

Annual Summary Report for 2020-2021

(Multiple acronyms are used within this document. See page 7 for the acronym key.)

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

University Housing programs and services are multifaceted and immense. In 2020-2021, many changes were forced upon the 680 full-time employees that ensure Housing provides outstanding services to residence hall and apartment residents and families, dining and catering customers, as well as the myriad of parents/families and visitors.

Under COVID-19, Housing's performance was consistently above and beyond all expectations. For further details of the COVID-19 emergency response, see the supplemental material uploaded for section 2 in webtools. Some highlights of the 2020-2021 academic year are listed below.

- Redesigned the undergraduate residence hall move-in experience by collaborating with campus units to offer a centralized move-in experience at the State Farm Center. This approach provided a one-stop service where residents picked up their iCard and residence hall keys after completing their first campus saliva-based COVID-19 test. Residents and families were impressed with the organization and ease of the check-in process. The lessons learned will be applied to the 2021-2022 centralized move-in experience.
- RL staff kept residents engaged through creative programming and ongoing community building. Student meetings with staff shifted to interactive virtual formats and small outdoor events.
- Fifty-four residents enrolled in the DS "Inclusive Solutions" program, a special diet and meal accommodation program led by the Housing registered dietitian. An additional seven students requested special meals while in quarantine. As part of the services provided, 3,612 allergy-friendly or special diet meal orders were fulfilled last year.
- Of the 680 full-time employees, 85.5% (581) worked onsite and in person. There were 99 staff who requested to work remotely which is 14.5% of the total full-time work force.
- All staff completed equity and inclusion training, Title IX and ethics training.
- All full-time DS management staff were 100% ServSafe® certified.
- University Housing employed and provided a valuable experience and extensive employment opportunities to 1,797 undergraduate and graduate students.
- The "Everybody Eats" initiative was launched to address food insecurity. Students using the everybodyeats@illinois.edu email received a reply with locations of current hot boxes for free daily soup and rice. The intent of the collaborative program with Bevier Café is to provide a discreet way for University community members to obtain a hot meal. More information may be found here: <https://housing.illinois.edu/Dining/About-Dining/Everybody%20Eats>
- Completed upgrades to the online Housing contracting portal with an increase in digital forms to better serve customers.
- Marketing collaborated with RL staff to pilot the functionality of "groups" in the Illinois App.
- DS staff fed customers under on-going pandemic protocols and successfully collaborated to launch a mobile ordering platform "order ahead" on the Illinois app for service at FAR and 57 North (SDRP). This collaboration involved SA Technology, Housing marketing and DS to create an interface with the TouchNet POS system that directly supports CBORD which ensures accurate menu maintenance and product inventory.
- The newly renovated ISR dining center and Townsend Hall opened in fall 2020. Although there was a construction delay due to COVID-19 protocols, the new space opened on time and as planned.



2020-2021 Financial accomplishments and challenges

Significant challenges arise when operating in crisis response mode over an extended period. Near the end of FY20, on June 18, 2020, the University announced students may choose to attend classes online for fall 2020. At the fall 10th day of instruction, the number of students living in the undergraduate and graduate residence halls was 5,336 - 67% of capacity. Through the fall semester, occupancy dropped as low as 63%. University Housing apartment occupancy, although lower than past years, was 78% occupied on 10th day.

With COVID-19, University Housing realized a revenue loss of \$25.6 million in FY20 and budgeted a deficit of \$28.3 million for FY21. Income estimates were reduced to reflect decreased occupancies for room and board, apartment rent, catering activity and canceled summer conferences. Although FY21 financials are *not final*, current estimates show an overall deficit of \$25 - \$26 million. Housing received \$17.5 million in COVID-19 relief funding in June, reducing the deficit to approximately \$8 million. The Housing operational fund balance will be used to offset this ending deficit.

University alumnae and former Residential Life staff member, Marilyn Michal, gifted \$1.7M to University Housing to fund student scholarships and awards for the Central Black Student Union, the National Residence Hall Honorary and further cultivate University Housing student-centered experiences.

The Innovation Living Learning Community students will benefit from an \$80,000 gift (\$4,000 per semester for 10 years) to support student projects through micro-grants.

Working with digital technology

Generation Z (individuals born between 1997 and 2012) reflects the age of current and future undergraduate and graduate residence hall occupants, which is the largest Housing customer base. As digital natives, Gen Z have never known life without digital technologies. This shift in consumer behavior has provided opportunities and challenges in how local, regional, national and international communications about services, events or options are executed. The rapid shifts of information and knowledge has changed how staff work across the department, whether the information shared across the social networks is accurate or not.

Technology continued to impact the department's daily work as campus moved to a hybrid work environment while also adapting to abrupt policy changes and directives at all hours. The social impacts of technology were made more complex with the immediate knowledge and awareness of challenging and traumatic world events. In the past year, staff and residents were coping with the unprecedented trauma related to the pandemic, racial unrest, mass shootings, national political structures, etc.

Using technology as a beneficial tool to inform and increase the customer base, Housing made the commitment to prioritize and pilot digital marketing strategies. Some of the efforts and results included:

- Launched the residence hall Housing hub in January 2021, which features a digital housing guide, 360-degree room tours, FAQ videos and Zoom chats. See the number of views in the chart below. The apartment Housing hub was launched in April 2021 and features 360-degree apartment tours and a roommate bulletin board.
- Strategically placed messages on the channels used by the target audiences like Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Message examples include Housing sign-up (renewal process) and new contracts, apartment renewal or new leases, RA recruitment and Housing scholarships and awards.
- Saved printing (\$43,000) and postage (\$17,000) dollars by converting to cost-effective digital marketing.
- Used Illinois email addresses and audience demographics to strategically target and serve Google ads and social media ads.
- Evaluated metrics and pivoted to target and engaged customers which resulted in higher conversion rates (the percentage user actions taken after total clicks on a display ad or other digital asset).

Marketing metrics -Residence Hall Housing Hub

	Number of views		Number of views
Residence hall Housing hub (overall)	20,949	FAQ video	3,459
360-degree room tours	5,716	Housing zoom chat	2,000 participants



Marketing metrics

Intentional Google retargeting, search, and geo fencing ads including the goal of a .12% click-through rate (CTR) or higher.	Number of impressions/views
RA recruitment campaign	28,855
Housing sign-up campaign	87,730
Apartment new lease campaign	9,885 (CTR .27%)
Housing scholarships and awards campaign	27,805 (CTR .16%)
Apartment new lease search	1,929 (CTR 5.65%)
Hall videos on channels Housing hub, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube	52,787 views
Marketing videos on channels Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube	24,326 views
Mass email	46% average open rate (Rate range 22%-65%)
Print QR codes	501 scans

ASSESSMENT

Anti-racism series

RL and FGH staff participated in a learning series and project that examined the concepts of anti-blackness and anti-racism, and took the step of examining policies, procedures, programs and staffing patterns to identify potential changes to recommend interrupting systemic racism. The work specifically examined paraprofessional staff recruitment and hiring, student policies in Hallmarks, administrative policies, use of funds and purchasing practices and the residential curriculum. Work will continue through summer and fall 2021.

Residence Hall Library usage

Opened the remodeled ISR library in fall 2020 in the lower level of the facility. Over 900 visits were recorded for the fall semester, with just slightly fewer loans than the previous ISR library during a fully occupied fall 2019. The Ikenberry Library recorded just over 500 visitors for fall 2020, with loans (615) decreasing to about one-third of the number of 2019 loans (1,954). Both library locations were not open evenings and weekends due to staffing budget reductions. DVDs, science fiction-fantasy, games and mystery-thrillers continue as the top categories borrowed from the collections. At the close of the year, the most popular loanable items were technology items (cell phone chargers, external disc drives, over the ear headphones, HDMI cables) and games (board and video).

Learn more: Click to read the assessment committee update presented February 2, 2021.

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Housing Student Organization Engagement

The RL assessment committee, a subgroup of the residential curriculum team, surveyed student leaders in spring 2021 to examine how Housing student organizations were functioning during the pandemic. Forty (40) student leaders responded to the survey from 32 organizations. Student organizations spent a fraction of their programming budgets (average of \$354 in the fall 2020 compared to \$1767 in fall 2019) yet continued to meet virtually. Zoom was the preferred method (85%) to keep organizations active. Student leaders (93.3%) communicated organizations met their fall 2020 goals for building community, funding events, helping residents make friends and/or being a support system. The Latino/a Student Association (LSA) and Men of Impact (MOI) were most engaged when comparing membership, attendance and utilizing event funds.

Learn more: Click to read the assessment committee update presented March 2, 2021.

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Residential Curriculum – The Illinois Residential Experience - iConvo #3: Social Justice Exploration learning goals

RAs from RL and the GUD halls conducted intentional conversations with their residents throughout the year as part of the residential curriculum. The third conversation of the year is a dialogue about social justice exploration, values



exploration and finding community. The assessment team, under the residential curriculum, gathered the results to be shared in preparation for the 2021-2022 academic year. The results found that COVID-19 had an impact on residents' abilities to visit spaces (i.e. cultural houses), connect with other students with whom they identify culturally and even have knowledge of those resources. Overall, RAs who identified as being from a minoritized identity asked more in-depth questions and were more confident having dialogue about identity development than their white peers. Residents in general were more easily able to discuss issues of gender and race than they were to discuss ability, status or nationality. Implications for the curriculum, as well as RA training were presented by the committee to the units to consider.

[Learn more:](#) Click to read the assessment committee update presented May 4, 2021.

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Family and Graduate Housing – Orchard Downs Preschool Assessment

Parents of dependents in the FGH apartment communities were surveyed to facilitate a comparative analysis of local childcare facilities. The findings indicate a demand for the FGH preschool and interest in a program that operates 12 months of the year. The survey results supported the preschool continuing to offer a full day class only. If staffing and enrollment increase significantly this decision can be revisited.

[Learn more:](#) Click to read the preschool assessment report from March 2021.

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EQUITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE

The University Housing director of Inclusion and Talent Development (ITD) led several efforts this past year.

- Conducted department wide antiracism, equity and inclusion training with both online and on-site platforms, netting 100% staff participation.
- Chaired the Housing inclusion committee which is spearheading a department-wide climate assessment in 2021-2022. As part of the committee's work, FGH staff reviewed the educational benchmarking survey data to diversity and inclusion question responses from Housing apartment respondents.
- Engaged Housing staff, alumni and faculty through a steering committee to reimagine the multicultural advocate position in Housing.
- Conducted dining services focused training on managers' leading an inclusive work culture, bias, bystander intervention and dialogue facilitation.
- Conducted staff learning series after RL audit with the antiracism focus.
- Engaged students through an identity-based student group.
- Supported Housing staff with follow-up dialog sessions as staff participated in the United Way of Illinois Equity Challenge. Several staff across the department signed up for this challenge.
- Engaged on campus-level committees including the antiracism summer series and the chancellor's antiracism task force.

Additional units in Housing focused on equity and inclusion.

- FGH leadership staff read "How to be an Antiracist," by Ibram X. Kendi, and met to discuss as a team.
- FGH staff attended campus training, like "Untaught Racism."
- RL and FGH collaborated to examine policy and procedures through an antiracist lens.
- DS staff provided education and training to staff related to food insecurity to align with the implementation of the "Everybody Eats" program. [Learn more:](#) About the Everybody Eats program <https://housing.illinois.edu/Dining/About-Dining/Everybody%20Eats>
- DS is intentionally examining the representation of student staff supervisors to ensure a balance of perspectives, as well as encouraging international students to apply.

One outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic is the shift to a heightened consideration of work vs. homelife demands.

Employees who were unable to work (on-site or telework) due to COVID-19 received up to 80 hours of emergency sick leave and expanded family and medical leave benefits through the FFCRA. This provision included 2/3 regular pay in lieu of using personal vacation or sick leave benefits. Working remotely or off-site is not an option for many Housing employees specifically in DS, Housing Facilities, FGH and RL due to the on-site nature of their work. The FFCRA benefits



and the University's COVID-19 quarantine benefits provided for the continuation of pay and benefit earning to employees unable to work on site or telework due to COVID-19. The FFCRA prevented the loss of income, the depletion of personal benefits and/or the loss of employment for employees who were required to quarantine or isolate, care for family members required to quarantine or isolate and to care for children unable to attend in-person school or daycare.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

As COVID-19 dominated the department, the campus and the world, a variety of collaborations held the department together. Housing leadership served and continue to serve the campus on several key committees, as well as led or participated in many other collaborative efforts over the past year.

- Executive director appointed to multiple COVID-19 focused committees and teams across campus:
 - Provost's COVID-19 contingency planning taskforce
 - Chancellor's COVID-19 return to on-campus operations committee
- RL director serving on COVID-19 focused committees and teams across campus:
 - Campus infectious disease work group (weekly meetings in response to COVID-19 pandemic)
 - University life subcommittee of the COVID-19 on-campus steering committee
- HI&M director appointed to campus SHIELD target committee.
- Senior AD for HHR appointed to COVID-19 focused committees and work groups across campus:
 - COVID-19 committee for return to on-campus operations-human resources and staff committee
 - COVID-19 future of work group
- Senior AD for HI&M appointed to COVID-19 campus communications group.
- Multiple units collaborated to establish and implement quarantine and isolation practices for Housing and private certified housing operations, including fraternity and sorority houses with Q/I operations crossing certified housing and community housing. These Q/I collaborations include:
 - HI&M and Housing facilities directors were on the Q/I transportation workgroup.
 - QIPS system collaboration between SATech, AHW, Housing, HHR, IHR, CUPHD.
 - Collaborated with Illini Union to house Q/I students.
- Housing asked by SHIELD Committee to serve as a Q&I location for off-campus students in two residence halls.
- SA Technology and campus Technology Services collaborated with Housing on multiple levels – testing, Q/I, Safer Illinois app, etc.
- Housing HR and IHR-LER negotiated with employee groups to establish flexible work schedules and other changes during the pandemic.
 - Approval received on March 19, 2020, for flexibility of work schedules, work location and type of work for SEIU employees in DS and Housing facilities.
 - Approval received on March 25, 2020, for flexible drivers' schedules for Teamsters #26 employees.
 - Approval received on April 13, 2020, for flexible and rotating work schedules to cover evenings and weekends for Housing maintenance inspectors (IUOE local #399).
 - COVID-19 premium pay was negotiated with the following employee groups when working on quarantine or isolation locations: SEIU-BSW and DS staff, IUOE local #399-MI staff, IBEW #51-WSO staff.
 - Negotiations were not necessary for other employee groups to receive premium pay like trades or open range employees.
- RL and SA Tech staff members developed the employee testing compliance data repository.
- DS collaborated with the ACES pilot plant to create hand sanitizer and a specialized cookie with the Illinois logo.
- Housing continues to collaborate with the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Conflict Resolution and multiple other campus departments like Public Affairs and the campus communication officers group. These collaborations multiplied over the last year.
- SEIU and Housing collaborated to conduct the DS annual staff bid process via Zoom.
- DS collaborated with Illinois State University to host two dietetic interns.
- DS collaborated with IHR and campus wellness office to provide targeted training to management staff.
- FSHN and DS collaborated to judge student projects for the senior capstone project program.
- DS trainer collaborated to teach a virtual cooking class offered at the ARC.



- Executive director serves on multiple committees and teams across campus:
 - Parking advisory committee
 - Faculty/staff assistance services advisory
 - Space work team
 - Coordinated community response team steering committee
- Housing “Everybody Eats,” and the FSHN “Everybody Eats at Bevier Café” are joining efforts to benefit both food insecurity programs.

Learn more: Housing’s expertise in planning and crisis response uniquely positioned the organization to serve as a leader in many COVID-19 collaborations. In many cases, University Housing was documenting procedures (e.g. Q&I) and asked for guidance in preparation for and in advance of campus level decisions. These procedures or templates were shared with campus partners within SA and PCH to assist with consistent and efficient implementation across campus. Housing’s communications team worked daily with Public Affairs and campus communicators to reinforce and disseminate health and safety information. Staff collaborated with Facilities & Services and CU- Mass Transit District to plan and implement transportation for students to isolation and quarantine. Within FGH, staff regularly met with representatives from DCFS, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Emergency Management Association, CUPHD and the IBHE to provide services to residents and customers of the Orchard Downs Preschool. In some cases, Housing’s intimate connection to the daily needs and behaviors of residents allowed an opportunity to recommend new campus procedures where none existed. Lastly, staff assigned to Housing from SA Tech contributed to several campus level COVID-19 response initiatives regarding technology.

FACILITIES

University Housing scheduled and completed projects with planned project costs totaling over \$87M. Included in these projects is the ISR major renovation of the dining center and renovations of Townsend and Wardall Halls. Also included is the phase 3 of the Orchard Downs apartments, building #775. This remodel includes 16 apartments in which one 1-bedroom apartment is fully ADA compliant. During FY21, the Orchard Downs Community Center renovation project was placed on hold with no new date determined to continue the project.

The Facilities Planning staff were actively involved in determining appropriate occupancy levels within all Housing shared spaces during COVID-19 following the University standards. While many office conference rooms were not used during the pandemic, the occupancy limits were very helpful for students within the residence halls and apartment communities.

As a result of COVID-19, 30 projects in the LRFMP were cancelled. Several project teams delayed work during the pandemic. A summary of the FY21 completed facilities projects are listed in the table on page 7.



FY21 University Housing Completed Facilities Projects			
Location	Description	Cost	
Illinois Street RH	ISR Major renovation of Dining	\$77,550,000	
Orchard Downs	Major remodel - phase 3 of 11 - bldg 775	\$3,050,000	
	Bonds & Reserves Subtotal		\$80,600,000
Ashton Woods Apartments	AW window treatments	\$12,500	
Ashton Woods Apartments	AW Community Building furniture	\$7,500	
Bousfield RH	Bousfield RD apt and office modification	\$5,000	
Busey- Evans RH	Lounge furniture repairs	\$5,000	
Busey- Evans RH	Wireless - fill in upgrades	\$150,000	
Florida Avenue RH	FAR kitchen online ordering	\$3,000	
Ikenberry- Weston and Hopkins Halls	Window treatments for Weston and Hopkins	\$3,000	
Illinois Street RH - Dining	Dining- FFE	\$2,000,000	
Illinois Street RH - Townsend Hall	Townsend student room furniture & mattresses	\$890,000	
Orchard Downs	Student room flooring (24 apts @ Orchard South)	\$192,000	
Orchard Downs	Window treatments	\$12,500	
SDRP	Treatment of flags w/fire retardant	\$5,000	
SDRP	Installation of lighting and signage for portrait	\$2,000	
	Operational Subtotal		\$3,287,500
Ikenberry- Scott Hall	Scott supplemental student room heat	\$200,000	
Ikenberry- Weston Hall	Weston supplemental student room heat	\$200,000	
Illinois Street RH - Townsend Hall	Student room & closet doors/ hardware replacement - Townsend	\$850,000	
Illinois Street RH - Wardall Hall	Student room & closet doors/ hardware replacement - Wardall	\$750,000	
Illinois Street RH - Wardall Hall	Wardall roof	\$550,000	
Orchard Downs	Upgrade electrical - Orchard Place - phase 1 of 3	\$400,000	
Orchard Downs	Upgrade electrical - replace apt lighting	\$190,000	
	R&R Subtotal		\$3,140,000
Total FY21 Projects			\$87,027,500

Acronym Key			
ACES	College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences	ISR	Illinois Street Residence Halls
ARC	Activities and Recreation Center – Campus Recreation	IUOE	International Union of Operating Engineers
BSW	Building service worker	LAR	Lincoln Avenue Residence Halls
CUPHD	Champaign Urbana Public Health District	LEHP	Licensed environmental health practitioner
DCFS	Department of Children & Family Services	LLC	Living-Learning Community
DIA	Department of Intercollegiate Athletics	LRFMP	Long range facilities master plan
DS	Dining Services	MI	Maintenance inspectors
F&S	Facilities & Services – campus operation	PAR	Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls
FAR	Florida Avenue Residence Halls	PCH	Private Certified Housing
FFCRA	Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020	POS	Point of Sale
FGH	Family and Graduate Housing	Q/I	Quarantine and Isolation
FSHN	Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition	QIPS	Quarantine and Isolation System
GUD	Graduate and Upper Division halls	RA	Resident Advisors
HHR	Housing Human Resources	RH	Residence Halls
HI&M	Housing Information & Marketing	RL	Residential Life
HIO	Housing Information Office	SA	Student Affairs
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning	SA Tech	SA Technology Services
IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	SDRP	Student Dining and Residential Programs Building
IBHE	Illinois Board of Higher Education	SEIU	Service Employees International Union
IHR	Illinois Human Resources	TVD	Taft-Van Doren residence halls
IHR-LER	Illinois Human Resources-Labor and Employee Relations	WSO	Water Station Operators

