Housing Selection for Fall 2020
Kim Proulx, Associate Director of Housing Services

The time of year is quickly approaching when current residents who will be living on campus next year will have the opportunity to choose their future roommates and housing assignment. Referred to by our department as “Housing Selection”, this is one of the largest processes managed by our office with up to 9,000 students participating over the course of several weeks. This includes students in Learning Communities, student athletes, Honors students, and students in various other interest-based communities. Although we do work with some students individually on their housing assignment, it is likely that your student has some level of participation in this process.

We have a variety of resources for students to review in advance of this process, including video tutorials, infographics, floorplans and in-person opportunities to meet with staff and also tour certain residence hall areas of campus. Please encourage your student to follow us on social media platforms, and do so yourself if you are interested in seeing our reminders and fun facts!

It may be helpful for you to discuss your student’s plans and expectations with them for the upcoming year. Important factors to consider are cost, location on-campus, how many roommates they plan to have, etc. Students get very excited for this process, but we find it can also be stressful for them. Our staff are available via email, phone, social media, and in person to answer any questions your student might have and to try to guide them through the process.

If discussions with your student turn to the option of living off-campus, please be sure to review with them the housing cancellation deadlines and policies. We send email reminders to students to help them plan accordingly if they will be living off campus so that they can notify us and avoid fees.

We are here to help make this process for your student be as user-friendly and low stress as possible, so please encourage your student to contact us with any questions. Don’t hesitate to reach out yourself if you are looking for information!
Charting our destiny as one collective, in fall of 2018 the Department of Residential Life, a department within the Division of Student Affairs, launched its 2-year diversity and inclusion plan “Reaching New Heights in Building Inclusive Excellence” - a bold and innovative strategic plan to support our department’s diversity and inclusion initiatives. The plan contained goals, measurable outcomes designed to promote fairness, engagement and inclusive values for all of our residence hall students and staff, and more specifically, to increase opportunities that would sustain our forward thinking.

The Building Inclusive Excellence plan required a shared vision/expectations, a department-wide commitment, and balanced efforts that are inclusive in nature and intermingled within the department’s diversity goals. Our plan had direct impact on all of our department units across all segments, including students, staff, administrators, and campus partners alike. The Building Inclusive Excellence plan was assessed internally by our staff for the purpose of ensuring the success and impact diversity has on the Department of Residential Life mission, vision and core values.

Creating a diverse and inclusive culture for our 2-year Building Inclusive Excellence plan provided a successful, solid foundation for diversity and inclusion. Throughout the plan, we worked to ensure each challenge was met with a change strategy that is transformative in scope and to explore new energy and revitalization as a better way of doing, thinking, and achieving. Secondly, the initiative had to be sustainable so that it had a home in our department and we could passionately take it on and integrate into our efforts for success. Lastly, the initiative had to be progressive in its landscape, meaning that it develop gradually over time, and to include our department check points over those two years, which is a continuous measurement for effectiveness.

Strategizing ultimately supported our goals to maximize the strength of diversity through high-performing diverse work teams with the premise that diversity drives innovative, creative thinkers. Each individual contributed from every level in our department helped drive our great success, thereby creating an environment that is inclusive, welcoming, and highly productive.

Believing in this commitment is recognizing that the higher education community is the best way to embrace and systemically anchor our efforts in creating safe and inclusive communities that foster student success, underscoring those democratic values of freedom, equality, and opportunity for all. The belief in inclusive excellence is at the core of our department and quite simply, there can be no excellence without inclusive excellence!

Transforming our collective voices, our diversity plan reminds us that its purpose is to put into action the mission to achieve inclusive excellence. It affirms the “Reaching New Heights in Building Inclusive Excellence” as an essential element in our department ongoing transformation through innovation and excellence in creating a distinctive roadmap for us in making a difference at University of Connecticut.

To advance a diversity and intellectually environment, please find some of diversity department milestones of achievement listed on the next page.

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Highlights of Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

**Department Diversity Dialogues (D3):**
Department Diversity Dialogues (D3) is a series of professional development opportunities for our professional staff in the Department of Residential Life to participate in an open dialogue around social justice and diversity topics. Conversations around relevant and important diversity topics help prepare professionals to approach their work in an inclusive manner and work with our residence hall students. These conversations also can serve as practice to develop skills to have difficult conversations with students.

**Affinity Group Resource Guide**
Affinity groups contribute to the business success for our staff through a host of ways: Recruitment and retention, robust and professional development, creating a positive and supportive work environment, and assisting to deliver on the commitment of diversity, equity and inclusion. Residential Life staff are highly encouraged to participate in these opportunities at the University as they play a vital role in articulating, promoting, and supporting the needs and goals of those various communities and organizations.

- African American Cultural Center ([https://aacc.uconn.edu](https://aacc.uconn.edu))
- Asian American Cultural Center ([https://asaac.uconn.edu](https://asaac.uconn.edu))
- Puerto Rican Latin American Cultural Center ([https://prlacc.uconn.edu](https://prlacc.uconn.edu))
- Rainbow Center ([https://rainbowcenter.uconn.edu](https://rainbowcenter.uconn.edu))
- Women’s Center ([https://womenscenter.uconn.edu](https://womenscenter.uconn.edu))
- Native American Cultural Programs ([https://nacp.uconn.edu](https://nacp.uconn.edu))

**Narrative 4 Project (based on the Narrative 4 website)**
Narrative 4 is widely embraced in four continents, twelve countries, and eighteen states in the US. The goal of Narrative 4 is rooted is story exchanges by equipping individuals to use their stories to build empathy, shatter stereotypes, break down barriers, and ultimately make the world a better place (quoted from their website [https://narrative4.com/](https://narrative4.com/)). In developing this initiative for our department, Narrative 4 will serve as our departmental commitment in building inclusive excellence demonstrating our priorities and continuing to ensure we focus on key initiatives like one to enhance our capacity.

**Collaboration with the Office for Diversity and Inclusion ([https://diversity.uconn.edu/](https://diversity.uconn.edu/))**
In support of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion’s mission statement and initiatives, Residential Life provides leadership for developing and implementing a variety of initiatives designed to strengthen the development of communities in practicing inclusive excellence in honoring and celebrating diversity throughout our department and residence halls.

We are committed:
- To create and support educational initiatives/programs related to social justice and diversity for students, student staff, and professional staff within the department
- To promote an environment of educational experiences that achieve and maintain positive race and human relations
- To foster cultural competence throughout the department
- To continue to forge new relationships and strengthen existing relationships with other campus departments.

**Diversity and Inclusion Conferences**
Throughout the academic year, staff from the Department of Residential Life have attended several professional development opportunities to enhance their skill set and understanding of inclusive excellence. From those professional offerings, staff have engaged others in thought-provoking conversations that have led to cultivate attitudes, systems and structures that promote equitable decisions and practices. In that spirit, we have been able to engage all staff members in building an inclusive community where everyone knows that they are valued.

**Invited national diversity key note speakers**
As part of our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity, the department has sponsored and invited several major diversity and inclusion speakers to campus to serve as our keynote speaker for our training programs. Some examples of speakers include Dr. Alfreda Brown (“Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion Change through Excellence”), Dr. Terrell Strayhorn (“Creating a Culture of Inclusion and Belonging on Campus”), Dr. Joshua Fredenburg (“Emotionally Intelligent Leadership” and “From Good to Exceptional in a Time of Change”), Dr. Marilyn Sanders Mobley (“The Paradox of Race Talk in America”), and Chris Haige (“Creating an Inclusive Environment”).
Summer Housing

Jen O’Neill, Housing Assignments Specialist

For the summer of 2020, summer housing students will be housed in Werth Tower. This is an exciting location to host our summer residents as the facility includes an abundance of study space throughout the hall, a game room, air-conditioning, breathtaking views of campus, and many more amenities that residents will enjoy throughout the summer. Graduate student housing will be hosted in on-campus apartments.

All summer assignments will be made in double occupancy spaces and based on availability. If a summer resident needs a medical housing accommodation, they should work with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) as soon as possible.

To be eligible for summer housing, residents must be enrolled in one or more Storrs summer session courses, be employed on campus, and/or interning on-campus during the time frame they apply to live on campus. The summer housing application will be available beginning on March 1, 2020. Please write in to livingoncampus@uconn.edu to request application access. Additional information about summer housing, including room rates, is available at: https://reslife.uconn.edu/summer-housing/.

St. Baldrick’s Fundraiser

A cure is not enough.

For many years, researchers struggled to give kids just a few more months of life. While many kids now survive, the search goes on for cures for many childhood cancers.

But even for kids who survive, the battle is not over. A recent study shows that because of the treatments they had as kids, by the time they’re 45, more than 95% of survivors will have a chronic health problem and 80% will have severe or life-threatening conditions.

So in addition to finding cures, a lot of research is focused on preventing the lifelong damage that results from surgeries, radiation and chemotherapies given while young bodies and brains are just developing.

Even during treatment, kids face all kinds of side effects, some very uncomfortable, others life-threatening. That’s why St. Baldrick’s also funds research to improve supportive care for patients.

UConn’s National Residence Hall Honorary is proud to once again host our St. Baldrick’s Day event on April 17th from 12-4pm in Student Union, Room 304.

Spring Recess 2020

All residential areas on-campus remain open during Spring Recess, March 14-22, 2020.
Residential Life Student Advisory Committee

Christina Gray, Policy and Process Coordinator

We value the input of the students who live in the residence halls at UConn. As a way to receive feedback and suggestions, the Department of Residential Life hosts the Residential Life Student Advisory Committee (RLSAC). RLSAC has existed for a number of years to provide students from around campus the opportunity to discuss and share their perspective on the services, facilities, programs, processes, and staff of Residential Life.

RLSAC meets monthly throughout the semester. The meetings are hosted by a staff member from the Residential Life Central Office and a Hall Director and snacks and professional development are all part of what is offered to members. Weekly agendas are shared with participating students to guide the conversations, but an open floor is consistently provided to allow students to contribute their thoughts to the conversations.

As a department, we have found the RLSAC to be a valuable resource to guide our work and ensure that we’re providing the best residential experience. We also find that students who participate in RLSAC enjoy the opportunity to share feedback and suggestions. Students are challenged to think critically about concerns and how to best address them.

Participating in the RLSAC is a great leadership opportunity for residential students and many go on to apply to be a Resident Assistant (RA) or another campus leader.

During the spring semester, our meetings will be held on February 12, March 4, and April 1 from 1:30 - 2:30PM in Rome Portico, lower level. New members are welcome to join at any point in the semester and can simply email livingoncampus@uconn.edu to express interest and will receive additional details about upcoming meetings.

Living in on-campus housing is not only about living close to your classes, it’s about the relationships you make and learning more about yourself while you are part of this community! Now more than ever, students are choosing to #LiveonandLearn at UConn!
Recent Incidents in the Halls

Sheila Morgansmith, Associate Director of Residence Education and Kim Beardsley, Assistant Director for Student Welfare

Residential Life believes in creating an environment that promotes individual growth and builds community through the safe, respectful exchange of diverse thought, opinion, and feeling. The success of your student depends on each of us and your partnership is crucial to their growth within the residence halls.

We have noticed an uptick in incidents occurring in our residence halls specifically related to bias, damage, and vandalism. We have held floor meetings in several of our communities to address these behaviors. It is important for our residents to take responsibility for their living environment, whether they become an active bystander, report an incident or agree to clean up after themselves within the community. We ask that you reiterate these behaviors at home and remind our residents to report any issues to Residential Life staff.

Did Your Student Apply to be an RA for 2020-2021?

Nancy J. Abohatab, RA Program Specialist

Here are some updates that may be helpful as your student goes through the process:

1. All candidates are emailed updates throughout the process to their UConn email accounts.

2. The Residential Life RA website is also updated and can be seen at: https://reslife.uconn.edu/resident-assistant-ras-fall/.

3. Eligible candidate interviews were conducted between February 3 - 14, 2020.

4. All candidates who were interviewed will receive an update on their status in the process during the first week of March 2020.

5. If your student - or you - have any process questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Nancy J. Abohatab (nancy.abohatab@uconn.edu)

Find us on Social Media!

www.facebook.com/UConnResLife
@UConnResLife on Twitter and Instagram

We encourage all residents to use #LiveonandLearn to showcase the benefits of living on campus!
Spring 2020 Room Change and Summer Room Change Process

The spring semester room change process opened to Storrs campus students on Monday, February 3rd and closed on Friday, February 21st.

The next opportunity for students to change assignments will be the online summer room change process. Students will be able to register from April 27th until May 25th in MyHousing.

Registered students will be issued a selection time for when they can go into MyHousing and change assignments. Once active in the selection system, students will be able to change rooms as many times as they would like until the process closes.

More information on this process will be emailed to students and also posted on our website.

Important Dates

March 1st
Summer Housing Application available in MyHousing

March 6th
Campus Change Application Deadline

March 14th-22nd
Spring Recess (no classes, halls remain open)

March 20th
Current UConn students begin to choose roommates online for the 2020-2021 year

March 24th - 27th
Current UConn students choose rooms online for Honors and Learning Communities for the 2019-2020 year

March 30th - April 20th
Current UConn students choose rooms and roommates online in the General Selection Process.

April 27th
Summer Room Change Application available in MyHousing.

May 11th
Halls, Suites, Northwood Apts., & Mansfield Apts. close for all students at noon for Spring 2020

May 31st
Hilltop & Charter Oak Apartments close for Spring 2020

Contact Information

Department of Residential Life
Whitney Hall, ground floor
(860) 486-2926
livingoncampus@uconn.edu
http://reslife.uconn.edu

We Hope That You’re Enjoying Winter!

We are here for you and your students if you have any questions!