



### Departmental Mission Statement

The Office of Residential Life works to provide safe and comfortable living and learning communities. We intentionally design programs, services, and leadership opportunities to foster an environment conducive to achieving academic goals, personal growth, and the development of community.

### Overview of Position

Valparaiso University firmly believes that living in a residence hall provides students with a learning experience that integrates and complements the more formal educational activities of the classroom, laboratory, studio, and stage. As a campus leader and role model, the Resident Assistant position provides an opportunity to observe and correct undesirable behavior while teaching new skills in problem solving, decision making, and critical thinking; to assist students in taking responsibility for their actions; to orient students to college life and aid in their emotional and academic adjustment; and to help students develop individual social skills. The role of the Resident Assistant is to help create and facilitate an environment of student learning in the residence halls, through an understanding/awareness of Individual, Interpersonal, Community, and Culture development.

**Individual** - Resident Assistants are preeminent leaders in the residential community and develop who they are as individuals and identify, develop, and refine their skill sets.

**Interpersonal** - Through theoretical training and practical application, Resident Assistants serve as a resource for students living within the residential community, by providing enriching experiences that promote personal accountability while fostering individual meaningful relationships that recognize and appreciate the value and contribution of individuals and their diverse perspectives. Resident Assistants also serve as first responders to situations, assessing, reacting, and utilizing their training and outside resources.

**Community** - RAs develop a residential community, which reflects a complex global society and encourages all members to take ownership of its standards and well-being. Resident Assistants will create opportunities through daily interactions and formal programming for residents to explore their place in the world while encouraging questioning and critical thinking. RAs will facilitate the development of a safe and inclusive community where people of all backgrounds and perspectives are empowered to create and express their individual identities, and continue their journey of spirituality, academic excellence, and social engagement.

**Culture** - RAs serve as role models of global citizenship. Further, they must also be able to develop dynamic relationships among individuals with dramatically different values, experiences, worldviews, communication styles, and needs. In these contexts, RAs must display the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and interact with different cultures.

### Qualifications

Must be in and maintain good social and academic standing with the University. Applicants must have a full-time student enrollment status with a minimum 2.75 cumulative GPA and obtain no lower than a 2.5 semester GPA throughout employment. Applicants must have resided in a residence hall at least two full semesters prior to the start of employment. First-Year students can only apply for Fall Resident Assistant positions.

*The responsibilities of the Resident Assistant position include, but are not limited to the following:*

### Personal

The Resident Assistant position is considered the primary 'out-of-class position', second only to academics. All other employment (during academic sessions) and extra-curricular activities and positions must be approved by their RLC and the Assistant Director of Residential Life for Staffing and Programming. RAs will use nights away appropriately to maintain balanced lives and aid in effectively balancing and prioritizing academic work, their RA position, and outside responsibilities/commitments. RAs will demonstrate effective listening and communication skills and maintain necessary communication in all matters with the Residential Learning Coordinator. RAs will be open to consider different points of view and backgrounds and will be respectful of others' choices. RAs will also exhibit support for the programs of staff members in their building and across campus.

### Leadership & Advisory

RAs are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the philosophy and tradition of the Office of Residential Life and Valparaiso University. RAs function as positive role models at all times by setting an example for students in terms of conduct, appearance, and manner. This includes activities, which occur on University property, as well as, off-campus. RAs will contribute to a positive environment and team dynamic by attending and participating in staff

development activities and demonstrate cooperation, teamwork, and flexibility. They will exhibit support for the general programs and staff of the Office of Residential Life.

### **Community Development**

RAs will serve as a community leader who facilitates an atmosphere conducive to studying, sleeping, and general student learning. Each RA will appropriately assess the programmatic needs of residents and offer a variety of programs and activities, which meet student needs and interests while attempting to involve residents in programming. RAs will display a positive attitude towards programming and know residents by name with initial and continued interactions throughout the year.

RAs will encourage a community atmosphere among residents that promotes a spirit of mutual respect and concern for all by interacting in a professional and approachable manner with all residents. They will aid students in their emotional and academic adjustment and help students develop individual social skills. RAs will be able to recognize interpersonal conflicts and mediate accordingly. They will exhibit impartiality and objectivity when dealing with individual resident or group issues and understand the limitations of confidentiality. RAs will also keep residents abreast of activities, programs, and other important information.

### **Administration**

RAs are responsible for knowing and abiding by all policies, rules, laws and regulations specified in The Student Guide to University Life and the Resident Assistant Manual. They will reside and be present on the floor, especially in the evenings and on ordinary weekends throughout both semesters (outside of standard duty times & responsibilities) to assist the community as needs arise. RAs will participate in any collateral assignments assigned to them by their RLC and/or the Office of Residential Life.

RAs will follow the appropriate programming timeline presented at training, including but not limited to, proposals, advertisements, and evaluations. RAs will readily seek out information related to hall damages and vandalism to ensure the structure of the residents living environment. RAs will attend Judicial Board hearings for the incidents they address and submit incident reports, program proposals and evaluations, weekly reports, intentional interaction logs, duty logs, and other paperwork in a timely manner.

### **Culture**

RAs will seek out and willingly interact with culturally different individuals and groups to form in depth, positive, and valuable relationships. RAs will express interest in learning other cultures and gain knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks. RAs will create opportunities for learning about other cultures and seek to answer questions concerning culture regardless of personal comfort level. They will consider new perspectives about their personal cultural rules and biases through seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities to learn about other cultures. RAs will demonstrate the ability to advocate for self and others.

### **Dates of Commitment** (subject to change)

- Spring Training - occurs in April.
- August Resident Assistant Orientation (RAO) - arrive approximately a week and a half before classes start.
- November Thanksgiving Recess Closing and Opening - stay a day late to close and arrive a few hours before the hall opens.
- December Semester Break Closing and Opening - stay a day late to close and arrive approximately 3 days before the hall opens.
- January Winter Training - occurs approximately 3 days before hall opens.
- March Spring Recess Closing and Opening - stay a day late to close hall and arrive a few hours before the halls open.
- May Commencement and Hall Closing - stay until the day after graduation to close hall.

### **Remuneration**

100% Room Credit (regardless of location); Stipend \$1200 per semester (semesters 1-2), \$1400 per semester (semesters 3-4), and \$1600 per semester (semesters 5-6).