



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings from the Journal Board! My name is Phil Badaszewski, and I began my term as editor for *The Journal of College and University Student Housing* in January 2024. I've been in the field of housing and residence life since 2005 and have worked at several large and small institutions up and down the East Coast. I am a very proud Buckeye and Bulldog, earning my master's from The Ohio State University and doctorate from the University of Georgia. You'll find me passionately cheering for both teams on Saturdays in the fall as well as riding the excitement and let downs of being a Buffalo Bills fan. The beginning of my term as editor coincides with my new role as executive director of residence life and housing at the University of Delaware. I'm very excited to be a Blue Hen even if our colors (and football helmet design) happen to be very close to those of The Team Up North (TTUN).

Since this is my first Letter from the Editor, I thought I'd take the opportunity to change things up a bit. I'm truly honored to take the reins of the *Journal* and to carry on the legacies of Sarah Gordon and Suzanne Price, both of whom supported and cultivated my personal involvement in the *Journal*. As a career-long scholar-practitioner, I hope to bring a different eye to the work of the Journal Board and to my approach to each of these letters. Maybe this will encourage more readers to become researchers or even consider joining the Journal Board as a reviewer, which is how I began my tenure working with the *Journal* and my overall involvement in ACUHO-I.

The April 2024 issue of *The Journal of College and University Student Housing* covers a broad spectrum of topics from both student and staff perspectives. One manuscript, authored by Gudrun Nyunt, Yuan Zhou, and Emily Sandoval, was endorsed by the ACUHO-I Research Committee. Each manuscript provides us with different ways to question the work that we do and to reconsider so-called normal practice as housing and residence life professionals. My hope with this issue, and all future issues, is that

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The flow of this issue begins with the large-scale physical environment, shifts to a focus on staff, and closes by looking at experiences of undocumented students and rethinking the tried and true floor bulletin board. The first article, authored by Xinqi Guo, Renae Mantooth, Upali Nanda, and Lakshmi Chilukuri, investigates the relationship between hall design and depression in first-year students. The findings offer insights into the impact of physical residence hall design on student depression and reveal that satisfaction with the physical environment decreases feelings of depression. The second article, written by Gudrun Nyunt, Yuan Zhou, and Emily Sandoval, explores the well-being of residence life staff during the pandemic, how the pandemic exacerbated existing challenges, and how staff responded to those challenges. Although the pandemic was a difficult time for everyone, the results and implications provide opportunities for positive change to improve the experiences and retention of staff. Next, Christopher Toutain utilizes grounded theory to examine how resident directors navigate disability within their work. Toutain's findings point to conflicts between the resident directors' understanding of students with disabilities and overall disability identity and how institutions, and even departments, develop protocols and procedures. The implications that follow offer ideas for how supervisors and departments can offer professional development opportunities related to students with disabilities as well as how to better center the experiences of students with disabilities in overall practice. Next, Leslie Jo Shelton and Aubree D. Hughart-Thomas add to the important and growing research on undocumented students. They delve into how these students experience mattering and marginality within a residential campus as well as some of the barriers that might pre-

vent them from living in a residence hall or even fully engaging on campus. The results shed light on how financial and familial expectations as well as the logistics of travel can impact the engagement of undocumented students, and the authors offer a number of important implications to refine our practice. Daniel E. Becton and Erin Long close out this issue by helping us re-envision the ever-present residence hall bulletin board. The authors engage in participatory action research through a photovoice methodology that shifts power from researcher to participant. The results that emerged break down the norms of how housing professionals might think about and structure bulletin boards as learning opportunities and show tangible ways that students can learn from what has long been thought of as only passive programming.

I am so grateful to the work of our volunteers in putting together this and every issue of *The Journal of College and University Student Housing*. Although the process begins with our brilliant authors, our process begins with the work of our incredible reviewers. Peer review is essential to our process, and we would not be able to have that without our reviewers. Our associate editors help to refine and streamline the work of their review teams before moving the accepted manuscripts to our dedicated copy editor, Christine Freeman, and graphic designer, Ellen Gray, both of whom quickly make everything publication ready. Many thanks to Camille Perlman and James Baumann in the ACUHO-I Central Office for keeping all of us on track and serving as a consistent resource, particularly during times of transition. I hope that you enjoy all the articles in this issue. Consider using the discussion questions to provide ready-made professional development conversations during your next staff meeting, or do as I do and forward an article or two on to your staff to help them begin to think differently about the ways we have always done things. I look forward to many more letters to open future issues of the *Journal* and wish you a successful fall semester. I close the best and only way I can, Go Bucks and Go Dawgs!

Phil Badaszewski, Editor

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