Commonwealth Honors College Residential Community (CHCRC)

The first of its kind at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the Commonwealth Honors College Residential Community (CHCRC) sits in the heart of the campus. It takes just minutes to get to most classrooms and the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, and it's right next door to the Recreation Center.

The six residence halls and Honors College administrative building added more than 500,000 square feet to the campus’s academic, residential, and administrative spaces. By design, the College brings together faculty and students with diverse academic interests to share a common love of learning.

Members of Commonwealth Honors College are eligible to live in the Commonwealth Honors College Residential Community. The community has nearly spaces for first-year students and about 900 for sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Two CHCRC residence halls are reserved for first-year honors students. First-year honors students can also choose housing in other residential areas; they are not required to live in the Honors Residential Community. Sophomores, juniors and seniors have the opportunity to live in suites and apartments in the four remaining CHCRC residence halls.
With residential space for 1,500 in double rooms, singles, suites, and apartments, as well as living space for staff and faculty-in-residence, the design of the CHCRC fosters a strong honors community.

The space promotes the kinds of informal interactions among students, faculty, and advisors that extend classroom learning.

The Commonwealth Honors College Residential Community includes:

**Residence Halls**

There are six residence halls. Two are designed for first-year students. Four are built as multi-year residences with suites and apartments. Most suites and apartment accommodations four residents who share a bathroom and common living space. Both offer single or shared bedrooms in a variety of configurations. Apartments include kitchens; suites do not.

The residence halls are arranged into four clusters:

1. **Oak Hall.** This first-year residence hall accommodates 334 residents in single rooms, doubles and a triple.
2. **Sycamore Hall.** This first-year residence hall accommodates 294 residents in single and double rooms.
3. **Birch Hall & Maple Hall.** These multi-year halls accommodate a total of 440 residents in suites and apartments.
4. **Elm Hall & Linden Hall.** These multi-year halls accommodate a total of 421 residents in suites and apartments.

**Events Hall**

The 300-seat events hall serves as a multipurpose room. The hall splits into two: one side offers a lounge space with overflow seating for the Roots Café while the other side accommodates auditorium-style seating for events. The events hall is the location for signature Commonwealth Honors College events such as Pizza & Prof Nights, Wednesday Workshops, social events, and alumni networking events. Public events, such as lectures and social activities, are also hosted there.

**Bloom Honors Advising Center**

Supported by the generosity of Honors Advisory Board member Peter Bloom ’78 and his wife Denise ’79, the Bloom Honors Advising Center helps students maximize the opportunities available to them and to plan effectively their academic paths, especially the year-long senior Honors Thesis/Project. Full-time professional advisors and part-time faculty advisors along with student assistants provide advising support for honors students.

**Classrooms**
The CHCRC adds nine seminar-style classrooms to the campus. Honors courses as well as general university classes are scheduled in these classrooms.

**Faculty Involvement**

Among those living in the Residential Community are faculty-in-residence. Faculty-in-Residence help to build a positive learning-centered environment. They interact informally with students, support residents, and promote out-of-classroom learning.

**Louis and Hilda Greenbaum Gallery**

Hosting rotating exhibits curated by students, this small art gallery is located in Elm Hall and open daily 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The location is easily accessible to the entire university student body.

**Roots Café**

A convenient eatery that stays open late and is open to the entire campus community, the Roots Café offers woodstone hearth oven pizza as well as quick-serve breakfast and lunch items, fresh fruits, upscale coffee, fresh iced tea, and other college culinary favorites.

**Sustainability**

The Honors Residential Community, designed by William Rawn, has been awarded LEED Silver certification, a level within the green building rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The facility is recognized for its material usage, energy efficiencies, water management, site planning, and indoor environmental quality. It incorporated waste reduction efforts to recycle or repurpose the majority of construction and demolition waste; application of low VOC paints, sealants, carpeting and flooring materials; use of high-efficiency plumbing fixtures; installation of single-room thermostats; operable windows; and inclusion of lighting controls with daylight dimmers and vacancy sensors.

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