

## ***Despite Storm, Many Flock to UMW's Eagle Landing for Tour***

University of Mary Washington's Eagle Landing apartments are nearing completion and many come for a tour

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BY JEFF BRANSCOME

Hundreds of University of Mary Washington students, parents and alumni checked out the Eagle Landing apartments yesterday evening just as heavy rain and wind hit Fredericksburg. Rising junior Taryn Tashner showed up to the open house with three friends and seemed impressed with what she saw. "Now, it feels like we're a bigger school," said Tashner of Richmond.

The 156 apartments are part of Eagle Village, a mixed-use development off U.S. 1, across from the city campus. The five-story complex's 624 tenants--who will live four to an apartment--are moving in Aug. 18. Some might mistake Eagle Landing for a five-star hotel.

A rotunda on the first floor has a large fireplace with a 55-inch flat-screen television. The room's roof has tables and chairs and offers a view of Fredericksburg's skyline.

A billiards room on the second floor has framed black-and-white sports photographs from Mary Washington's earlier days.

And the courtyard has an artificial turf field with rubber pellets. "This makes you want to kick your shoes off," university spokesman George Farrar said Thursday as he walked on the field.

Jeff Rountree, CEO of the UMW Foundation, which is developing Eagle Village, said Eagle Landing is the best university apartment complex around. The common areas, including a large meeting room for parties, movie nights and other gatherings, are key, he said.

"Keeping that community piece is important in a huge building like this," he said. The two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartments will have couches, chairs, bar stools, lamps, desks and beds. UMW furnished two of the rooms for a ribbon-cutting ceremony yesterday and will put furniture in all of them beginning Monday.

"It's much different from when I was in school," UMW spokeswoman Marty Morrison said. The kitchens have granite countertops and stainless steel appliances--more than enough for the standard college fare of ramen noodles. "I love the kitchens," UMW Director of Residence Life Chris Porter said. "I am really looking forward to hearing what the students are going to be making." She also enjoys the views, particularly in Room 514. Students can look out the bedroom window across U.S. 1 and see UMW's intramural field, James Monroe High School and a lot of trees. Most of all, Porter said, she's looking forward to watching the faces of students and parents on move-in day. "That will be the moment that does it for me," she said.

