Dear Parents and Family Members,

We hope this newsletter finds you healthy and safe. We decided to add a summer edition of this newsletter so that we could update you on the end of the spring semester and share with you what we are working on this summer and how we are planning for the fall semester.

We recognize that the spring semester was an unusual one for your student, and we all have ventured into strange and uncharted waters during this global pandemic. Please know that we miss your students, and that we are doing all we can to plan for the fall semester per the state and federal guidelines and with the safety and security of your student in mind. We hope that soon we will be able to return to some normalcy, even if that includes updated practices for our residence halls. As always, you are our greatest partner in providing support to your student, so thank you for all that you do!

Welcome to our June Newsletter!

Kimberly Proulx, Associate Director of Housing Services

Campus flags at half mast on April 22, 2020

Weeping cherry tree in full bloom
Room Change Process

The summer room change process opened to Storrs campus students on Monday, May 4th so that students could request to change their fall 2020 housing assignment.

Students could request to either move as a group or participate in the online room change process to see all available spaces and select a room on their own. The online selection was available to students from Friday, May 29th until midnight on Thursday, June 4th.

Students can also request to do a Trading Spaces move, which involves swapping places with another student. While we are not able to accept any additional room change requests to move to vacant rooms, students can still request to swap places with each other until June 30th.

Additional information regarding the Summer Room Change Process is available at: https://reslife.uconn.edu/summer-room-change-process-storrs-campus/
Building Virtual Communities

Dr. Ralphel Smith, Director of Educational Initiatives

Since March, life has been about constant change for the world and has affected our wonderful campus. The college experience is so strongly connected to community and the connections that result as a case of community. With the onslaught of coronavirus in our country since March, our idea of community has been shattered by the need to isolate and social distance. Isolation and social distancing have changed the lives of UConn’s students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Wrap up for finals week online. Lectures transitioned to an online educational format; we have all been forced to create virtual communities for connecting. During the latter part of spring semester, I was able to work with several offices on-campus to create a virtual community with the 800 residents who remained on campus.

In order to do that, I worked with the Dean of Students office, the uKindness group from Student Affairs and the Hall Directors from Residential Life. We connected residents with a Hall Director who had an intentional conversation with the resident about how they could assist or help during the isolation. In addition, each week the Hall Director provided academic resources, resources about safety, resources about physical activity, mental health resources, and resources concerning preparation for finals and checking out of the halls at the end of the term. Although being isolated and social distancing was challenging for our students they appreciated the weekly facilitation guides to keep them informed and connected.

As we continue to be challenged by the pandemic, virtual communities and connection will be important to create a sense of belonging and mattering for all of our students.
Residential Life Service Desk

Christina Gray, Policy and Process Coordinator

Beginning in the fall of 2020, Residential Life is pleased to announce the opening of a centralized Service Desk for students living in on-campus housing. The Service Desk will be located in the Residential Life main office, in Whitney Hall on the garden level.

The Service Desk will serve as an information hub for Residential Life and will house the keys to all residential assignments on-campus. The Service Desk will have consistent hours and staff availability, allowing students to drop off or pick up keys when they are changing rooms, moving in, or moving out of their on-campus housing assignments.

Students participating in room changes will no longer need to visit two offices to finalize their move. They will now be able to drop off the keys to their previous space and pick up the keys to their new assignment at the Service Desk.

The Service Desk will work to provide a high level customer service to all students, faculty, staff, and parents who call or come in to the office with questions about living on-campus and Residential Life policies and procedures.

We are excited to provide this new service, and we encourage your students to reach out to us with any questions they may have.
RA End of Year Awards

Terrence Abney and Nate Gordon,
Assistant Directors Residence Education/Co-Chairs RA Training and Development Committee

Each year the Residential Life Department gives out various awards for the staff that go above and beyond in their roles and this year was no different. Below are the awards that the department distributed during a virtual presentation on May 13, 2020. A special thanks to our Award Selection Committee for reviewing and selecting our recipients.

**JACQUELINE R. SEIDE OUTSTANDING S/RA AWARD**
Nathalia Hernandez (Buckley/Shippee Halls)

**SENIOR RESIDENT ASSISTANT (SRA) OF THE YEAR**
Jamiah Bennett (McMahon Hall)

**LEARNING COMMUNITY, HONORS, SPECIAL INTEREST RA OF THE YEAR**
Sydney Spizzoucco (Alumni Quadrangle)

**UNSUNG HERO**
Ryan Miller (North Campus)

**NEW RA OF THE YEAR**
Emma Vittori (HilltopApartments)

**SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR**
Josue Quiles (North Campus)

Waiting List Information

Jennifer O’Neill, Housing Services Specialist

If your student does not have on-campus housing for the fall and is waiting for a guaranteed housing offer, please encourage them to keep an eye on their UConn inbox this summer. Offers go out in batches once a month, as spaces become available. Students who accept their offer by early July, will have the opportunity to select their own housing assignment in an online selection process this summer. Information about this process will be sent out as it nears closer. Students who do not receive and accept a housing offer by early July will be matched with a roommate based on lifestyle preferences and placed into rooms by Residential Life staff. All students who accept housing will be eligible for room change processes once the academic year begins.

If your student was planning to live off campus but has changed their mind, please have them write into livingoncampus@uconn.edu to join the waiting list. If your student finds other accommodations before receiving and accepting a guaranteed housing offer, they are eligible to cancel their housing application in their MyHousing portal for no cost.

Please contact us at livingoncampus@uconn.edu if you or your student have any questions.
Residency Requirement Information

Christina Gray, Policy and Process Coordinator

The University of Connecticut (UConn) considers the on-campus living experience an integral and necessary part of the total education of its students. The Residency Requirement has been developed with great consideration. Research has shown that first and second year students who live in residence halls build closer relationships with faculty, staff and their peers; become more involved; and are generally more satisfied with their overall university experience. The policy is in place due to the significant link between academic success and participation in the Residential Life program. The Residency Requirement program started at UConn in the fall of 2019.

All Undergraduate First-Time Freshmen and Undergraduate International Freshmen students admitted to the Storrs campus for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 academic semesters must live on-campus for the 2020-2021 academic year. Living on-campus in summer academic housing or during the UCAELI program does not count toward the Residency Requirement. Campus Change students changing to Storrs for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 academic semesters, who will be under the age of 20 at the start of the semester, must live on-campus for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Students who wish to request an exemption to the Residency Requirement, may do so provided they meet the criteria and deadlines as outlined on the Residential Life website. UConn recognizes that some students live locally to the university, and may wish to remain at home with their parent/guardian for the duration of their academic career. Provided that a student’s home address of record with the university is within sixty miles of the Storrs campus, students may request an exemption based on commuting from home. Students who are military veterans; are married or have dependents; for whom living on-campus would be a significant financial burden; who have medical needs that cannot be met in on-campus housing; or have religious needs that cannot be met in on-campus housing are also eligible to request an exemption to the policy. Exemption request forms are available by request. Students seeking access to the form should send their name, student ID number, and a request for the application to livingoncampus@uconn.edu

Exemption requests for students admitted or campus changing for the fall 2020 semester are due by June 30, 2020. If a student who falls under the Residency Requirement is not approved for an exemption, they will be assigned housing and billed accordingly.
Residential Life Staff Telecommuting

In order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 (coronavirus), professional Residential Life staff are working standard hours remotely or telecommuting. Voicemail boxes will be checked regularly while staff work remotely or telecommute, but we strongly encourage sharing any questions for staff either at their UConn emails or to submit general questions to livingoncampus@uconn.edu.

Have a great June!

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

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