

Notice of Press Opportunity

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Wesley House welcomes low-income college students

Homeless, foster, formerly incarcerated students receive support

San Diego, August 19, 2022 – Wesley House Student Residence welcomes students to its affordable college housing for the 2022-2023 academic year. The affordable housing complex is located just steps from San Diego State University and provides housing and wraparound support services for low-income and system-impacted students attending community colleges and universities in San Diego County.

On August 19th, Wesley House will host a *Welcome Back* event for its 22-23 school year residents. College poverty is currently a hot topic with multiple pieces of legislation aiming to provide relief. This is an opportunity to secure interviews, photos, and footage of these students who are working hard to improve their circumstances.

What: Wesley House Welcome Back Event

When: August 19, 2022

Interview & visuals opportunity: 5 pm – 6:30 pm with Wesley House students & staff

Where: Wesley House Student Residence, 5710 Hardy Avenue, San Diego, CA 92115

Students will receive special basic supplies baskets made possible by our generous donors and the support of Sprouts Farmers Market.

About Wesley House Students

Wesley House provides access to affordable housing and wraparound support services to low-income, full-time college and university students in San Diego County. These individuals face the usual challenges associated with higher education including high tuition and fees, the cost of books and supplies, and San Diego's exorbitant cost of living and housing. In addition to these stressors, Wesley House students also encounter barriers related to identifying as homeless or formerly homeless, formerly incarcerated, a former foster youth, a first-generation college student, and/or an immigrant.

Wesley House provides these students with a safe place to live and study, access to a full food pantry, free Wi-Fi, an on-site social worker and case management, referrals to additional resources and community partners, and application assistance for financial aid and public programs such as CalFresh and Covered California.

A Student's Story

Amber Miller is a current resident at Wesley House and a student at San Diego State University. She is a formerly homeless, formerly incarcerated, single mom working hard to earn her degree and improve the opportunities available to herself and her daughter. At a young age, Amber lived in behavioral camps, group homes, homeless/domestic violence shelters, and alcohol/drug rehabilitation centers. Eventually, she was institutionalized. When Amber was released from custody in 2016, she enrolled full-time at San Diego City College while living in a homeless shelter with her daughter. Once

she received her Associates Degree in Sociology and Alcohol and Drug Studies, Amber transferred to San Diego State University. She and her daughter now reside in a permanent residence at Wesley House. Amber is on course to graduate with her Bachelors in Fall 2022 and plans to apply to graduate school to study social work. She now serves as a mentor for incarcerated youth, introducing them to the benefits of higher education as a path towards stability.

The Need

Providing easy-to-navigate access to resources and academic and emotional support can be the difference between a student dropping out of college to meet their basic needs or graduating with a degree. Studies show that a higher education has a direct and positive impact on long-term health outcomes while creating opportunities to break the cycle of poverty ([health.gov](https://www.health.gov/)). The most prominent needs amongst college students with low incomes are housing and food security. Additionally, these students often lack the support system provided by family that is vital to success in higher education and young adulthood.

The Numbers

- 3 in 5 college students experience housing and/or food insecurity.
- According to [a 2021 study](#), **59% of San Diego college students** report experiencing housing insecurity.
- The same study reports **18% of San Diego college students** experiencing homelessness.
 - Homelessness includes living in a vehicle, couch-surfing, living in hotels, temporarily staying with family and/or friends, sleeping on the street, and generally not having a stable, secure place to live.
- A [5-year study](#) shows that foster students are more deeply impacted: **62%** experience food insecurity, **70%** experience housing insecurity.

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Please contact Joe Shumate at joseph@sdwesleyhouse.org or 619-616-7600 for more information or to arrange for interviews. Photos available at sdwesleyhouse.org/press-room.

Wesley House Student Residence empowers qualifying students to achieve their goals through affordable housing and support services. Our vision is that every low-income student has access to equitable college experiences.