

EWU's modern Snyamncut Hall is first new campus dormitory in 42 years

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The 104,000-square-foot Snyamncut Hall at EWU has five floors and 354 beds.

The view, the rooms, the amenities – students are buzzing about a new place in Cheney.

“I love it,” Eastern Washington University freshman Audrey Fairhurst said. “It’s new.”

Fairhurst joins more than 350 students who consider themselves lucky to be living in EWU’s first new residence hall in 42 years.



Dignitaries and EWU officials gathered Tuesday to dedicate the dormitory named Snyamncut Hall – pronounced sen-yam-en-sut – in honor of the Spokane Tribe. The Salish word means “place of gathering.”

“This is a good day for the community,” said JoAnn Kauffman, an EWU trustee.

The reasons for building the \$25 million facility were twofold, said Josh Ashcroft, chief housing officer. The seven other housing units are old, and enrollment has increased for the fifth consecutive year. Nearly 1,700 students live on campus.

“We took the aspects that worked best in the other residence halls and incorporated it into this one,” said Stacey Morgan-Foster, vice president for student affairs. “What’s more unique are the social and academic spaces.”

She added, “I think we did really well for the budget.”

The residence hall opened this fall. Students who lived on campus before had first pick of rooms. The remainder went to new students on a first-come-first-served basis.

The 104,000-square-foot building has five floors and 354 beds. Every floor has Wi-Fi. Washers and dryers on each floor are equipped to text residents when their clothes are done.

The first floor has a great room with a fireplace, couches and a drop-down screen. Residence Life administrative offices are across the lobby.

The second through fifth floors each have full kitchens so students can cook and socialize.

"We're big on potlucks," said Zach Lontz, a residence hall community adviser. "We had a watch party last night" for the Seahawks game.

The second floor's recreation room has a pool table, while the fourth offers pingpong. The third and fifth are set up as gaming rooms with three television screens.

The goal is to encourage residents to socialize between floors, not just with people on the one where they sleep, Lontz said.

Study areas on each floor are designed so students can work together; some are in an enclosed room with a common monitor for study groups. Tables and chairs at the end of hallways, called engagement areas, encourage students to get outside their rooms.

"If my roommate's doing something, I go to the engagement area to study," said Victoria Contoise, a sophomore. "It's nice."

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