OVERVIEW
The department of Housing and Residence Life (HRL) had a very productive year, providing a high quality living learning experience to approximately 1,200 WSU students. This is our highest occupancy in over six years and we are excited to have already surpassed that number for the upcoming 2018-19 academic year as well. This constant growth in the demand for student housing has led to a few growing pains along the way, but our department has navigated these rapid changes in in a team-oriented and student-centered manner. As our mission statement articulates, we are committed to continuing to provide students with a safe and inclusive community that promotes personal and academic success.

The 2017-18 academic year included some major changes for Housing and Residence Life. Some significant milestones include:

- Fairmount Towers was taken offline, effective July 2017- at that time HRL entered into an agreement to lease The Flats at WSU as a replacement facility. The Flats was revamped to serve as a residence hall, with many single rooms being converted to doubles in order to accommodate all the residents originally assigned to Fairmount Towers.
- Housing application numbers continued to grow throughout the summer, which led to our residence halls being over capacity for the Fall semester. HRL managed the situation through the implementation of an expanded occupancy plan which involved creating temporary spaces in our larger residential units throughout Shocker Hall.
- Revision of the Living Learning Communities program-introduction of the Pre-Medical Professions LLC and the restructuring of the LLC student staff to include Community Development Specialists and RAs, and no longer have Peer Academic Leaders.
- The creation of 7 HRL Work Groups with the task of documenting and improving procedures/policies around the following functional areas:
  - Emergency Procedures
  - Marketing Plan
  - Annual Calendar
  - Communication Plan
  - Occupancy Work Flow
  - Opening and Closing
  - Strategic Plan

In addition, each of our internal department units had a banner year with many accomplishments to celebrate. Below is information about our three areas: Facilities, Residence Life, and Business Operations.
HRL’s Business Operations consists of five functional areas: Reception, Accounting, Marketing and Outreach, Housing Assignments, and Human Resources. In addition, many other daily administrative tasks that are needed for a department to run efficiently fall in to this area’s purview. The 2017-18 Academic year has been one of rapid growth and change, leading to the need for a great deal of adaptability.

Below are some highlights of the year:

- Finished Implementation of StarRez software (Summer 2017 was first semester that billing was transitioned into this system).
- Transitioned fully from Sodexo to Chartwells Dining Service Provider.
- Refreshed design of brochure, to continue utilization as primary recruitment material for new/transfer students.
- The decision to take Fairmount Towers offline and transition The Flats into university housing in mid-July resulted in:
  - Restructure/Redesign of bedrooms at The Flats in order to accommodate Fairmount residents
  - 397 students reassigned rooms from Fairmount Towers to The Flats (total building capacity rested at 403 throughout the academic year); as well as reassignment of all meal plans from Fairmount plans to The Flats plans.
  - Re-alignment/transfer of Fairmount Towers budget lines to newly created budget lines for The Flats.
  - Re-alignment of Human Resources/Payroll information from Fairmount Towers to The Flats for all department staff.
  - Relocation of the HRL Central office from Fairmount Towers to The Flats (including our maintenance/grounds operations relocating primarily to Shocker Hall).
  - Creation of Triple Rooms due to Over Capacity.
  - Designed capacity for 2017-2018 was 1184; on Move-in Day we had reservations for 1252 residents (occupancy was at 105.7%). This resulted in:
  - Creation of 82 expanded occupancy spaces (either as a triple in a “double” bedroom space, or an additional space in a common living area of a private style suite).
  - Students and roommates in these expanded occupancy spaces received a daily reduction of their room cost upon the temporary resident moving-out to a new room location.
  - Some students (approximately 32) remained in expanded occupancy spaces through until the end of the fall 2017 semester when they were finally relocated into rooms vacated for spring 2018.

In addition to all the work accomplished due to this year’s unique circumstances, the Business Operations team handled the day-to-day tasks and kept the department running effectively.

Below are some of the annual numbers for our most common requests from students:

- Room Change Requests: 54
- Meal Plan Change Requests: 65
- Exemption Requests: 876
- Contract Cancellation Requests: 561
- Appeals Reviewed by HRL Appeals Committee/Administration: 4
Like all areas within HRL, this year in Residence Life was defined by change. With the significant shift from Fairmount Towers (a traditional semi-suite style residence hall) to The Flats at WSU (a new apartment style building), community development looked and felt different. The nine staff members of The Flats navigated this challenge throughout the year by adapting their community development style to the needs of residents in this new environment. While involvement may have looked different, the staff successfully found ways to involve residents in ways that matter, leading to overall satisfied residents. Shocker Hall too experienced significant change, with changes to Living Learning Communities (LLCs), both in name and in structure. This year 6 LLCs were led by traditional Peer Academic Leaders (PALs) in addition to a Resident Assistant (RA), while 4 were led by new “Thematic RAs”. This new combined position performed all duties of both positions, and oversaw the 4 LLCs not tied directly to LLCs. The success of this new position led to the decision to implement Thematic RAs in all LLCs moving forward, known now as LLC RAs. Residence Life Professional Staff positions also experienced significant change this year, with Shocker Hall and The Flats both led by returning Residence Life Coordinators (RLCs) but in new buildings. The Assistant RLC (ARLC) for Shocker Hall, the RLC for Camps and Conferences, and Associate Director for Residence Life (ADRL) positions were all filled by new staff members.

Here are some of Residence Life’s overall highlights:

- Communities were led by 4 RLCs, 1 ARLC, 1 Desk Manager, 28 RAs, 6 PALs, and 6 Desk Assistants (DAs).
- Transitioned Information Desk staffing to include RAs and PALs working shifts in addition to DAs, resulting in higher RA/PAL engagement with residents.
- Successfully founded a new student activities board for The Flats, the Flats Activities Board (FAB). FAB was able to keep attendance at events high throughout the year all the way to the end of year Carnival.
- Brought the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) back to WSU for the first time in recent memory with the founding of the new Shockers Chapter. 8 students made up the inaugural membership, with an additional 2 students being inducted at the end of the year.
- 55 students applied for RA positions for 2018-2019, more than 3 times the number of open positions. More than half of current RAs/PALs applied to return to an RA position.
- Implemented new committee structures, with 4 committees led by RLCs & the ADRL comprised mostly of RAs.
- Partnered with University Police, Student Health, Student Involvement, Dining Services, Campus Recreation, Counseling and Testing Center, and more areas on campus to offer engaging educational opportunities for residents.
- Revamped the Camps & Conference program to make Shocker Hall the primary offering for all interested groups, and initiated a new contract system resulting in a more efficient and accountable camp and conference program for all involved.
- Laid the groundwork for a new residential curriculum model designed to provide comprehensive out-of-classroom learning and involvement for all residents across campus.
FACILITIES
THE POWER IS IN THE PEOPLE

The personnel team that supports our residence hall and apartment facilities consists of over 30 HRL-employed staff members, WSU physical plant services, and over 30 privately-owned and local contractors and vendors. Our day-to-day work is accomplished by a mix of full-time, benefited staff (10), temporary/seasonal employees (up to 4), part-time student employees, 2 supervisors and 1 associate director. The team is organized into three areas: (1) maintenance and grounds, (2) custodial, and (3) facilities planning and management.

The 2017-18 fiscal year presented a great deal of changes to the mix of the physical facilities that our team managed and operated out of. The two main changes that took place were (1) the completion of a new 300+ bed apartment complex and (2) the planned demolition of Fairmount Towers (600+ capacity bed facility). Because of this, there was a transfer of the physical location of our main Housing & Residence Life office and our Facilities Maintenance plant operations. The bulk of the maintenance operation moved to the basement of Shocker Hall and the central business office of our department to The Flats at WSU. These moves presented great opportunities for our entire staff to be closer to the heart of campus, giving us a greater opportunity to connect with the campus community. Our maintenance team organizes their labor by way of work order (maintenance request). In order to best serve our campus community and staff, HRL facilities utilizes Schooldude software to submit, assign and track maintenance work progress. The use of this software also assists in following up with chronic issues that may arise. Labor and material costs are also able to be tracked and job performance is also monitored using the Schooldude maintenance system.

FACILITIES BY THE NUMBERS

A total of 4,074 work orders have been requested and completed by our facilities maintenance team (compared with 5,119 last fiscal year – a 20% drop). This past year work order rate was just over 11 work orders per day on average - drop of 3 per day from last year. The drop is a result of not bearing the operating overhead of Fairmount Towers - which had over 2,000 work orders requested and completed during the last fiscal year – about 5.5 per day compared with the Flats which has less than 3 per day.

Work orders include those requested from staff and residents who live or work in Shocker Hall and The Flats. Included in the scope of our facility-services responsibility is our residential dining facility - Shocker Dining (the food service facility operated by Chartwells) and the main office and student space for the Dorothy & Bill Cohen Honors College.

THE COMMENDABLE CUSTODIAL TEAM

One of the key components to a successful community is the upkeep of the environment the community exists in – in this case the overall appearance of Shocker Hall and The Flats. Our custodial team takes great pride in maintaining the overall appearance of the facilities. This year, the custodial team underwent some significant changes related to the structure of the supervision of their area. The department consolidated supervision of the custodial area from 2 supervisors to just one. The decision to consolidate this responsibility was due to the need to be efficient in labor and other operational expenses. Jose Alonso, HRL team member for over 6 years, was selected to lead the custodial team and navigate through the opening and operation of the new apartment complex, The Flats. Our custodial team continues to train and learn new crafts. Each full-time team member is encouraged to learn new trades and take on new project work. Supervision and leadership opportunities are a focus of the custodial area to develop team members’ abilities in the workplace. When preparing work schedules for the team, the more skills and abilities that team members are trained on the more varied the projects each team member can complete are – breaking up the mundane in the process! Cross-training is an essential part of how our HRL custodial team serves our residents.
WE LOVE FEEDBACK!

The facilities team is always looking for ways of improving our services. The best way to determine if our current services and processes are successful is by evaluating our resident satisfaction survey results from the EBI survey given to residents each year. This year, our survey results were collected further into the school year to get a better gauge of the overall residential experience, as opposed to the first impression. Decisions about what services to provide and where to focus our efforts come from the results of this survey - including but not limited to our shuttle services, cable television services, and Wi-Fi internet services. The more we can hear from our residents directly, the better!

Overall, our residents were satisfied with our performance in the facilities area. There were minor fluctuations from the past academic year (16-17) to the academic year that just concluded in May 2018 (AY 2017-18). Some of the biggest drops in resident satisfaction were in the area of cable TV services (-11%), cleanliness of common areas (-6%), cleaning staff (-5%) and study facilities (-4%). Overall, residents were satisfied with the components in the survey related to facility services and staff.

There were some statistically significant differences in satisfaction between those residents who live at The Flats compared with those that lived at Shocker Hall. Flats residents had much lower satisfaction with cable services than those at Shocker Hall – this is easily explained with the fact that only streaming services were available in apartment units and cable was only available in one common area (13% difference). Satisfaction with laundry facilities was much higher at the Flats – a result of residents at the Flats having access to a washer and dryer within their apartment suite (28% difference). Internet connectivity was an issue with residents at the Flats compared with those at Shocker Hall (20% difference).

Other Facilities projects either completed, in progress or planned for the future:

- A new sound and paging system was installed in Shocker Dining prior to 2017-18 academic year. This allows for great opportunities with programming and adds ambience to the dining experience.
- Our Shocker Hall custodial team introduced a new “Team Clean” concept that has reduced the time it takes to clean all common areas in Shocker Hall including the Groundhouse and the Shocker Dining facility.
- Shocker Hall office space remodel is presently being bid on for construction completion in September of 2018. This would involve relocating all central office staff members to Shocker Hall A building.
- The removal of asbestos in Fairmount Towers complex is currently in progress with completion set for September 2018. The demolition of the complex is planned to occur soon after the safe removal of asbestos materials.
In conclusion, Housing and Residence Life has continued to see significant improvements each year in the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes and programs. We are proud of the direction our department is heading and hope to continue creating positive student experiences within our residence halls. We believe that we are truly living out our values of engagement, inclusion, collaboration, excellence, and integrity.