

Dear Bowdoin College Community,

During the 2016-2017 academic year, the Office of Residential Life continued to focus on diversity and inclusion, student leadership development, the transition of first year students to Bowdoin and the creation of quality programs and services. Student housing was another focus for the office including the introduction of the new housing software StarRez and the efforts of the Working Group on Off Campus and Upperclass Housing. The 72 members of the Residential Life student staff continue to be a diverse and talented group who touch every corner of Bowdoin's campus. Through direct student contact, programs, and facilitated conversations, these student leaders ensure that challenging topics are addressed thoughtfully and effectively and that all students have access to the resources they need to be successful members of our campus community. The 209 students who live in the College Houses, led by the 5 Inter-House Council members and the 40 College House Officers, serve our campus in a myriad of different ways. Through collaborative programming, the first year buddy system, and working closely with their 24 faculty/staff advisors, the members of the 8 College Houses continue to create spaces where people from across campus gather to learn and grow. The 37 members of Peer Health continued to positively impact students across campus through conversations with first years, innovative programming and a new focus on multi-media presentations.

Accomplishments over the past year include:

- By focusing a great deal of attention on the importance of **diversity and inclusion**, the Office of Residential Life was able to give students the tools to have challenging conversations in a respectful way. The College Houses, Residential Life student staff and Peer Health selection processes yielded a **significant increase in the diversity of the students**. Much of the **300 training hours** over the past year focused on giving our students the tools to help themselves and others process the events taking place nationally and on campus. 17 College House residents participated in a special College House only Inter-Group dialogue program in the fall semester. The January **collaboration training brought staff, faculty and students together** to delve more deeply into conversations around gender, sexuality, race and ability.
- **Leadership development** continues to be a focus of our work and we see great opportunity within the **318 student leaders** who engage with our office on a regular basis. Over the past year, these students received **300 hours of training** on topics such as negotiating and resolving conflict, communicating effectively, successfully collaborating, understanding leadership styles, planning and facilitating meetings, and executing successful programs and events.
- The offering of **high-quality programs and services** continues to be a priority and throughout the past year over **900 student-led programs** were held in residence halls and College Houses. Of the **300+ programs developed and implemented** by College House members, **101 were in partnership** with student groups, faculty and staff. Residential Life student staff held **416 duty nights** throughout the year and developed an additional **250+ unique programs**. Health promotion continued the focus on alcohol education through programs such as "Bowdoin Uncorked", Alcohol Screening Day and Alcohol and Event Training. Over **350 students were trained in responsible party hosting**. In addition, our student leaders are an important conduit to resources across campus. **Residential life staff made over 500 referrals** to resources across campus.
- A number of **targeted new initiatives** were developed over the past year, focused on allowing our office to meet the needs of our student body more robustly and effectively. **Residential life developed partnerships with faculty and staff** across campus that allowed student staff to delve into important topics such as **Race in America, Dis/Ability, Family Structure, Disordered Eating**,

**Trans Identity and Dating Violence** through a continuing education program. Newly designed surveys allowed the office to clearly understand the challenges of both individual College Houses, as well as the system as a whole, and resulted in a **redesign of both the selection process and the officer structure**. Peer Health expanded their Peer2Peer program to include follow up meetings in the spring with all first year students, **strengthening this important mentorship relationship**.

- Much of the attention of our student leaders is focused on the **transition to Bowdoin of first year students**. Each first year floor has a proctor, an affiliate RA, College House buddies and a Peer Health member. Because of programs such as flinners (floor dinners), facilitated conversations, and introductions to resources throughout the year, **first year students often point to the Residential Life staff as their primary support** during their transition to campus. Every first year student is also assigned a College House buddy, to serve as another mentor and connector to campus. Additionally, many of the programs held in the College Houses are geared towards first years and focus on introducing new students to Bowdoin, as well as to Maine. Finally, **98% of the first year class has a one-on-one conversation with their Peer Health affiliate** in the fall and a follow-up conversation in the spring as part of the Peer2Peer program.
- Housing was a major focus of the office over the past year as StarRez, a housing software program, took the place of the outdated program previously used. This allowed first year students to **both complete their first year housing questionnaire and find out who their new roommates are online**, reducing paper use and allowing incoming students to access all housing information remotely. The Working Group on Off Campus and Upperclass Housing, made up of faculty, staff and students, was formed in the spring and over a period of three months used a combination of focus groups, community forums and surveys to **collect feedback from 1600 people**. Utilizing the viewpoints of students, staff, faculty and neighbors of the College, the group made a series of recommendations to Matt Orlando, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer, and Tim Foster, Dean of Student Affairs regarding both off campus and upperclass housing.

As the 2017-2018 academic year begins, there are already several projects the Office of Residential Life is excited to focus on. Building on the first year experience, the office will **pilot a “sophomore year” experience** focused on the unique challenges and opportunities of the second year at Bowdoin. Alcohol education and prevention will continue to be a priority, with the Alcohol Team focusing on **developing recommendations for potential changes to our existing alcohol policy**. This will be the **20<sup>th</sup> year the College Houses have been in existence**, and the office will spend time developing a plan for the next 20, focused on meeting the needs of today’s Bowdoin students. Finally, the office will be **developing a policy for off campus housing**, building off the recommendations of the Working Group on Off Campus and Upperclass Housing. Our student leaders continue to be at the center of our work and we are grateful for the time that they put into creating a strong and inclusive residential community here at Bowdoin.

Best,

Meadow Davis  
Associate Dean of Student Affairs  
Director of Residential and Student Life