

LETTER FROM VICE PRESIDENT

Dear Students,

Welcome (or welcome back) to campus! Whether you're brand new and still pretending to know what "West Pine" is, or a seasoned resident student who just figured out the laundry machines still occasionally eat socks, we're so glad you're here. You continue to be a part of a world-class educational experience more than 207 years in the making, and we're proud to call you a Billiken.

As your Vice President for Student Development (fancy title, mostly I just love working with students), it's my job, and my joy, to support the experiences that happen outside the classroom: your friendships, your late-night pizza debates, your club meetings, your achievements, and even the moments that require a little regrouping and occasional tough conversation.

Let's talk about something that matters a great deal to me as we begin this year together: **Taking care of one another.**

Life at SLU is better when we look out for each other. That means checking in on your roommate, speaking up when something feels off, and showing up for people: not just when it's easy, but when it's important.

You don't need to do college at SLU perfectly (spoiler alert: nobody does), but you *do* need community. So be kind, to yourself and to others. Be goofy. Be the person who holds the elevator door open *and* the one who sends a "hey, just thinking about you" text.

And if you ever feel lost, geographically, emotionally, or existentially, there are faculty and staff all across this beautiful campus ready to walk with you (yes, even literally. We have maps. And dogs. And counselors. And snacks.)

Lastly, you'll see signs on campus instructing you to "Be a Billiken" and with that in mind, here are three last "Be's" to kick off our year:

- Be yourself. God created only one of you. Let your light shine.
- Be safe. Ask for help and create safe spaces for others.
- Be someone who helps others feel like they belong.

Have an incredible year, Billikens.

Warmly,

Matt

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