



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings ACUHO-I, I know we have all embarked on the fall semester, and I hope your year is off to a smooth start. We have definitely had some unexpected rough air at the University of Delaware (UD) and have needed to lean in on heavy support for our students and staff. If your campus is working through some tough situations, then my hope is that you will find some new perspectives and insights in this issue of the *Journal*. I know I did! I also want to take a second to acknowledge the work of countless housing professionals across North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida in supporting students, families, and their communities through the devastating cleanup after Hurricane Helene.

This issue begins with a focus on resident assistants (RAs) and residential students and then shifts to entry-level staff and concludes with a big picture view of the physical environment. Our first two articles focus on the experiences of resident assistants. Funded in part by ACUHO-I and the ACUHO-I Foundation, Patty Witkowsky and Megan Bell shed light on the perspectives of resident assistant engagement with the diversity and social justice components of residential curricula. As we begin to review our own curriculum at UD, Witkowsky and Bell provide guidance and caution for hiring and training resident assistants as well as for practitioners managing their curriculum. Next, Nicholas Blair and Rishi Sriram provide statistical insights on a crucial function of residence life – resident assistant selection. Blair and Sriram ground their RA effectiveness instrument in Bolman and Deal's four frames of leadership, provide data on a highly reliable and valid instrument, and share how RA effectiveness impacts residential student involvement. If your campus is anything like mine, then our third article, from Dayna Weintraub, Joan Collier, Justin Kelley, Amy Miele, and Florence Hamrick, about supporting students on the autism spectrum is arriving right on time. The authors not only contextualize students on the spectrum but also provide insights and recommendations for physical space, programming, and how to help this population find their place within the residential community.

Viewpoints articles provide a scholarly summary and examination of a topic important to housing professionals, paying special attention to implications for practice. Our 2024 Viewpoints article from Craig Seager helps us revisit a 2008 report related

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to the recruitment and retention of entry-level professionals, which revealed that perception did not match reality regarding staff recruitment and retention. Of course, much has changed since then. Seager provides timely critical analysis and solutions around issues that I know are impacting UD and so many other housing departments nationwide. Finally, we close out this issue looking at the macro level of residential colleges. Lara Lomicka and Logan Lebron take us around the country to literally map residential colleges and the services they offer. The authors compile useful information for practitioners looking to build, expand, or just learn more about residential colleges.

Many thanks to our reviewers and associate editors who give their time in support of each and every author that submits a manuscript. Thanks to our dedicated copy editor, Christine Freeman, and graphic designer, Ellen Gray, both of whom quickly make everything publication ready. Thanks to Camille Perlman and James Baumann in the ACUHO-I Central Office for supporting the *Journal* and our ongoing enhancements. 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 send articles to staff and colleagues to better support your students. Go Bucks and Go Dawgs!

Phil Badaszewski, Editor

The Journal of College and University Student Housing

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