

# 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Residence Life | *Division of Student Affairs*



# FOUNDATION & STRUCTURE

## Mission

We develop living environments to enhance the academic mission of UWL through creating inclusive communities, supporting experiential learning and building meaningful relationships. We are student-centered, we care, and we have fun!

## Staffing Transitions

### Live-In Hall Staffing

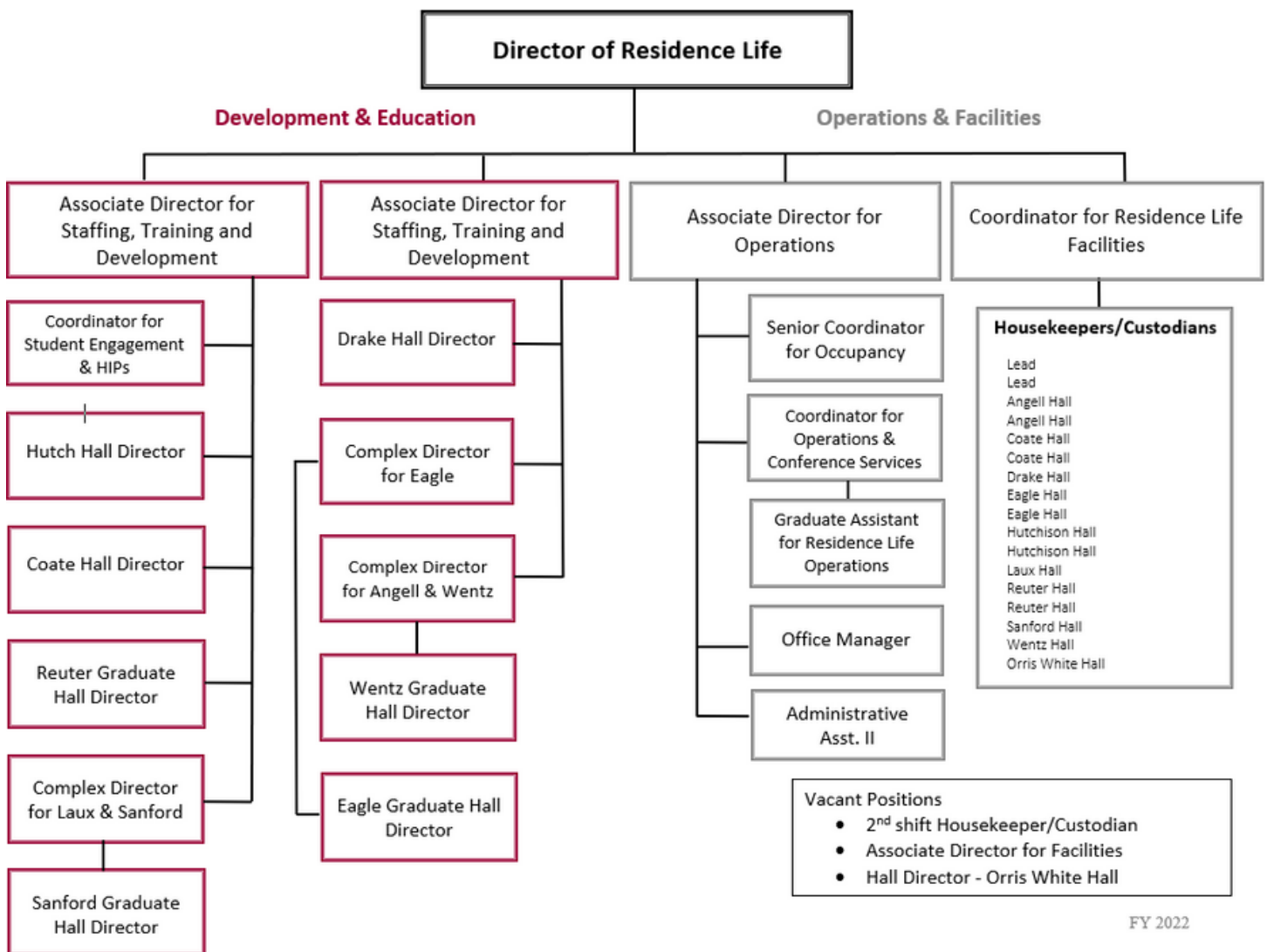
- Beginning in 2017 we noticed a significant decline in Hall Director applicants and in 2019 the decrease was even more notable. To account for these trends and align with national focus on retention and recruitment, in July 2021, we adjusted our live-in staff structure by adding a position of "Complex Director" to our current positions. Additionally, we changed the position of "Assistant Hall Director" to "Graduate Hall Director" and recruited more graduate students than in previous years. This not only supported the ORL structure changes, but our Student Affairs Administration program needs.
- It should be noted that the change to the live-in staffing model impacted summer staffing. While the three Complex Directors are committed by position description to supporting the summer conference operation, it also removed three 12-month full-time staff during this time.

### Operations Staffing

- As Residence Life performs as a self-support entity, it is important that the management of our business is sound and efficiencies are improved. As such, in July 2021, we reviewed the scope of work and reconfigured the "Coordinator of High Impact Practices and Conference Services" and the "Coordinator of Student Engagement" positions. The new Coordinator positions created were titled "Coordinator of Operations and Conference Services" which serves general operations, conference services, oversight of the centralized mail center, departmental HR needs, and website/social media, and "Coordinator of Student Engagement and High Impact Practices" which focuses on academic student success, growth of academic engagement initiatives, retention and assessment.

- To support centralizing the mail operations for 3000+ students and servicing year-round operations, we created a new graduate assistantship. This allows for continuity of operations and provides a different experience to graduate students. This position, also, helped account for gaps from the live-in staff model changes by being approved for summer employment.
- ORL aligned the work of the Administrative Assistant II (formerly USA II) positions with their day-to-day responsibilities and the needs within the department. There are now differentiations within the two positions to account for office management and financial and operational support.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# RESIDENCE LIFE BY THE NUMBERS

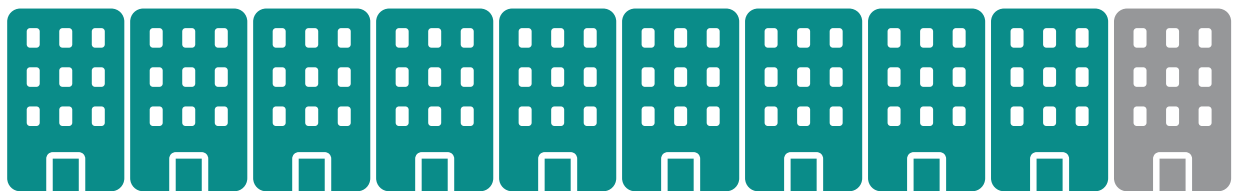
<b>10</b>	Professional Staff	<b>3</b>	Complex Directors
<b>17</b>	Custodial Staff	<b>3</b>	Hall Directors
<b>2</b>	Assigned Facilities Staff	<b>4</b>	Graduate Hall Directors
<b>1</b>	Graduate Assistant	<b>169</b>	Student Staff

# 2952

RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

# 1:28

RA TO RESIDENT RATIO



9 residence halls occupied; 1 hall unoccupied for isolation housing (fall) and renovations (spring)

# COVID-19 IMPACT

## Fall 2021

Due to high COVID-19 rates in the county, Orris White Hall was utilized for isolation for the fall semester. To move in, vaccination verification or proof of negative test was required for residential students.

795 (residential) students were contacted by our team during the fall semester

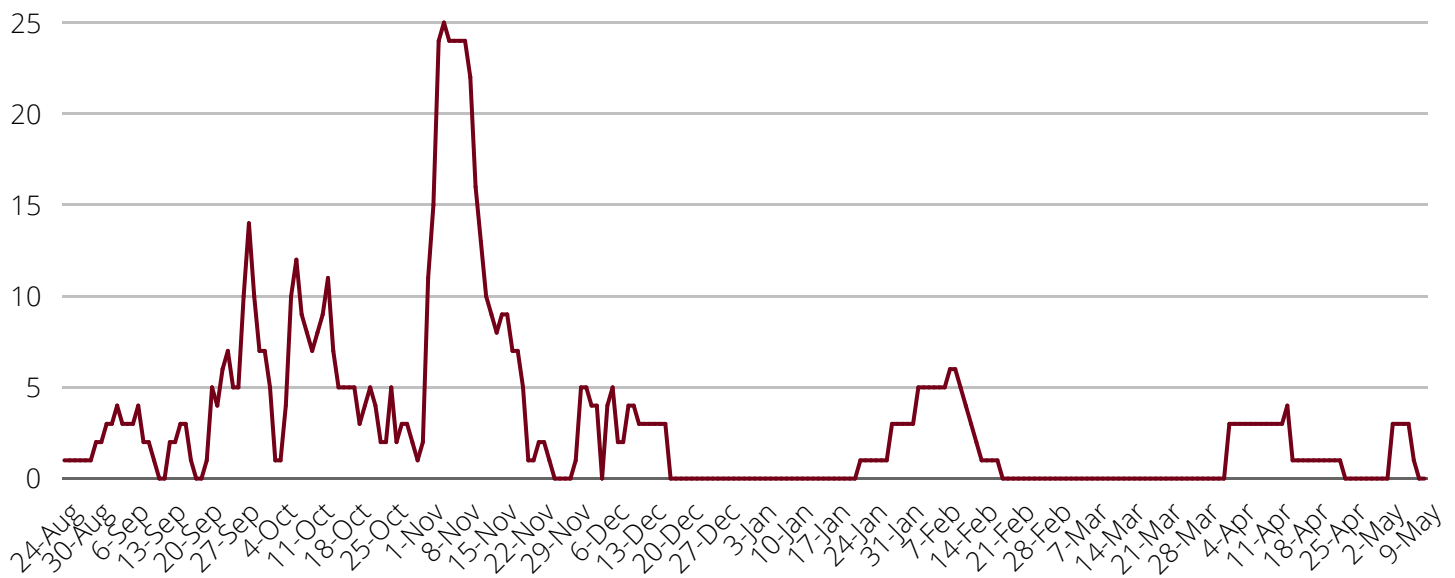
- 253 of these students were considered fully vaccinated and were monitoring based on a known exposure
- 336 of these students displayed symptoms at the time of testing, had a PCR test, and had to isolate pending results (all of which were released with a negative PCR test; anyone who had a positive PCR is accounted for in the following stats)
  - 171 of these students opted to wait for their results at their home (away from campus)
  - 161 of these students opted to stay on campus to await their results
  - 2 of these students opted to stay at a hotel off campus (paid by their parents)
  - 3 of these students stayed for at least one night in O.White Hall and then went home
- 28 of these students tested positive and isolated on campus
- 89 of these students tested positive and isolated off campus
- 53 of these students were considered close contacts and had to quarantine; they did so on campus
- 29 of these students were considered close contacts and had to quarantine; they did so off campus
- 7 of these students were monitored due to past positives or travel quarantine needs

## Spring 2022

By January, the COVID-19 rates were categorized as moderate in the county, so O. White was no longer utilized for isolation. However, proof of negative test, regardless of vaccination status, was required for all residential students to move in for the spring semester.

264 (residential) students were contacted by our team during the spring semester

- 98 students presented symptoms at the time of testing and required a PCR test and stayed on campus to wait for their results; results were negative and they were released from isolation
- 9 students presented symptoms at the time of testing and required a PCR test and stayed off campus to wait for their results; results were negative and they were released from isolation
- 43 students tested positive and isolated on campus
- 114 students tested positive and isolated off campus



This chart indicates the usage of isolation beds. In Fall 2021, there were 94 beds available. In Spring 2022, there were 20 beds available.

Notable changes from fall to spring semester in isolation housing protocol included:

- Shared-quad rooms (rather than individual rooms)
- Students who did not have a roommate in their individual room were allowed to isolate in their spaces
- All students isolating "pending PCR results," isolated in their current assignments

# OPERATIONS

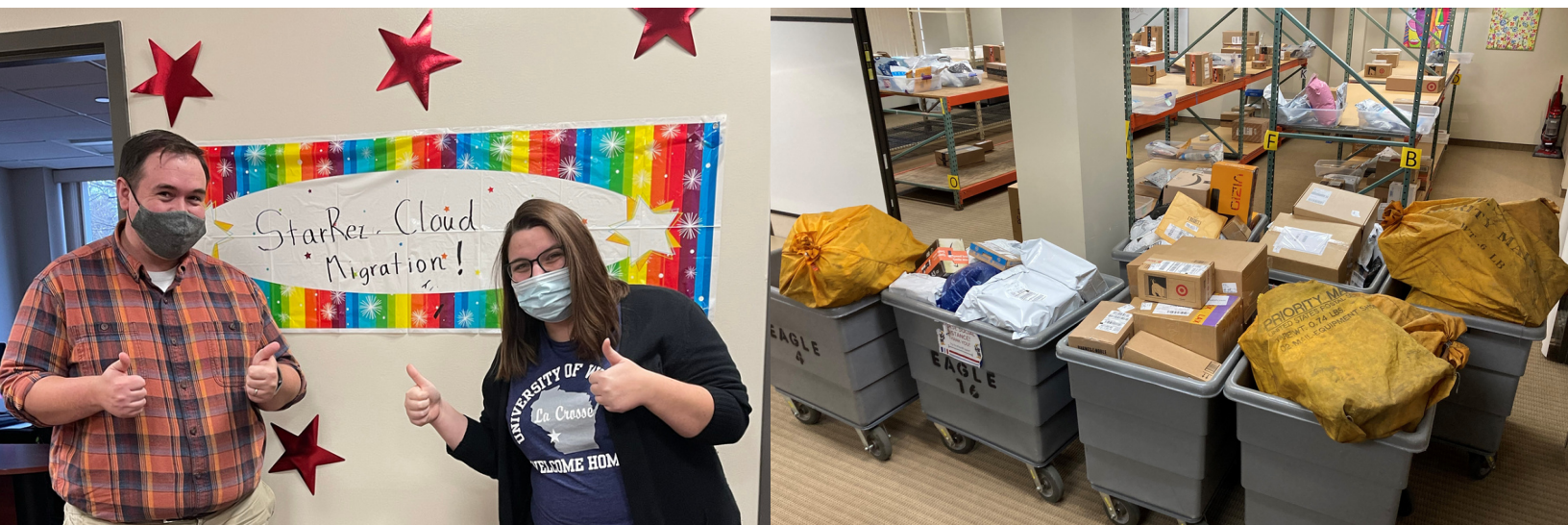
## Occupancy Management

- In late 2021 Residence Life began conversations with our current vendor for occupancy management software, StarRez, regarding migrating from on-premises server hosting to StarRez cloud-based data hosting. By the end of the summer, we had come to an agreement with StarRez for a new service contract and our cloud migration process concluded in December. Moving to cloud hosting includes a number of benefits for Residence Life operations. For one, we are now able to instantly access all of the newest software features that StarRez develops, along with fixes to bugs or other software issues. This is a major leap forward for us, as we had previously only been able to update our system software once a year, putting us on a delayed schedule for fixes and enhancements.
- As part of the cloud migration contract, we also added in the StarRez report designer module and parcel tracking module. Report designer allows us to continue to produce customized and automated reporting for campus leadership for residence hall occupancy. It also supports our ability to create customized invoice templates in StarRez for our large-scale conference events.



# Purchasing

- During FY22 the Residence Life Festival Foods purchasing guidelines were revised. This was a collaborative project between UWL Purchasing, Chartwells, and University Centers. As part of this project, the original provisions for Residence Life Festival purchasing in the Chartwells contract were reviewed and used as the basis for the creation of expanded and much more detailed purchasing guidance. The new guidance (reviewed and agreed upon by all stakeholders) has removed more of the gray areas that the previous guidance allowed for.
- The Festival Foods purchasing process remains a work in progress. Student staff and student leaders who are able to make these purchases at Festival Foods on Copeland Ave. frequently lose, misplace, or fail to turn in their purchase receipts causing the need to track down missing receipts. Additionally, despite the improved shopping guidelines, there were issues with unapproved purchasing food items. Additional changes will be made to the process for FY23 that will involve increased accountability and review, both before and after purchases are made.
- Comparing FY22 Festival Foods spending progress compared to the pre-Covid years of FY18 and FY19, Residence Life is not spending as much at Festival Foods as in previous years.



# Eagle Mail Center

- The parcel tracking module allowed us to leverage our pre-existing occupancy management database (StarRez) to receive campus mail, automatically notify on-campus students about deliveries, and track the status of students' mail. This module allowed for compatibility with laser package scanners, which has vastly improved the efficiency of our package logging. We have also integrated student ID card swipe stations in the Eagle Mail Center which allows our staff to quickly pull up student information in StarRez and easily identify the mail that students have ready for pickup at the mail center.

- With the integration of parcel tracking into StarRez, we are also able to do advanced reporting on mail received; including mail audits, frequency of mail received, mail volume, etc. Reporting has allowed Residence Life staff to make more data-informed decisions such as mail center staffing and business hours.

**1 Student Lead**

**10 Student Assistants**

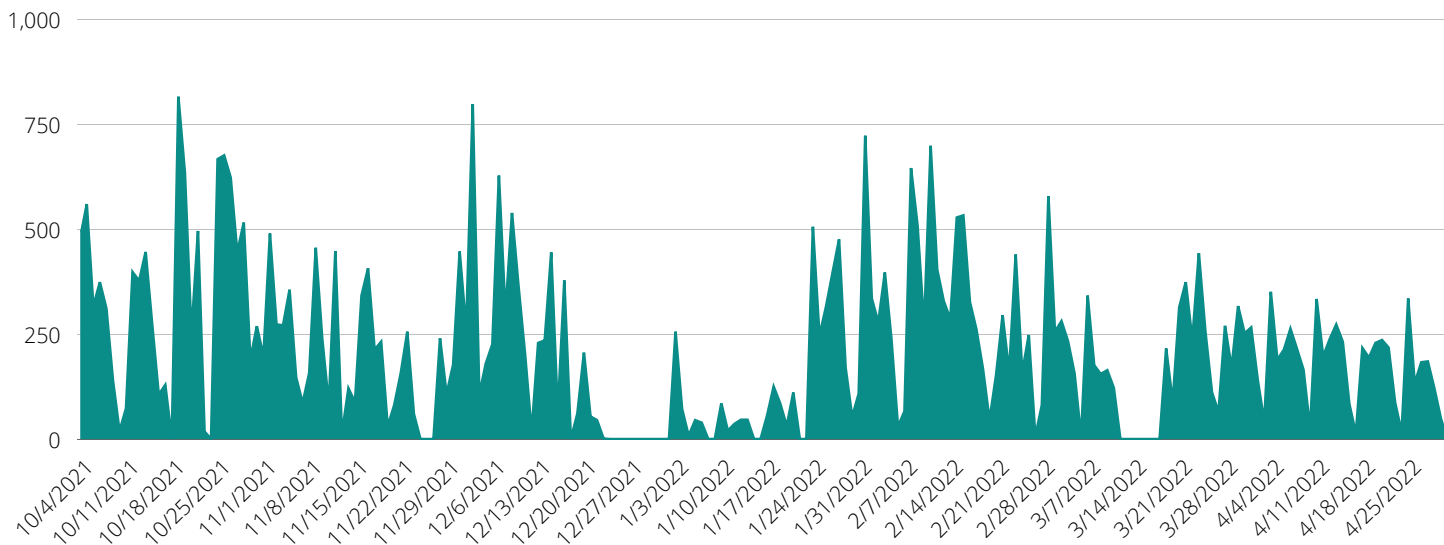
**44,118**

**TOTAL PACKAGES/LETTERS RECEIVED OCT. 4 TO MAY 2**

**249**

**AVERAGE PACKAGES/LETTERS RECEIVED AT EAGLE MAIL CENTER PER DAY**

PACKAGES & LETTERS SCANNED IN PER DAY



## Camps & Conferences

- Residence Life was able to support a small conference program for Summer 2021. Due to less camps and conferences, we had a smaller student staff of five to six Summer Assistants.
- WIAA State Track Meet was held later from June 23-26. Divisions 3, 2, 1 were on 3 different days. We hosted volunteers and officials, but no athletes or coaches stayed on campus.
- Along with the Summer Assistants, Camps and Conferences were ran and managed by the Interim Coordinator for Operations and Conference Services, a Complex Director, and a Graduate Hall Director.





# FACILITIES

## Renovations

Summer 2021 we were able to re-engage in the planned (and encumbered) 2-phase renovation schedule for our 4 "small" traditional halls. Phase 1 renovations include fire/safety and electrical upgrades, upgrades to floor bathrooms including adding a gender inclusive bathroom to each floor. Phase 2 renovations are cosmetic improvements including furniture, paint, flooring, and lighting. Additionally, common use spaces are being configured and returned to student use (rather than extended housing). Much of the year was used to review furniture and flooring vendors to select the new look/feel of the residence halls.

- Phase 1 for Orris White Hall began January 2022
- Phase 2 for Laux Hall began May 2022

## Overall Improvement Projects

Providing students with the best living experience possible, Residence Life allocates a large percentage of time and financial resources to improving the physical facilities as much as possible. Beyond routine and preventative maintenance, we identified and implemented the following improvement projects this year:

- Unit ventilators in Drake and Coate
- Steam traps in Coate
- Wi-Fi upgrades in Angell, Drake, and Eagle
- Bottle filling station in Drake
- Heating modulation valves in Coate
- Conducted a feasibility study about placing solar panels on Laux Hall

# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

## Policy & Programming

- Updates to policies with the housing contract more clearly outlined the process, deadlines, and expectations for students needing mental health support as well as supporting minors on campus.
- A passive campaign called "Hurt Happened Here" was created and used to identify areas where a bias related incident occurred and to provide resources for support and opportunity to report.

## Presentations & Trainings

Residence Life provided on-site and local opportunities for full-time and student staff to attend workshops and trainings to advance our personal and professional growth and commitment to social justice and inclusion. Opportunities included:

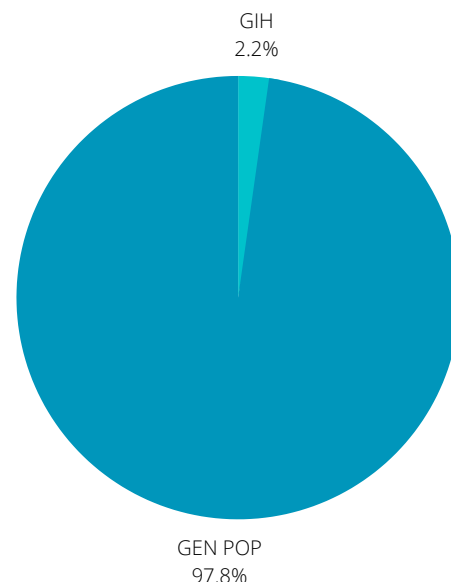
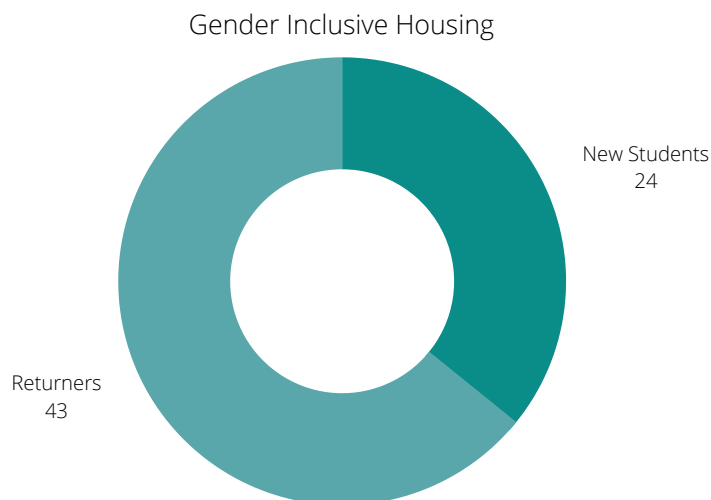
- Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Asexual College Conference (MBGLTACC)
- Fantastic Beasts and Where Not to Find Them (Disability Support Services course)
- Anti Defamation League Inclusive Policing training
- Anti Defamation League Introduction to Hate Crimes training
- Carlos Whittaker- training speaker
- White Privilege Symposium
- Civil Rights Pilgrimage

## Staffing

Recruitment for Resident Assistants for Inclusion was created to serve each hall community. The primary focus is to work collaboratively with their supervisor on in-hall social justice, inclusion and identify development initiatives.

## GIH

There were 67 residential students that opted into Gender Inclusive Housing this year.



# STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The ongoing development of staff is a priority for our department. This includes recruitment, selection, onboarding and ongoing training. Our in-hall team is vital to our success as a department as they work most directly with students. The Leadership Team is responsible for the development of the employees that report under their supervision.

## Student Staff

- The candidate pool (206) for Resident Assistants was fairly strong; 105 were selected as outstanding staff to join the team.
- Hired 50 Desk Assistants of which were mostly 1st year students.
- Residence Life staff continued to partner with the Career Center to bolster the use and effective service of the Eagle Advantage initiative. This will continue in 2022-2023.

## Professional Staff

Support for professional development and conference attendance continues to be strong as these opportunities were offered either in-person or virtually:

- Campus Connect, Suicide Prevention Workshop – All live-in student staff and live-in professional staff, Jordan Vlasak, Melissa Weaver, Patrick Heise, Lisa Weston, and Jenni Brundage
- Academic Success Institute (NASPA) – Reg Hawkins
- Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Asexual College Conference (MBLGTACC) – Haille Fleming and 24 student staff
- University of Northern Iowa RA Conference – Josh Zabel and 10 student staff
- Upper Midwest Region of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – Steph Lowe, Andie Coxey, Haille Fleming, Jordan Vlasak, Patrick Heise, Emily Hammell
- Professional Certification in College Student Wellbeing, Trauma, & Resilience through Florida State University – Alexis Bergstrom and Lisa Weston
- Student Affairs Assessment Leaders Course through Kent State University – Andie Coxey
- Title IX Training – Reg Hawkins
- White Privilege Symposium, La Crosse WI – Heidi Pullen, Patrick Heise, Haille Fleming, Todd Pyka, Lisa Weston and 9 student staff
- SSAFER Recovery Ally Training – Jordan Vlasak
- Leadercast – Patrick Heise and Lisa Weston

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

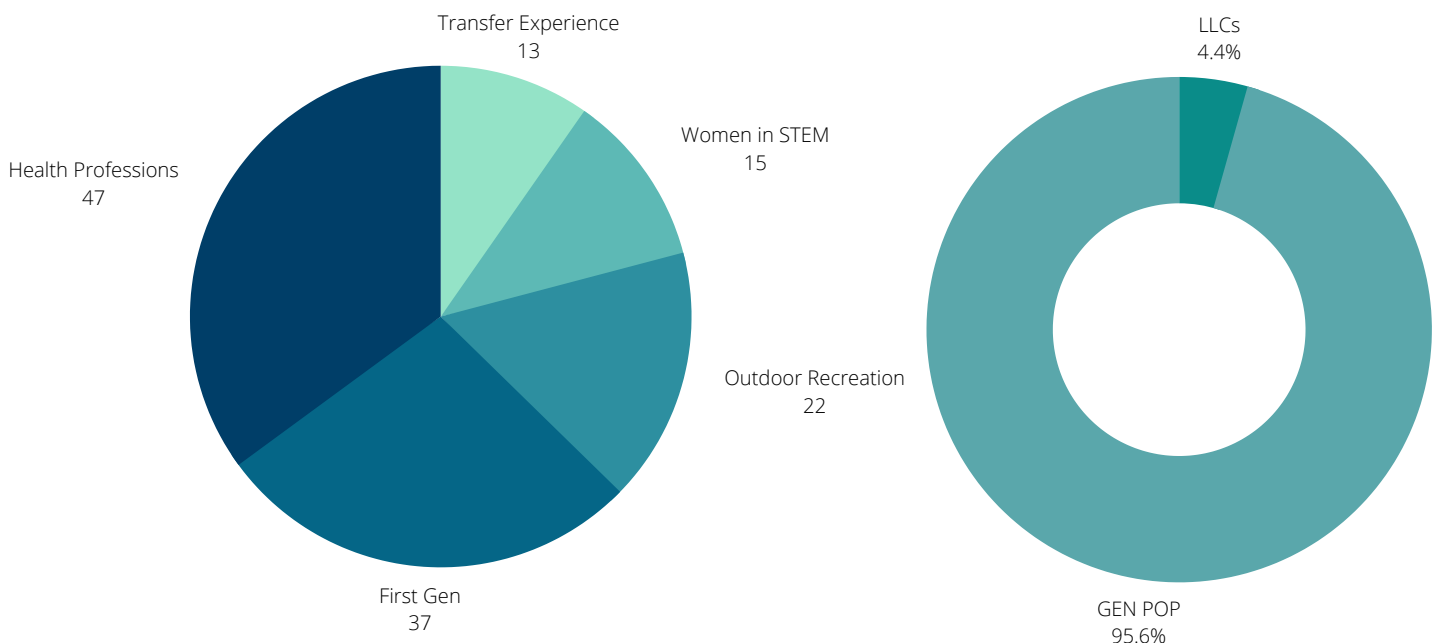
Community is at the core of how we create engaged communities for students that foster development and success. Residence Life staff is committed to developing intentional and individualized experiences for students.

## Living Learning Communities

In Fall 2021 the new **Women in STEM** Living Learning Community launched with a cohort of 15 residential students.

**Second Year Experience:** Knowing that second year students who have not declared a major are more likely to transfer or to not complete their degree, the goal of the program is to assist undecided second year students in finding their major, developing career goals, and creating a sense of belonging at UWL.

- This year 104 second year students were enrolled in the program with 51 of those students living in the residence halls.
- Programmatic highlights include: StrengthsQuest, headshots and resume review, finances and budget, wellness night, study abroad fair, registration assistance, and much more.
- Looking ahead: The Second Year Experience committee is excited to introduce a mentorship aspect to the program in Fall 2022 as well as creating an optional canvas course for the upcoming cohort.



## Director's Council

The mission of the Director's Council is to intentionally provide direct access to the Director of Residence Life for students to provide feedback and suggestions to improve the residential experience. Year two of Director's Council was unsuccessful. In the fall semester, the meetings were held every other week in person and added a way (via online form) to offer feedback without attending. Attendance declined in the spring semester, so the meetings were moved to every three weeks virtually. Attendance and feedback were minimal, hence establishing a "council" was not possible. Moving forward, a recommendation is to change the name and offer monthly community feedback meetings.

# SCHOLARSHIPS & FUNDING

Residence Life contributes annual funding towards the following positions at UWL:

- Assistant Dean of Students
- 2 Maintenance positions
- Wellness Coordinator
- ITS Desktop Technical Support
- ITS Enterprise Application Support
- Res Life Police Services

Residence Life annually funds a number of scholarships for UWL students:

- \$70,000 annually for Multicultural Validation Program Scholarships
- \$17,500 Admissions Housing Scholarships

# CHALLENGES

- Lingering responses to COVID-19 continued to tax our system; such as tracking vaccination status/negative tests for fall and spring move-in, changes in protocols, and lack of bed spaces for the spring semester.
- Although there were fewer cases of student conduct, University Police involvement increased due to more severe cases that required removal from the residence halls.
- Due to a staff vacancy, research, development, and initiating a departmental academic engagement plan did not progress until March 2022.
- Overall system procurement changes altered business and service practices for the department.



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Enhanced efficiencies within our data management system, Starrez. Platform hosting was migrated from UWL-premises hosted to cloud hosted. Benefits include: immediate access to new software features and ability to fix bugs/issues. Additionally, a report design module and a package tracking module were implemented.
- Committed to a 3-day Move-in experience. Students and their families provided positive feedback that smaller crowds caused less-stress and a warmer welcome to campus. This model will carry forward.

# 3.4

**AVERAGE GPA OF  
STUDENT STAFF**

# 60%

**IMPROVED STUDENT  
EMPLOYEE CAREER  
PREPAREDNESS USING "EAGLE  
ADVANTAGE" FRAMEWORK**

# 85%

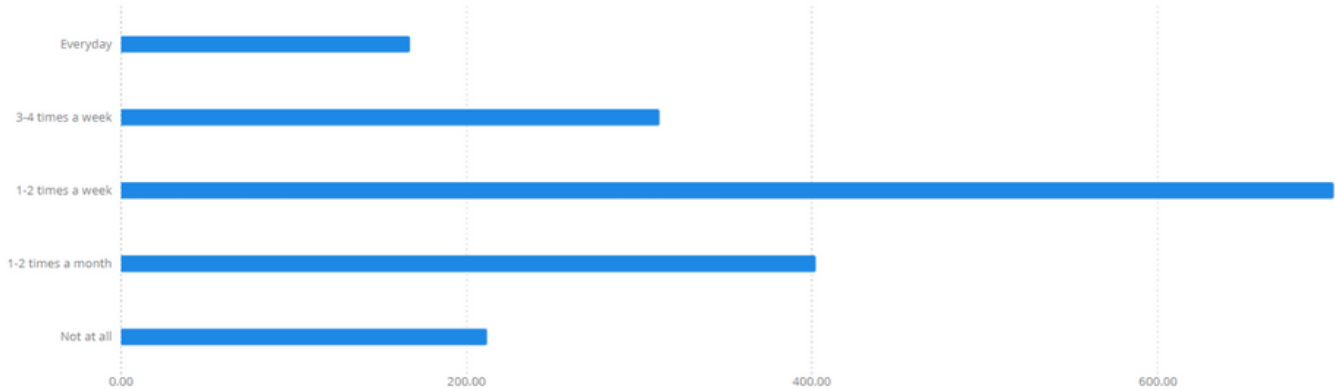
**OF THOSE WHO STATED IT AS  
A VALUE, FELT A SENSE OF  
BELONGING**



# ASSESSMENT

In November, a Student Satisfaction Survey was sent to residents. There were 1,986 respondents.

In an average week, how many times do you interact with your Resident Assistant (RA). ⓘ



How satisfied are you with your Resident Assistant regarding their: ⓘ



How well do each of the following statements represent how you feel about your residence hall floor? 1,918 ⓘ

