to Rice and to Murt! I'm Rafa, and I transferred to Rice as a freshman. Before coming to Rice, I was a little stressed out with some of the concerns that are entirely normal for transfer students to have. I remember feeling a bit self-conscious over the fact that I was a transfer student. I guess some part of me thought people might judge me for having transferred schools, or that I wouldn't be on the same playing field as all of the other new students at Rice. I guess it's one of those things you look back on and wonder why you gave it so much thought, or like one of those memories you have that you think is so embarrassing, but in reality, no one would be able to remember it. I came to realize that it is something people found interesting in me and what I did outside of Rice. I felt so welcomed at Rice. At O-Week, I got to meet all of the incoming students to Rice and had a great time doing so, and learning more about Rice's culture.

One of the perks of being a transfer student is that you already have some college experience walking into Rice. However, even with this experience, there are still so many unique qualities to the Rice experience that I would be quite shocked if other schools replicated them. Going to Rice is not just 'going to another college' but rather a place with a very unique culture that will be interesting for you to learn and keep your transfer experience exciting!

Rice provides great support for transfer students, including transfer advisors who will help you transfer your credits to Rice in a smooth fashion. Using resources such as this, transferring to Rice felt for me just like starting college, but with a little experience and some credits to my name. I am so excited to meet all of you during O-Week, and if there is ever anything you need, I am happy to help!

Rafa Sharpe, McMurtry '28

To our International Students:

Dear International Student,

Welcome to Rice! You're gonna have so much fun here! However, if you're worried about the new environment, Shawn's got you with the pointers.

First, some essentials. You'll NEED shoes that can get wet in the rain, an umbrella, and something warm (but not too warm) for the winter months, and if you ever get tired of the food Rice has to offer, don't worry! There are tons of places off campus where you can eat, many of them having cuisines from around the world if you're ever homesick.

Secondly, get to know everyone! Rice is truly a melting pot of cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds, so even if people aren't directly from your country, you'll have tons of things to relate with others. Plus, the best part is that Rice students are super friendly and supportive with both academics and personal life, so you'll be sure to find people to support you and help you navigate this new environment.

Finally, if your issues end up being a little more complicated than one a friend or an umbrella can fix, there are tons of resources offered at Rice that are made to cater to many different needs. If you're feeling a little TOO homesick, multiple student societies for international students can help, such as the Rice International Students' Association (RISA), the African Students' Association (RASA), and the Chinese Student Association (CSA). For all my Caribbean Internationals, I got you covered with the Caribbean Students' Society (I'm the secretary). Along with the many student organizations available, resources such as the Student Success Initiative, the Wellbeing Centre, and the Office of Academic Support for Undergraduate Students (OASUS) are available to help you with many of your new college student needs!

Take it from an international student who has so far loved this new environment. For the rest of the time that you're here, Rice will form a great fit for your new home. From figuring out taxes and Social Security Numbers, to navigating the working world, the resources at Rice to help you out are endless, and your advisors and upperclassmen will always be there to give you the little extra support you need.

In conclusion, you got this! And you have an army cheering you on along the way!

GO OWLS! GO MURT!

Shawn-Michael Ferguson, McMurtry '28, Kingston, Jamaica



To our Undocumented Students:

Hello, new Murts!!

Congratulations and welcome to Rice University and McMurtry College! We are thrilled to have you join our family. Know that you should be proud of how far you've come in your educational journey. We acknowledge the grit and resilience, it has taken for you to be here, and we embrace your perspective and life experiences in our community. College is the next big step in your life, and although this task can seem daunting, we have a few set of tips to help you navigate this journey as an undocumented student:

First, remember that your status is YOUR status. Whether you feel comfortable sharing this part of your identity or not, it is completely okay and your sole decision. Regardless of the route you decide to take, know that your perspective is still valued in and outside of the classroom. Whether it's discussing DACA, or fostering a community of support, we encourage you to serve in as active of a role you feel comfortable in. Know that even through direct and indirect advocacy, we can create an equitable experience for future undocumented Rice students. Second, pursue your passions wholeheartedly here at Rice. Whether you want to do research, advocacy work, or volunteer, you have the resources and opportunity to accomplish these goals.

Don't be afraid to reach out to the Center for Career and Development (CCD), to learn what opportunities are available to you as an undocumented student. Once you learn more information, share it with your fellow networks who might also be seeking answers to the same questions. Ultimately, we still have a lot of control over the opportunities we unlock and the direction in which our lives go.

Some resources/opportunities we recommend during your time at Rice:

Undocumented Student Support Services Task Force (IG: undoco.rice): The task force is a student-run club dedicated to providing undocumented students with a safe space for advocacy and community. They offer free appointments with immigration firms, anonymous Q&A sessions, and post-grad alumni panels.

Center for Civic Leadership (CCL): The CCL has a variety of Houston-based programs that allow non-citizens to participate in semester, year-long, or summer projects. This includes Alternative Spring Break, Gulf Scholars Program, Houston Policy Experience, Houston Action Research Team, Leadership Rice Mentorship Experience, and the Rich Family Endowment.

Research Stipends: Rice loves for its students to be involved in research and compensation is as equally of important. Talk with your Research supervisor to discuss possible stipend and payment options.

Welcome once again, and we can't wait to see all that you will achieve!

To our Religiously Diverse Students:

Hey Murt!

Welcome to the Rice family!! My name is Adarsh and I'm going into my senior year. I'm originally from Maryland but moved to Bastrop a few years ago. Over the last few years I've been privileged to meet a super diverse set of people at Rice. Through these experiences I've been introduced to many different ways of religious thinking, both across religions and within religions. I grew up in a Christian household and went to Catholic school for my 12 years of education. Coming to Rice opened the door for me to dive further into my spiritual beliefs as well as to learn more about others spiritual foundations. I encourage you to take advantage of the many student organizations, interfaith events, and campus resources available to connect with others and explore your faith—or learn about others' beliefs—in a supportive environment.

Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the country, and offers places to practice religion for most world religions. Rice fosters such a caring and inclusive community, so please don't be nervous to reach out about resources and opportunities to learn more or share your story! Whether it's through your coursework, extracurriculars, or simply discourse, your experiences are what empower our community. We're super excited to meet you guys and have you join our family. See y'all during O-Week!

Adarsh Gadeppalli, McMurtry '26

Welcome, new Buddhist students!

Welcome to Rice and McMurtry — we're so glad you're here! We're excited for you to begin this new chapter of your journey. Whether you grew up immersed in Buddhist teachings, practice meditation occasionally, or are simply curious to learn more, you'll find opportunities at Rice to explore your spirituality and connect with others who share your interests.

There are so many opportunities to engage with Buddhism at Rice, whether through the Zen Buddhism Club or courses offered by the Religion Department, such as RELI 333: Knowing Body/Glowing Mind: Buddhist Arts of Contemplation and Analysis.

Houston is also home to many Buddhist temples, including the Viet-Nam Buddhist Center, Thanh Long Tu Buddhist Temple, Phat Quang Vietnamese Buddhist Pagoda, and Linh Son Temple. If you're interested in connecting with Buddhist students beyond campus, GDPT Huyen Quang and Linh Son both have large youth groups that meet every Sunday!

Everyone's spiritual path is unique, and wherever you are on yours, you belong here. We're grateful to have you in our community and look forward to supporting you along the way. Once again, welcome to Rice and to McMurtry!

With compassion ,
Abbie Ha, McMurtry '28

To Jewish Students,

First of all, Congratulations and welcome to the Rice community! My name is Lilly, and I'm a rising sophomore from Los Angeles, California. I'm a Co-Advisor from Sid Richardson College, and I'm excited to be a part of your freshman year!

When I first came to Rice, I was terrified to tell people I was Jewish because of what I had seen happening on college campuses to Jewish students the previous year, but I had nothing to worry about. We are a small community on campus, but we are a strong one. Rice has both Chabad and Hillel associated with its campus, which hosts events throughout the year. Both have great people who attend, and everyone is welcome. No matter what kind of Jewish you are, or how Jewish you may feel, or how you practice, the Jewish community at Rice is here for you.

If you eat Kosher, Siebel servery (the best one) has a Kosher Korner with pre-cooked meals made in a Kosher facility available during lunch and dinner. Additionally, during Passover, Chabad offers a Kosher for Passover pantry with complimentary food to assist you during the Passover holiday.

In my experience, professors have been very accommodating of Holidays as long as you give them enough time. The first night of Rosh Hashanah coincided with my Physics 101 Exam, and I was able to get my test postponed so I could attend a dinner at Chabad. If you need any help with formatting emails if you may have any religious conflicts with class, feel free to reach out, and I would be happy to help.

I can't wait to meet all of you!

Lilly Dembo, Sid Rich '28

Hi incoming Murts,

Welcome to Rice and welcome to the McMurtry family!! We are so so excited to have you as a part of our amazing community :) My name is Sohani, and I am an incoming senior at Murt. I know that a lot of you may be wondering what the Rice campus is like, especially in the context of welcoming various religious backgrounds that you may identify with. Rest assured, Rice is one of the most diverse and accepting communities that I have personally ever been a part of. Although I identify with a religious minority and have at times feared that others would not get me because of that, I have always been welcomed for who I am, even by people who do not belong to the same religion as me. Whether it be celebrating religious holidays with you or helping you get religious accommodations, students and faculty here are always finding ways to make everyone feel comfortable and seen.

With this being a huge transition for y'all, I know it can feel intimidating at times to embrace parts of your culture and religion, especially if others around you do not identify the same way. But, if you're up for it, here's my challenge for you - embrace that side of yourself, even if it can feel scary at times. College is a great time to do some self discovery and understand the spiritual and religious side of you, and it's an even better time to find people that embrace that side of you. It'll make your experience here feel that much more homey, I promise. I came into college with the goal of finding people that were either Sikh or understood how much value I placed on my Sikh identity, and if I found that, so can you :)

And to all my Sikhs out there, Sat Sri Akaal!! I'm soooooo excited to meet y'all :) Although there isn't a large Sikh community here, we're all very excited to meet any fellow Sikhs :D Feel free to talk to me anytime about anything related to being Sikh at Rice (or anything at all tbh I'm a huge yapper). Another Murt advisor Zabrina and I also tried to start a Sikh Student Association here, so if that sounds like something you'd be interested in then let me know! There's also a group of people at Rice that are planning on carpooling to the gurdwara on Sundays, so also let me know if you want to join in on that :)

I can't wait to get to know y'all!!

#MurtLove,
Sohani, McMurtry '26

To our MENA Students:

Dear MENA Students,

Let me be one of the first to say welcome to Rice!! My name is Malak Ettahali, I am a sophomore at Murt, and I was born and raised right here in Texas, but my family comes from Morocco.

To start, I hope that your first week is full of memorable experiences, amazing people, and a sense of pride that you have come this far in your academic career. Although I am not a part of the O-Week team this year, I would like to impart you with a few encouraging words as you start your journey here! Being a part of MENA means experiencing and contributing to rich and vibrant culture, and that definitely does not end when you get to Rice. Rice's MENA organization is very active year round, and provides opportunities for engagement and recognition for the many distinct cultural groups from our region, especially during Sahra night at the end of the spring semester! We are a smaller community on campus, so it's nice to have events that help create a more tight knit community within our group.

Beyond Rice, the city of Houston also has a strong MENA presence. There are a plethora of fantastic MENA-based restaurants and cafes that are a great place to get a coffee fix or eat amazing food. There are also various community organizations, like the Houston Arab Run Club, that you could join (even if you don't identify as Arab)!

All in all, Rice is a fantastic place to learn more about who you are, and the world around you. I urge you to make the most out of your time here, seek opportunities to expand your worldview, and don't forget to have fun!!! See you all in the fall :)

Shukran,
Malak Ettahali, McMurtry '28

To our Gap Year Students:

Welcome to McMurtry College and Rice University!

Congratulations on reaching this exciting new chapter in your life! I am so excited to welcome you to the Murt family and can't wait to meet you all during O-Week. I understand that your journey to Rice has been unique, especially since you chose to take a gap year. This decision, no doubt, brought with it a wealth of experiences, growth, and newfound perspectives, all of which I can't wait to hear about!

My name is Alena Powell, and I am a rising junior at Wiess majoring in Finance and minoring in Entrepreneurship and Finance Computation and Modeling (FCAM). During my gap year, I lived abroad in Cape Town, South Africa, where I interned at a local radio station, backpacked through Europe, and worked multiple jobs to save up for my travels.

A gap year is a remarkable opportunity to explore the world beyond a traditional education. Whether you traveled, worked, volunteered, or pursued personal passions, the skills and insights you've gained will serve as invaluable assets as you embark on your college journey. That being said, I am eager to share some advice with you to navigate the transition to college and Rice specifically. The biggest adjustment I and many other gappers experienced was the transition back into a rigorous academic environment. It took me most of my freshman fall to adjust to going to class and taking exams. I could barely get myself to study for my Calculus exams; all I wanted to do was travel and explore. My main piece of advice is to start by taking a manageable course load and gradually build up. Take advantage of Rice's many academic resources, such as TA and office hours, academic resources including your Divisional Advisor (DA), and writing labs such as the Center for Academic and Professional Communication (CAPC).

A major hallmark of a gap year is your choice to step off the traditional educational path. It reflects a spirit of adventure, independence, and a desire to learn beyond the classroom—qualities that will enrich Rice's diverse community. I would encourage you to continue discovering your passions outside of the classroom. Explore various experiential learning opportunities outside of the classroom, whether it's research, starting your own business, or developing a new hobby. One thing I fell victim to in my freshman fall was the culture of busyness. Rice students are incredibly high-achieving, and at times, it can be easy to fall into the loop of diving headfirst into all things academic and not prioritizing personal and social needs. Take some time to venture off campus - exploring Houston's food scene, the museum district, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Additionally, I want to be honest: when I first got to Rice, I felt a bit out of place. After spending 14 months away from a traditional school environment, it was hard for me to jump into conversations about high school, and I often felt like I couldn't fully relate to the people around me. If you're feeling this way, you're not alone. It's okay if it takes time to find people who truly get you or to move past surface-level conversations. What helped me was reaching out to other gap year students, spending time with Wiess upperclassmen, and letting my O-Week parents know how I was feeling. Over time, I found friendships that made Rice feel like home, and I hope you give yourself the space and time to do the same. McMurtry really is a family, and whether you're a freshman or a senior, people genuinely want to get to know you.

Lastly, my favorite part of why I am such a strong advocate for gap time is the opportunity to develop skills that you can't learn in the classroom, for example, cultural competency, living independently, the ability to embrace uncertainty and change, and so much more. Be confident in the skills you've developed during your gap year. These are lifelong skills that will not only serve you during your time at Rice but also beyond the hedges. As you navigate your transition, please know that I'm here as a resource. I'd love to hear about your journey to Rice and support you in any way I can!

Best,
Alena Powell, Wiess '27

To our Students with Disabilities:

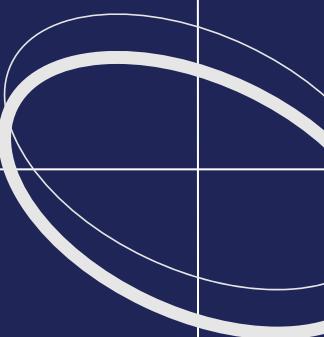
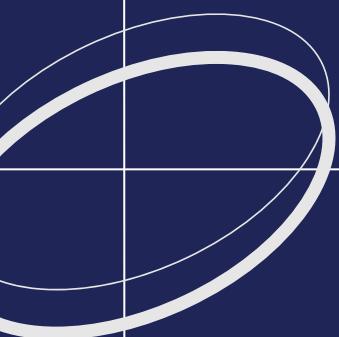
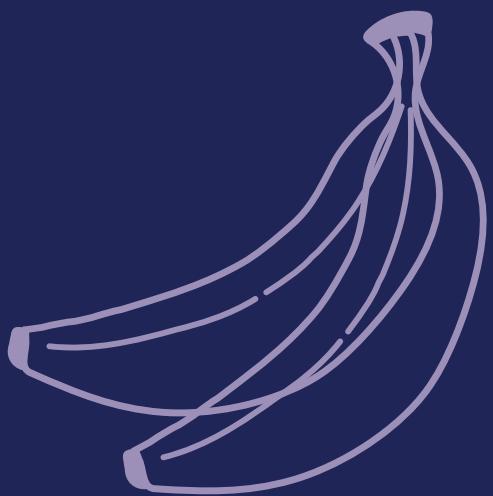
Dear New Students,

Although you might be worried about college and the new environment you'll be in, you'll quickly realize how accommodating Rice and Murt specifically is. Despite the challenges you might face and the difficult parts of this transition to Rice, you'll soon realize how great of a community you're entering.

The Disability Resource Center is always willing to help and quickly respond to any questions you may have. If you don't know where to start asking for help, your advisors are more than happy to help you figure out who you need to talk to. They will also help you advocate for yourself if you need any help. If you need any accommodations in class, professors are not judgmental and are very accommodating. You will also quickly discover the lack of judgement and kindness from your fellow students. You will hear a lot about Rice's culture of care and you'll quickly discover how it truly does exist at Rice. No matter what you need, there are always people at Rice who are willing to help. Welcome to Rice and McMurtry!

Warmly,
One of our Murts :)





Section 4. **McMurtry College**



History & Traditions

We Bleed Purple.

McMurtry's history reaches surprisingly far back to the very beginning of the residential college system. Our founders, Burt and Deedee McMurtry, served together on the student-faculty committee that created the original residential college system. The McMurtrys graduated with the Class of 1956, got married, and went on to become successful in venture capitalism in California. The founding couple's efforts towards establishing the college system came full circle on August 16, 2009, with the successful opening of Burton and Deedee McMurtry College — your new home! Ever since then, each and every incoming class has worked to create traditions and culture that will last for years to come. Though there are many traditions in place already, you are all an essential part of creating even more throughout your time at McMurtry.



Conch

The conch shell is a classic Murt symbol and refers to the fact that the McMurtry name derives from the Scottish "Son of the Sea Navigator". When this instrument of glory is blown, all Murts let out the ear-piercing scream of "MURRRRRRRRRRT!" that embodies the intensity and strong bond of McMurtry.

Y2K

Each college hosts a public party once a year, where free food, drinks for people of age, music, and dancing are provided in their College Commons. McMurtry's party is Y2K, a throwback 2000's themed party held in February!

McRice

The first O-Week Coords of McMurtry prefixed every imaginable sign and placard on campus with the letters "Mc" to officially mark Rice with Murt spirit. The possibilities are endless as we venture across Rice to proclaim Murt pride.

Bananas

We cheer on Murts with loud screams of "McMurtry is bananas!" Murts in banana suits have fondly been adopted as our unofficial mascot, and if you ever see people in banana suits at music festivals or events, don't be surprised if you recognize their faces.

History & Traditions

Continued

Birthday Gong

At McMurtry, we like to celebrate birthdays by hitting our Birthday Gong. Usually during mealtimes, your friend will stand on a table in Commons and yell “Hey McMurtry! It’s [insert name]’s birthday!” followed by Murts cheering “Birthday Gong!” repeatedly as you go hit the gong.

Sundae Sundays

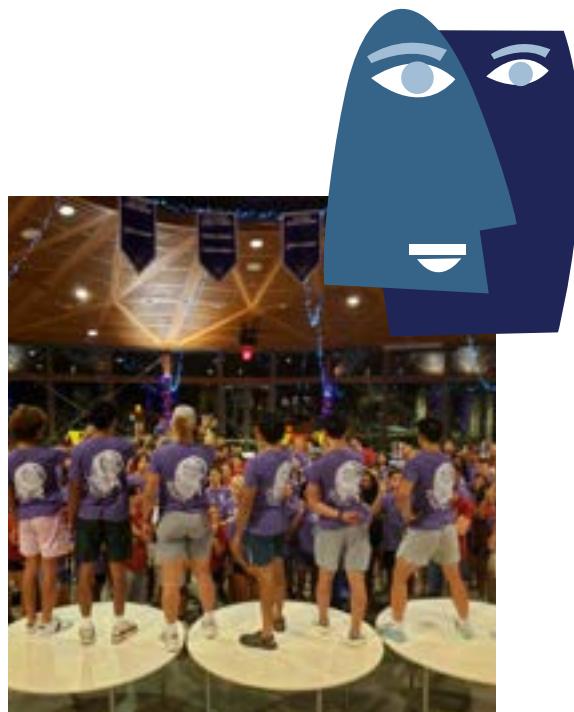
Every other Sunday in Deedee’s Lounge on 5th floor, we have a tradition of serving sundaes to anyone and everyone who’d like one! The ice cream comes in a variety of flavors with tons of toppings to choose from. If you want one, you better bring your bowl (you’ll get an extra scoop!) and join the line early because this event is super popular!

McScottish Night

A uniquely McMurtry night dedicated to celebrating our Scottish heritage. The night has historically featured Scottish delicacies, student-led kilt-making, a bagpipe procession, the burning of a homemade Wickerman, and more!

Fridays in the Quad (FITQs)

When you walk back to McMurtry after class on Friday, you will be greeted by the mass of Murts in the quad playing volleyball, talking, or having some great snacks. There’s nothing like finishing the week off with some good food, games, music, and friends in the Murt quad!



Cookie Defense

Our spirit of inclusivity extends farther than our own college. As part of our Baker 13 defense, we bake and pass out cookies for the runners and get a peaceful truce in return.

Powderpuff

Combined with Will Rice, our college reigned victorious in our first-ever appearance in the Powderpuff championship. Since then, we’ve already won the Fall 2016, Fall 2017, and Spring 2022 championships, making Powderpuff a common gathering for Murts to show their college pride.



History & Traditions

Continued

Murt Olympics

To honor our competitive, sporting nature, and our strong floor culture, McMurtry hosts hall bonding events known as Murt Olympics to show which floor will reign supreme. Events have included trivia, tug-of-war, video game tournaments, and other competitions.



Burt's Teahouse

The kitchen on 5th floor is named 'Burt's Teahouse' after one of McMurtry college's founders, Burt McMurtry. You can find Burt's Teahouse fully stocked with various different kinds of teas available for any Murt who'd like a cup.

Super Bowl Party

Every Super Bowl, McMurtry holds a watch party in commons, complete with pizzas and nachos! Everyone comes out to watch the game for a night of fun, food, and friends.



Beer Bike

McMurtry goes all out in the great tradition of Rice. Murts proudly wear banana suits and blast music throughout the week, making us the most hype college in Beer Bike. We also enjoy winning, most recently the 2020 Men's Beer Run and the 2021 Women's Beer Bike.

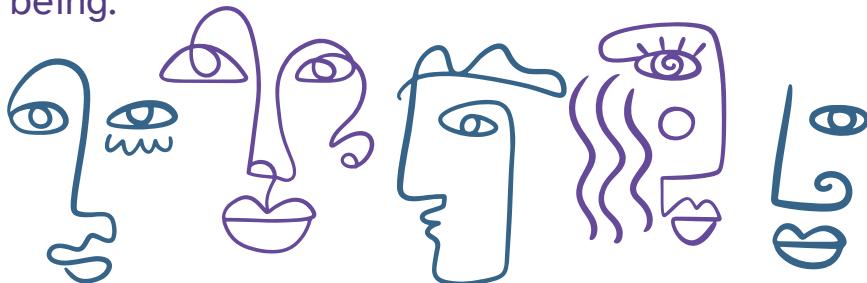
Cultivating New Traditions

This is a great freedom of our college, as the time is ripe for new traditions to be created, both during O-Week and beyond. As part of the sixteenth matriculating class, you have the incredible opportunity to help shape our ever-expanding, ever-changing college. Be ready, for you will be an unforgettable part of McMurtry's history.



The McTeam

Each residential college has its own Core Team of Rice faculty and staff. Here at McMurtry, we have our own special name for them: the McTeam. The McTeam is one of our most visible and helpful groups of mentors. It consists of 7 people, who, all except one, our College Coordinator, live in the college. In addition to being members of the McTeam, many also work for Rice in some capacity. There is 1 Residential Associate (RA), 3 Resident Faculty Associates (RFA), 2 Magisters, and a College Coordinator. Among the McTeam there are professors, administrators, advisors, and our favorites: dogs, cats, and children! The McTeam is a great resource to go to for personal or academic advice. They are also a group of great people to become friends with! You can find them down the hall in the college, at the Magisters' house, in classrooms and offices around campus, and even in West Servery for most meals. To become part of the McTeam, each member had to apply to the program and must be reevaluated every few years at the end of each of their terms. You will get to meet them early on during O-Week, and they love it when you say hello to them around campus or at other McMurtry events! They have helped many of us in unimaginable ways, and they are truly invested in your well-being.



Magisters



Welcome to McMurtry!

We are Jeff Fleisher and Libby Vann, the Magisters of McMurtry College. We are new as Magisters this year, but have been at Rice for 18 years.

Jeff is a Professor and Chair of Anthropology. He is an archaeologist who works in eastern and southern Africa, exploring the complex histories of African peoples that live in Tanzania and Zambia today. He teaches courses in archaeology, and takes students most years to learn how to be archaeologists in Africa. When he's not at Rice, you can find him out riding his bike across the city and through gravel roads in the hill country.

Libby is Associate Teaching Professor of Political Science and the Director of Community Partnerships for the School of Social Sciences. She teaches courses in Social Policy Analysis as well as experiential courses in Political Science. Through her community partnerships role, she helps develop engaged learning programs and opportunities for students in the Social Sciences. She is an amateur vegetable gardener who likes to cook and loves to hike.

Our family includes our son, Max, a rising junior at the University of Virginia, as well as three cats – Yahtzee, Clyde, and Rudi – who you'll likely see when you visit us. We are a family of cribbage players, and we love to travel – internationally, as well as to state and national parks in our little camper trailer that you might spot parked behind the Murt Magister house.

As Murt Magisters, we're here to support McMurtry and each Murt during their time at Rice. We advise the Murt student government and help to foster strong student leadership in the college. We help Murts navigate their academic careers, guiding you to the amazing advising networks on campus. We promote student well-being, including helping students experiencing physical or mental health challenges or family-related issues to find the help and support they need. We also work with the college government and Housing and Dining to oversee the physical spaces at Murt; this is your and our home for the next four years, and we want it to be the best possible environment for social and intellectual life at McMurtry.

We're excited to meet you and we look forward to seeing you in the commons, at Murt events around the college, and at our house in the coming months and years. Welcome to McMurtry!

-Jeff Fleisher and Libby Vann

College Coordinator



My name is Jackie Carrizales and I am the McMurtry College Coordinator. I have been the Coordinator here since the week before O-Week in 2015, but I have been an associate at McMurtry since it opened in the Summer of 2009. I was so excited to be able to be a part of a college from the beginning and see the start of all of the traditions that make each college unique. I can't believe that I'm lucky enough to spend every day here now and get paid for it!

I have worked at Rice for 16 years. Away from McMurtry, I am married to my husband, Marc, and we have three adult sons, Max, Luke, and Leo. We also have three dogs, Azura, Shorty and Dagon, who think that they control the house (and they really do). My office is on the ground floor right outside the door to the commons. I love when students visit and tell me about what is going on with their lives, so please stop by any time to say "Hi." Grab some candy or a cup of coffee or tea.

What can I do in Jackie's Office?

- Pick up mail and packages
- Buy stamps & get envelopes
- Catch up with Jackie!
- Borrow an extra room key
- Do homework
- Use the staplers, packing tape, scissors, shredder, etc
- Take a study break
- Relax with other Murts
- Solve puzzles

There are some very comfortable couches and chairs in my office, along with Squishmallows if you need a hug, and puzzles to challenge your brain. I'm always ready to talk about Asian dramas, Korean music, Astros baseball, or whatever interests you!



- Jackie Carrizales

Resident Faculty Associates

We're so excited to welcome you to McMurry! We are Priscilla Martinez, Matt McCary, and Camila McCary—your first-floor Resident Faculty Associates (RFAs). To say we're excited is an understatement! One of the things we're most looking forward to is getting to know you and building connections that make the McMurry community even stronger.

Matt is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biosciences, where he studies soil ecology with a special focus on insects. Priscilla is a Marketing Manager at a biopharmaceutical company and loves using customer insights to drive creative, impactful strategies. The newest member of our family, Camila, was born in April—she's just a few months old and already excited to meet you too!

A fun fact about us: we met during our senior year at North Central College in Illinois. Matt awkwardly asked Priscilla out in the library (luckily, she said yes [EM]). Our interests span beauty and lifestyle (Priscilla), running (Priscilla), and chess (Matt). Together, we enjoy nature walks, reading, coffee, live music, art shows, and all things fitness. Our home is usually filled with music—Latin, hip-hop, Afrobeats, pop—you name it! And yes, we love to dance.

We also can't forget our most unusual family member: Tula, our pet tarantula. If you're curious, we'd be happy to introduce you!

We're looking forward to an incredible year ahead and can't wait to meet you.

- Matt McCary and Priscilla Martinez



Residential Associate

Hiii new Murts! My name is Tamara (pronounced with emphasis on the Tam), and I am entering my eighth and final year as Resident Associate at the best college. I am the Student Services Administrator in the Dean's Office here at Rice which entails helping students navigate their way through college life – some paths are more arduous than others and that's where I can step in and help. I was born and raised here in Houston. I have a Master's degree in Sociology and love learning about human variation in every form – cultural, familial, personality, life choices, etc. This means I want to learn all about your life story, from the mundane to the deep!

I have many hot takes on food. I hate the 5 C's: chocolate, cinnamon, caramel, coconut, and coffee (it's just an elevated palate thing; only the real ones would understand) and love strawberry, guava, passionfruit, vanilla, and Funfetti. My hobbies include curating music playlists (ask me about my playlists for each day of the week), birdwatching, nature photography, color consulting, consuming pastries, and games of all sorts – bowling, board games, video games, trivia, you name it. I enjoy reading, listening to dark-sided podcasts, exploring new cities, and finding new Netflix series to watch.

I live here with my daughters Seraphina, Aura, and Lila. Seraphina is a rising 7th grader who enjoys volleyball, dance performances, swimming, spicy noodles, and unhinged what-if scenarios. Aura is a rising 5th grader who enjoys building things, birding, Pokemon, shopping, and being literal. Lila is a rising 3rd grader who enjoys sing-alongs, skateboarding, using people as furniture, and taking Murts hands and running off with them every time they pass by in the hallway. I look forward to getting to know all of you and The Gems (the shorthand collective name for my daughters) can't wait to play with you!

- Tamara Jones



Resident Faculty Associate

Welcome to the Murt family! My name is Deirdre Hunter and this will be my seventh year at McMurtry. I am an Assistant Teaching Professor at the Oshman Engineering Design Kitchen (OEDK). In addition to teaching engineering design courses at the OEDK, over the summers I teach a study abroad course in Mexico and Kenya. As an undergrad I studied Mechanical Engineering at Syracuse University then earned a PhD in Engineering Education from Virginia Tech. My research has focused on developing learner-centered environments in engineering classrooms, and teaching and learning metacognitive skills. I love thinking deeply and philosophizing about higher education systems and learning more broadly. Some of my hobbies include: playing games (from cards and board games, to organized sports and wacky competitions, I am game!), cheering for the Houston Astros (I have season tickets and love attending games), drinking coffee (totally addicted, and no shame!), hosting Dogs & Donuts on 5th, and finding great conversations. But most of all, I'm passionate about people. For me, it has always been more about who I am sharing moments with, than what I am doing in that moment.



My personal life vision is "to build inclusive community" and I think every person has a deep desire to be known. Knowing someone starts with listening, and when we are truly known we begin to feel like we belong to a shared experience. So, let's sit together over a meal or a cup of coffee; I am eager to hear your story!! I live on 3rd floor with my daughter, Frankie and our two pups. Frankie will turn 2 year in September. She enjoys coloring and giving high fives. Sandy is a dachshund-beagle mix. She was born on the streets in Mexico, crazy story you should ask me about sometime! She loves naps, belly rubs, and doesn't miss a meal!! Nexus is an Australian shepherd mix. He struggles with anxiety, but loves spending time with students, giving hugs, and long walks. If you ever need some puppy time you can find us in 347, just knock!

- Deirdre Hunter

President



Bienvenido my friend!

My name is Berny, and I have the pleasure of being your college president this year, and I'm taking it upon myself, alongside our entire strong and mighty McGovernment, to serve you and place your needs as our priorities. Even though I might be close to like the 100th person to congratulate you on your admission to Rice (given how I'm on page 85 hehe), I'd still like to still extend a warmest of welcomes to you—in just a few moments, you'll be part of our amazing community of ambitious entrepreneurs, creative innovators, and inventive change-makers: the very kind you'll have as your next-door neighbors, giving you front row seats for many charming stories and cultures from all over the world.

I'm talking about McMurtry College, of course, and of what it's like to be part of our great community: your college family and home for the next four years.

It's the way I describe us. Back during my O-Week—in fact, my entire freshman year at Rice, I had lots of fun talking with others, meeting new people and hearing about their lives... but under the hood, I was really nervous. Anxious even, much from being homesick and feeling like I was drifting in the wind, uncertain of what I wanted to study or even of where to go after I was done with my classes for the day. I needed people to talk to, people who would listen to me... and little did I know that I would have those very important, truly life-changing conversations right in my dorm room. With my present-day best friends at the West servery picnic tables. Playing basketball at the quad. And even while baking cookies in the second floor kitchen.

McMurtry holds a dear place in my heart, because it's helped to form it—and all one has to do is to show up and to realize—to know, that you're not alone. Rice is the place for you to chase your dreams, to meet likeminded future industry leaders and to unlock your true, colossal potential—and we all at Murt and your incoming class of '29 will be right at your side as we also strive to chase after our dreams. Together, as a team... and with a side of purple, bananas and lions! I look forward to your arrival in the fall and can't wait to see all that you do. The best is yet to come!

Murt love,

Berny, McMurtry '26

(Text me at +1 (214) 742-0506 for direct communication! For anything about the Executive Council, H&D, committees, or Murt facilities, etc.)

- Berny Guerra Arthur

Chief Justice

Carmine Steiner

Carmine Steiner, a fun-sized force of nature disguised as a junior from the island of Guam, has a heart as big as her leadership resume. Whether she's sprinting across campus to make a meeting or squawking nonsensical Korean through the halls of McMurtry, she still finds time to serve as Rice Program Council's Social VP, an ambassador for the Transnational Asian Studies Department, and most importantly, McMurtry's very own Chief Justice. Basically, if something exciting is happening, Carmine probably planned it, complete with color-coded spreadsheets, Canva graphics, and jammed into a Google Calendar more packed than the pit at a Taylor Swift concert.

Double majoring in Political Science and Asian Studies, she has her sights set on a future in humanitarian or international law. But don't let this big goal fool you. She still makes time to binge K-dramas and C-dramas and belt out Taylor Swift like it's a full-time job. Fueling it all is a questionable amount of Mountain Dew, preferably the Baja Blast variety, and Milky Ways from Chaus, which she somehow transforms into high-octane hustle juice for juggling her packed schedule and dropping life advice with a brilliance that's entirely her own.

In all seriousness, whether she's breaking down political theory or ranking her favorite Swift eras, you'll quickly realize that Carmine is more than just your Chief Justice. She is a dedicated mentor, an endlessly supportive friend, and the very embodiment of Murt love.

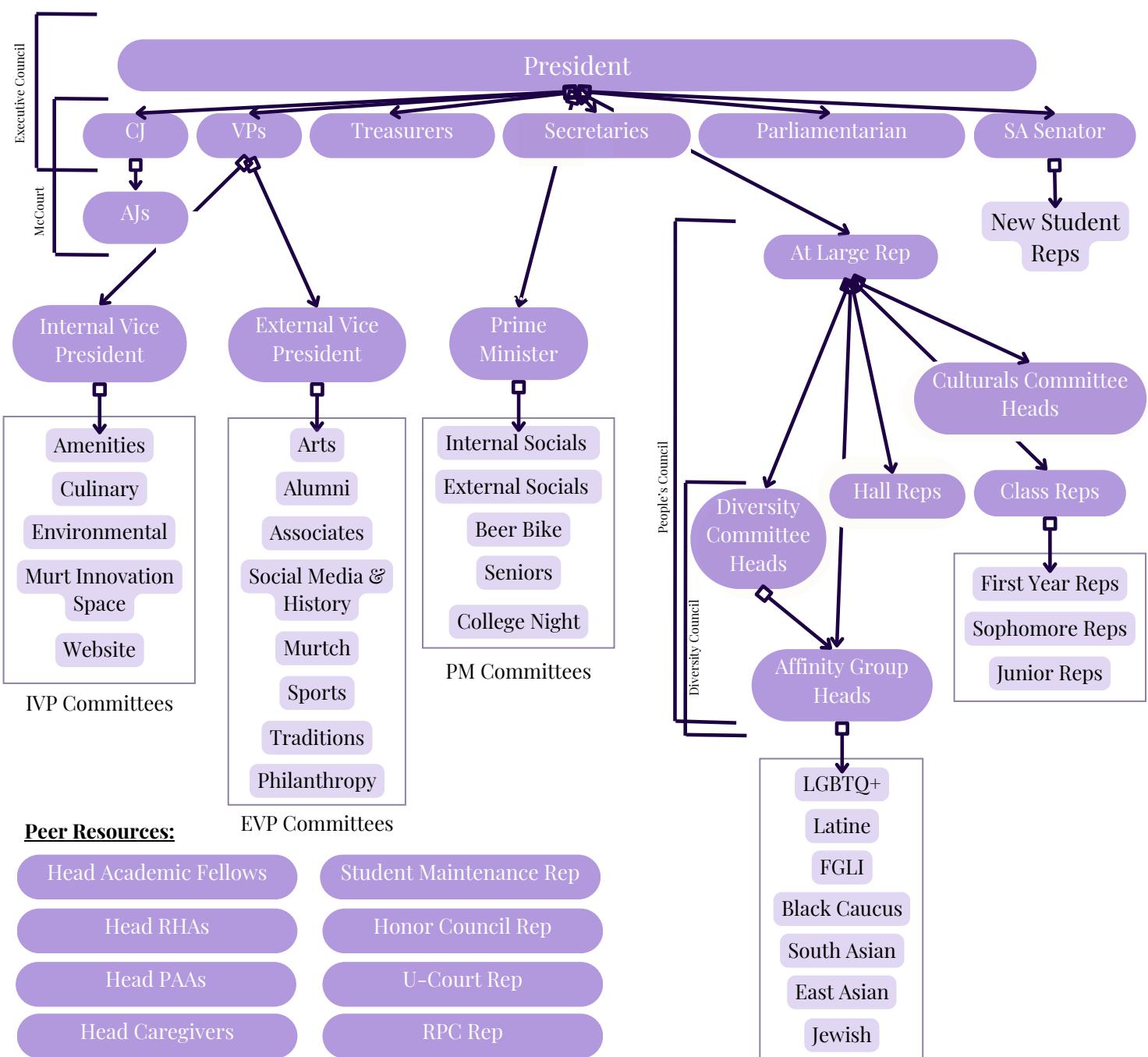
- Aisha Khemani (McMurtry '27)



McMurtry '27 | Major: Political Science, Asian Studies | Minor: Politics, Law, and Social Thought | Dededo, Guam

McMurtry Government

At Rice, all 11 colleges have an internal, student-run government designed to deal with various aspects of the college. At McMurtry, our student government is known as the McMinistry. The McMinistry contains the Executive Council (EC), which includes the President, Chief Justice, Internal and External VPs, Prime Minister, At-Large Representative, Secretaries, Treasurers, Parliamentarian, and SA Senator. The EC conducts various functions, including overseeing the committee system, advocating for ideas and initiatives, creating and managing the budget, and much more. In addition to the EC, the At-Large Rep serves as the head of the People's Council (PC) and represents the interests of McMurtry College as a whole. The PC includes 9 Hall Reps, 9 Class Reps, and the Diversity and Culturals committee heads. The Class Reps include three First Year Reps who are elected in the fall (and you can be one!). Many of the events that are planned for McMurtry students are organized through the various committees. Getting involved in a committee is a great (and easy) way to get involved with the McGovernment. Additionally, the McMinistry meets bi-weekly for Town Hall, which are meetings to discuss current Murt news, hold voting sessions, and are an open forum for any Murt to voice their opinion (free snacks too!). These meetings are where you can learn what is going on at McMurtry, so make sure to attend!



Murt Spaces



Quad

The Quad is McMurtry's central outdoor space. Here, you'll find benches, a basketball hoop, and more. It's a great place to hang out after class!



Gym

Don't feel like going all the way to the Rec to get a quick workout in? McMurtry's got you covered with our very own gym, equipped with weights, a squat rack, a treadmill, and yoga mats!

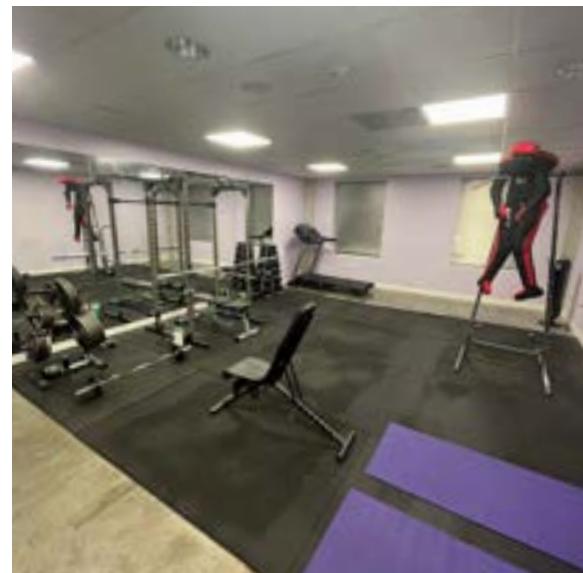
The Yurt

The Yurt is what we call McMurtry commons! It's a circular building that is fully surrounded by windows, offering lots of natural light. Come to eat, work, play games, or just chill!

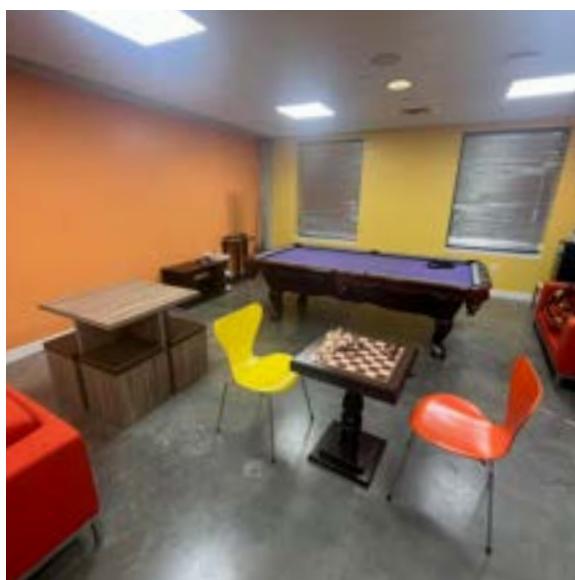


Movie Room

Study Room 120 is actually our very own movie room! The room comes with couches and a TV available for hosting fun movie nights with friends.

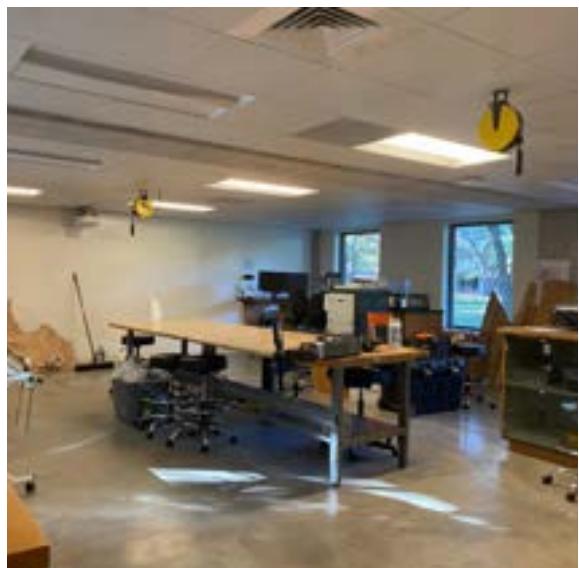


Murt Spaces



Game Room

The newly renovated Game Room is home to McMurtry's pool table and air hockey table. The yellow and orange walls pay homage to the former hallway colors of McMurtry college.



Murt Innovation Space

For all you creative Murts, take a short safety quiz and you'll have access to equipment including hand tools, art + electronic prototyping supplies, computers, 3D printers, and more!



Laundry Room

McMurtry's laundry room is located on the ground floor. Here you'll find plenty of washers and dryers, all free, although it does tend to get busy so you might be waiting to catch a free one!



Mailroom/Jackie's

The mail room is where you'll receive all of your letters and packages. Come by to pick up your mail or just to say hi to Jackie :)

Murt Spaces

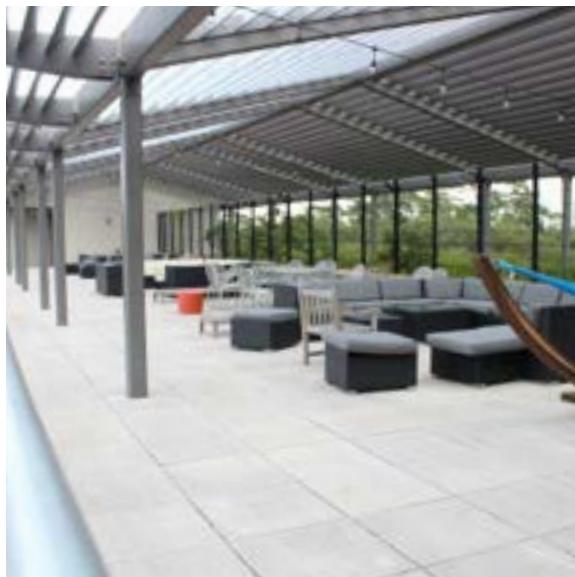
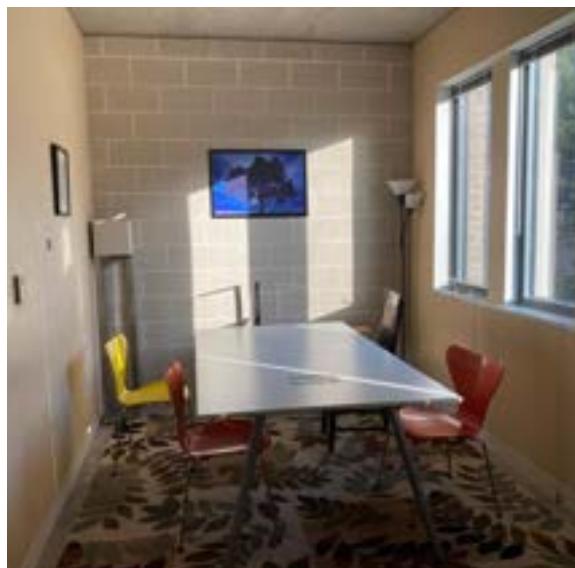


Study Rooms

McMurtry has two study rooms on the ground floor and one on each of the higher floors. Each study room offers a table and whiteboard for Morts to catch up on some work.

Library & Private Dining Room

The McMurtry Library and Private Dining Room (PDR) are spaces located above West Servery, often used for quiet studying or club events.

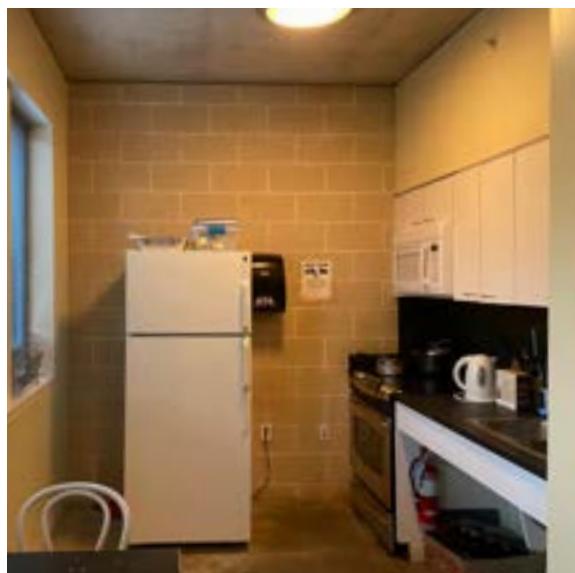


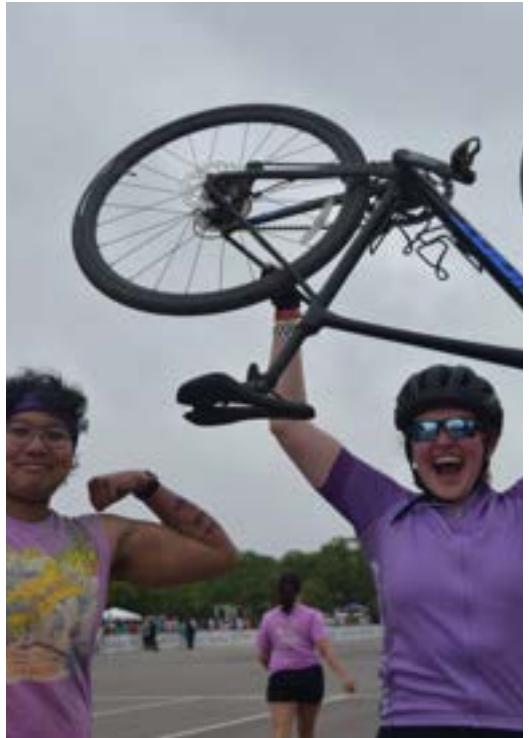
Kitchens

McMurtry has kitchens on each 2nd-5th floor, equipped with a fridge, stove, oven, microwave, and essential cooking supplies. Just make sure to clean up after yourself when you're done.

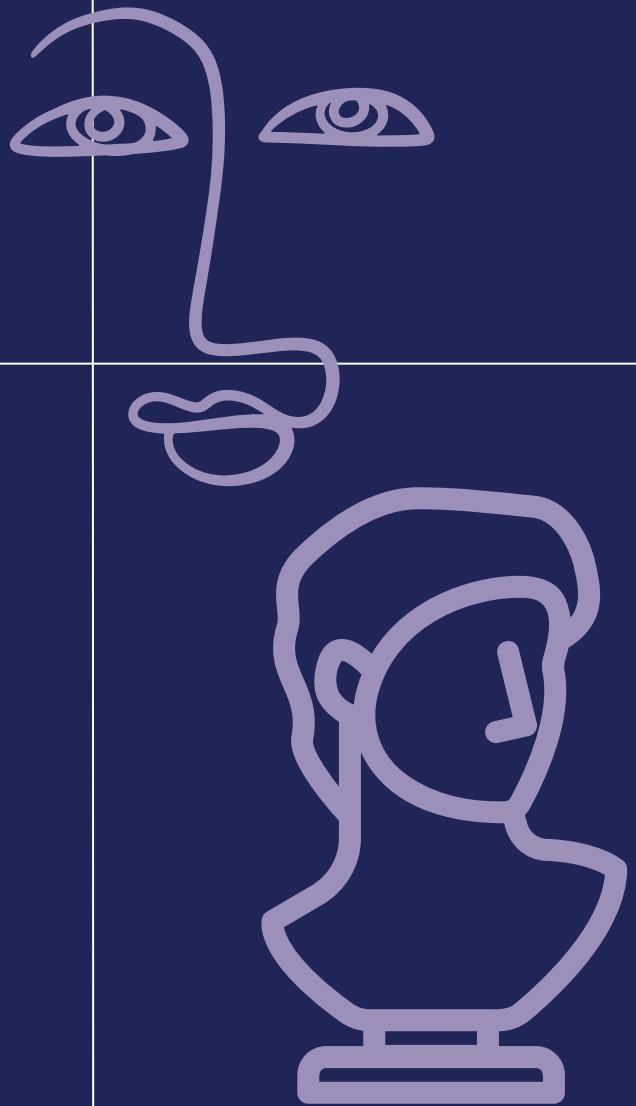
5th Floor

The rooms on 5th floor are reserved for upperclassmen, but the top floor sundeck offers a nice space for all Morts to hang out outside.





Section 5. Greater Rice





McMurtry & Rice Vocabulary

Associate Justice (AJ): They help out with the justice system and alcohol policy regulations; are under the CJs.

Associates Night: A formal dinner held in your college's commons once a semester to connect with the Associates.

Beer Bike: A very competitive, inter-college, GSA, and alumni race/event held every spring, in which eight bikers and eight chuggers from each college compete for personal and college pride.

Birthday Gong: A beautiful, golden gong located in the Yurt and carved with the McM crest that people ring on their birthday.

Burt's Teahouse (Burt's): A McMurtry communal kitchen on 5th Floor, with free tea and mugs available for all Murts.

Chaus: A nickname for Rice Coffeehouse, a student-run business located in the RMC.

Chug: One-half of the Beer Bike race, often preceded by one of Rice's most sacred chants: "They're forty yards out, they're thirty yards out, ready, set chug chug chug chug...!"

Chief Justice (CJ): They're in charge of making sure Murts stay safe, so they're experts on the justice system and alcohol policy. They're who you go to for registering your parties!

College Night: Not just a night, but actually a full day of themed celebration and partying held every semester, with each college celebrating their own College Night.

Conch: Whenever you hear this beautiful instrument trumpeted, know that it is time to rally and show the other colleges our Murt pride!

Deedee's Lounge: Located on 5th floor, this room is a common space for people to watch TV or play video games. It is also home of our biweekly Sunday Sundaes event.

Fellow: Murts who are dedicated to helping other Murts academically in various subjects.

FITQ: *Friday in the Quad* is a gathering for Murts every other Friday, typically with free food, good music, and amazing friends.

Fondy: Fondren Library is a great place to study, conduct meetings, rent out media equipment, and many other things.

H&D: Housing and Dining is in charge of all food services and residential buildings on campus.

IM: Intramural: informal, low-stress sports played among students.

Jack: To pull a prank, usually on another college.



McMurtry & Rice Vocabulary

KTRU: Rice's on-campus, student-run radio station.

Matriculation: Ceremony held during O-Week to officially welcome you to Rice.

McTriculation: Ceremony held during O-Week to officially welcome you to McMurtry.

McTeam: McM Core Team (Magisters, Resident Faculty Associates, Resident Associates, College Coordinator).

Murt: A resident of McMurtry College (YOU)!

OC (Off-Campus): People who live off-campus are referred to as "being OC." People who live far away from Rice, or seem to spend a lot of time outside the hedges are referred to as "deep OC."

Private: A party thrown by a group of people in a residential college, rather than the whole college. The rules and regulations are outlined by the Alcohol Policy.

Pub: Located in the basement of the RMC, Pub hosts sports nights, trivia nights, and Thursday night themed parties.

Public: Themed party thrown by a residential college open to any Rice undergrad. Most colleges throw one per year.

The Quad: McMurtry Quad is a gathering place for Murts to eat at the picnic tables, play soccer in the grass, or just hang out.

RMC: Rice Memorial Center is the home of Chaus, Student Success Initiatives, the Office of Academic Advising, and many other great resources.

Room Draw (Jack): The process we use to assign rooms for the next school year.

Sallyport: The huge archway in Lovett Hall. Once you pass through during Matriculation, you are not to cross through here until graduation.

Sammy's: Located in the RMC, it's a multi-purpose area that is regularly used as a study space or dining area for food stations located there, or repurposed as an event space.

Servery: The kitchen where your everyday food is made. Every college either has its own servery or shares one with nearby colleges (McMurtry's is West Servery).

Student Association (SA): Campus-wide student government.

Suite: The rooms that are shared by 5 or 6 Murts found near each of the stairwells.

Tea Nook: Student-run boba shop located in Sammy's in the RMC, open Tues-Thurs nights.

Town Hall: Biweekly meetings used to discuss various Murt events and policies, open to all Murts and their voices.

Beer Bike Week: The week preceding Beer Bike, filled with college activities, alumni, and plenty of jacks!

Y2K: The best 2000s-themed public party of the year held every February in McM Commons!

Yurt: McMurtry Commons named after its resemblance to the Mongol dwelling.

What to call people from other colleges?

Baker - Bakerite | Brown - Brownie | Duncan - Duncaroo | Hanszen - Hanszenite
Jones - Jonesian | Lovett - Lovetteer | Martel - Martelian | Sid Rich - Sidizen
Wiess - Wiessman | Will Rice - Will Ricer

On Campus Resources

Rice Police (RUPD) | 713-348-6000 (24/7)

Rice Emergency Medical Service (REMS) | 713-348-6000 (24/7)

Rice Housing and Dining | 713-348-5445

Rice Counseling Center | wellbeing.rice.edu | 713-348-3311 (24/7)

Rice Wellbeing Center | wellbeing.rice.edu | wellbeing@rice.edu | 713-348-3311

Student Health | health.rice.edu | (713) 348-4966

Disability Resource Center | drc.rice.edu | adarice@rice.edu | 713-348-5841

Women's Resource Center | women.rice.edu

Queer Resource Center | pride.rice.edu

Rice Health Advisors | rha.rice.edu | mcmurtry.rice.edu/people/RHAs

Office of the Registrar | registrar.rice.edu | registrar@rice.edu | 713-348-4999

Office of Financial Aid | financialaid.rice.edu | fina@rice.edu | 713-348-4958

Office of Equal Opportunity Services | eos.rice.edu | eos@rice.edu

Student Success Initiatives | success.rice.edu | success@rice.edu | 713-348-2924

Office of International Students and Scholars | oiss.rice.edu

Office of Academic Advising | oaa.rice.edu | aadv@rice.edu | 713-348-4060

Center for Career Development | ccd.rice.edu | ccd@rice.edu | 713-348-4055

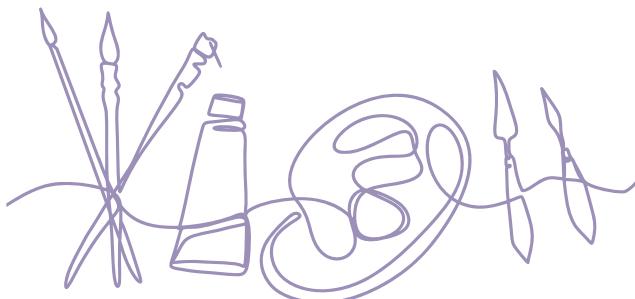
Multicultural Center | mcc.rice.edu | mino@rice.edu | 713-348-5124

Center for Civic Leadership | ccl.rice.edu | ccl@rice.edu | 713-348-2223

Fondren Library | library.rice.edu | 713-348-5698

Student Judicial Programs | sjp.rice.edu | sjp@rice.edu | 713-348-4786

Student Association | sa.rice.edu



Beyond the Hedges

As the nation's most culturally diverse and fourth largest city, Houston offers endless opportunities for exploration. As a Rice student, you will have close access to the Texas Medical Center, the Houston Museum District, Rice Village, Hermann Park, and lots more!

Texas Medical Center (TMC): A 15-minute walk from Murt, the TMC is the world's largest medical center. A variety of biomedical and life science-focused labs host Rice undergraduates to conduct independent research, and there are many opportunities for hospital volunteering as well. The TMC is also home to numerous food establishments, including Starbucks, Chipotle, MOD Pizza, and many more.



Museum District: About a 20-minute walk or short metro ride from Murt, the Museum District is home to 19 museums, galleries, cultural centers, and community organizations, including the Museum of Natural Science and Museum of Fine Arts. The Museum District is a popular destination for Murts looking for a relaxing but fun weekend activity!



Rice Village: Located immediately west of campus, Rice Village is a 16-block bundle of boutique and chain stores, along with bars, coffee shops, and a variety of restaurants. Students frequently walk (about 20 minutes from Murt) or drive to this area to grab food, boba, drinks, etc. off-campus.



Hermann Park: One of Houston's oldest public spaces, Hermann Park is across the street from the North Colleges and consists of over 450 acres to host any outdoor activity you can imagine, including picnics, scenic runs, and sports! Some of the most popular points of interest are the Houston Zoo, the Japanese Garden, and McGovern Centennial Gardens-- all of which you can get in for free with your Rice ID!

See You Soon!

Hello again, fellow artist!

We are thrilled that you are going to get to be part of the most vibrant residential college on campus! We hope this book gave you a colorful glimpse into the dynamic culture you'll experience here at Rice and McMurtry College. Huge thanks to our PicassO-Week Advisors, Co-Advisors, Affiliates, and our McTeam for helping us bring this masterpiece together—from planning events to crafting this very book. Before we let you go, we'd like to leave you with a few final brushstrokes of encouragement:

Your journey at Rice is about to begin, and like any great work of art, it will take time, effort, and many layers to bring your vision to life. There will be sketches, bold colors, and maybe even a few messy strokes—but each moment will help paint the bigger picture of who you're becoming. Here at McMurtry, you'll always have the tools and the support you need to keep creating, growing, and exploring.

Don't be afraid to ask for help along the way: even the most celebrated artists were once beginners, and we believe there's beauty in progress, not just perfection. During PicassO-Week, we encourage you to be expressive, authentic, and open to every part of the creative process. Whatever challenges you face, remember—you're not painting this picture alone. Rice has a palette full of resources ready to support you.

Welcome to MURRRRRRRRRRT!

Cara, Carlos, and Yazmine

Your 2025 PicassO-Week McCoordinators





