Miami University’s Residence Hall Association
[An Introduction for Advisers]

Office of Residence Life Adviser Training, July 2010
Hello Advisers!

My name is Liz Kirkham and I am beyond excited to be the 2010 – 2011 President of the Residence Hall Association (RHA). The relationship between the RHA Executive Board and each of you, the advisors of your hall’s Community Council, is essential to both the success of RHA and of your councils. This packet is designed to introduce you to everything that RHA has to offer. It will also give you a preview of what we have planned for the upcoming year, introduce resources we provide, and explain our vision for RHA and Community Councils. Finally, this packet will (hopefully!) begin a dialogue between the advisers and the RHA Executive Board, so that we can ensure a successful year in the residence halls.

RHA membership is unique; we basically begin from scratch every year. Prior to fall elections, our active membership is composed only of the ten members on our Executive Board. Therefore, at the beginning of every year, we must actively recruit to establish a membership for the upcoming year in a very short time frame. This is why I see our working relationship as extremely important in order to not only build a strong Residence Hall Association, but also to seek out interested students within the residence halls. During the first few weeks of the semester, we must work as a team to advertise information sessions and elections, form Community Councils, prepare all of our Councils to attend fall training, and get all new members excited about the year to come.

Your active support and advising of the leaders within your hall’s Community Council will not only strengthen the success of RHA for the upcoming year but also increase the ability of your hall’s Community Council to grow and function as an active leadership outlet.

Throughout the next several pages, I will hopefully be able to explain more about RHA, Community Councils, and RHA’s plans for the year. With that said, if you have a question at any time, please feel free to contact any member of our Executive Board, whose contact information is listed on the second page. Thank you once again and I look forward to working with you over the course of the next year!

Sincerely,

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Miami University’s Residence Hall Association (RHA) was founded in 1996 to unify and give representation to the entire on-campus student body. RHA is composed of on-campus residents, and anyone living in a residence hall is welcome and encouraged to join their Community Council.

RHA is a subset of Miami’s Associated Student Government (ASG). While RHA’s sole mission is not legislation, like the Student Senate, some bills have been written and presented to the Senate. Bills passed in Senate from RHA include safety lighting, quiet hour changes, Miami Metro route changes and recycling initiatives. RHA also creates and organizes campus-wide programming, promotes community service, and represents the needs and concerns of on-campus students. Most importantly, RHA is the direct link to the Community Councils; a leadership outlet that reaches almost 7,000 students each year!

RHA is overseen by an Executive Board consisting of ten individuals fulfilling the roles of President, Vice President, Leadership Director, Finance Director, Communications Director, Campus-Wide Programming Director, Internal Programming Director, Community Service Director, Technology Director, and NRHH President. There is also an advisor to the Executive Board that attends weekly Executive Board meetings as well as General Assembly meetings. This advisor serves as a resource to residence life, and comes from the Office of Residence Life (ORL).

The RHA Executive Board also oversees the General Assembly (GA), which is composed of one resident from each hall. GA representatives are responsible for attending weekly meetings reporting RHA business back to their Community Council, serving on a committee within GA, writing legislation, attending RHA programs and publicizing RHA and Community Council events. The General Assembly has one standing, permanent committee, the Funding
Committee, which is a monetary resource for any on-campus resident.\(^1\) Other GA committees are determined by both the Executive Board and the General Assembly on a yearly basis. They typically include programming, community service, and communications.

One of the biggest responsibilities of RHA is campus-wide programming. RHA hosts and facilitates multiple events every semester, with both community service and general fun in mind. Past events sponsored by RHA include the RedHawk Hunt, Safe Trick-o-Treat, campus blood drives, RedHawk Games, service trips to Over the Rhine, the Knolls of Oxford and the Animal Adoption Foundation, Field Day, and Community Council training events in the fall and spring.

Miami’s RHA belongs to both a regional and national association of student leaders working to enhance the residence hall experience for their constituents through the exchange of programming ideas and resources. These associations provide leadership opportunities, conference experiences, and the ability to recognize outstanding people and programs. The regional affiliation is CAACURH (Central Atlantic Association for College and University Residence Halls). CAACURH hosts a leadership conference each fall, which RHA members and RAs can apply to attend. In the past few years Miami students have attended conferences at Bowling Green State University (2007), Stevenson University (2008), and the University of Pittsburgh (2009). This coming November, Miami’s delegation will travel to the University of Maryland. Students can also attend a No Frills Conference in the spring semester, which consists of the selection of awards and the discussion of legislation that sets policies and initiatives for all institutions in the regions. Miami University will host No Frills in the February of 2011, which we are extremely excited about! The national association to which Miami belong is NACURH (National Association of College and University Residence Halls). Each summer, students have an opportunity to attend the national conference. The 2009 conference was held at the University of Arizona, and in June a delegation of 6 Miami students and an advisor attended NACURH 2010 at the University of California, San Diego. All on-campus residents are eligible to attend these conferences and RHA selects delegates via an application process, which will be advertised via e-mail and on our website. RHA is able to cover a majority of conference costs for those delegates attending.

\(^1\) See the resource section for a further explanation of the Funding process.
Community Councils at Miami University

1. Formation
   a. Community Councils will form following elections and may be composed of as many members of the individual hall as the community feels appropriate. Positions, minus the General Assembly Representative and Senator (explained below), are decided on a hall to hall basis and may be decided either before or after elections. As the Advisor to your hall’s Community Council, it is up to you to decide how this is going to occur, such as through a hall informational meeting. It is advised that you do not hold your Community Council meetings on Mondays between the hours of 7 and 9pm, as that is when GA meets, and your GA Representative (unfortunately) can’t be in two places at once.

2. Positional Guidelines
   a. General Assembly Representative: Every individual hall or community, and not council, will appoint a General Assembly Representative. This GA representative will be responsible for attending weekly meetings, where both RHA and campus-wide policies will be discussed. Attendance at these meetings is integral to the success of RHA and Community Councils and absences of GA representatives will result in a loss of funding for the entire hall. One of the most important responsibilities for GA representatives, outside of GA meetings, is returning to his or her Community Council and hall and sharing information from weekly meetings. GA representatives also serve on a committee during GA meetings, plan programs, community service activities, contribute to the newsletter, write legislation, and serve one office hour each week.

   b. Senator: Student senators serve as part of both RHA and Associated Student Government. They are elected in on-campus districts and thus there will not be one senator from every hall. Senators join their off-campus counterparts in a weekly Senate meeting run by the Associated Student Government (ASG) where they advocate for the needs of their constituents. They are expected to attend the Community Council meetings within their district and share information from their Senate meetings with their halls and councils. Senators focus on campus-wide policy, and serve as the Legislative body of ASG.

   c. Other Community Council Positions: There are various positions that are often found within individual Community Councils; however none of these positions must be filled in each council. Positions can be created whenever they are necessary, appropriate or desired as we realize that each community is different. Positions that have traditionally been seen in the past include:
      i. President

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2 See Funding section under resources for full explanation.
3 See following page for list of districts.
ii. Programming Director
iii. Community Service Director
iv. Treasurer
v. Communications Director
vi. Technology Director
vii. Corridor Representative

2010–2011 On-Campus Senator Districts

Senator Districts are formed and reexamined yearly based on the guidelines within the Associated Student Government (ASG) bylaws (see below). As much as possible consideration was given to try to keep size consistent among the 24 allotted on-campus seats. Consideration was also given in attempt to match similar living learning communities and keep upper-class halls and first year halls together. However, due to the limitations on number of available districts this was not possible in all cases.

ARTICLE I. The Student Senate
SECTION 09.101

09.101.B.1. There shall be twenty-five on-campus Senate seats.
   a. Twenty-one students shall be elected by the students living in their halls, excluding designated sorority halls.
   b. Three students shall be elected by undergraduate students living in designated Sorority Halls.
   c. One student shall be a Resident Assistant selected by the Office of Residence Life (the RA council).

The on-campus Senator Districts for the 2010 – 2011 academic year are as follows:

1. Flower Hall
2. Hahne Hall
3. Hepburn Hall
4. McFarland and Brandon Halls
5. Swing and Ogden Halls
6. Bishop, Wells, Stoddard and Elliott Halls
7. MacCracken Hall (Sorority Seat)
8. Richard Hall (Sorority Seat)
9. Hamilton and Minnich Halls (Sorority Seat)
10. Dorsey and Symmes Halls
11. Wilson and Dennison Halls
12. Collins and McBride Halls
13. Scott Hall
14. Porter Hall
15. Dodds Hall
16. Stanton Hall
17. Anderson Hall
18. Heritage Commons
19. Emerson Hall
20. Tappan Hall
21. Morris Hall
22. Havighurst Hall
23. Mary Lyon, McKee and Clawson Halls
24. Peabody and Thomson Halls
RHA Elections Process for 2010-2011

Elections for all Community Council positions will take place on September 8th, 2010.

Names of those students running for the position of GA Representative will be due to Liz Kirkham (kirkhaej@muohio.edu) by September 2nd, 2010.

Names of those students running for the position of ASG Senator will be due to the President of Senate, Carson Cowles, (cowlesdc@muohio.edu) by September 2nd, 2010.

RHA, in attempt to overcome confusions and consistency issues from past years, will be streamlining the election of the General Assembly Representatives and Senators. Through working with the Director of Divisional Technology Initiatives, we have developed an online election system through BlackBoard through which students will vote for the General Assembly Representative in their hall and the Senator in their district on September 8th.

This will bring in quicker results for these positions, which are essential for RHA and ASG to begin the year successfully. Also, because GA Representatives and Senators have duties to fulfill almost immediately following elections, we will be able to communicate training session times and meeting start dates more conveniently through this system. We are confident this system will reduce the possibility of students voting more than once.

All residence communities will conduct their own elections for any positions they wish to elect to their Community Councils on the same day. We support your communities using any method you wish to conduct your elections, provided that all Community Council positions are elected and RHA notified of the successful candidates by September 9th at 5:00 pm, so we can pass on important information to the newly elected members regarding RHA and training.

More information will be passed on to you closer to elections about the exact time constraints of the on-line voting and what else can be expected from the election process.

We welcome any questions or feedback from Advisers leading up to and following the elections so that we can assist you or clarify any part of the process.
Community Council Training

Following elections, **all** Community Council members and Advisers are required to attend a Community Council Training hosted by the RHA Executive Board. This will occur on Saturday, September 25th in Benton Hall from 9:30 AM until 2:00 PM (Registration starts at 9:00 AM; the program begins promptly at 9:30 AM). Training will serve as a chance to introduce council members to RHA and attend several sessions throughout training on topics ranging from how to program, advertise, communicate ideas, recognition styles, leadership development, teamwork, and attend actual programs that can be brought back and put on in the Residence Hall.

We are also inviting Advisers to facilitate sessions if there is a topic or program you believe would be beneficial to the councils. Please contact me if you would like more information on putting on a session during training. The day will conclude with a chance to discuss what the members of your Community Council learned during training. We promise to make it a fun day, from which the members of your Community Council will have the chance to learn a lot and build a foundation to hit the ground running. We will send you more information as we get closer to training.

Training will follow a general conference format, and as of now the tentative schedule for the day appears below. Changes may occur as we further develop the program.

- **9:00 – 9:30 AM:** Registration
- **9:30 – 9:50 AM:** Introductions of Exec; Run-through of Day; Opening Speaker
- **10:00 – 10:30 AM:** Session #1
- **10:35 – 11:05 AM:** Session #2
- **11:10 – 11:40 AM:** Session #3
- **11:45 – 12:30 PM:** Lunch
- **12:35 – 1:25 PM:** Breakout sessions by Quad
- **1:30 – 2:00 PM:** Closing; Raffle; Best-Costume/Most-Energetic Awards
1. Funding

Community Councils, Resident Assistants, or any group of residents and/or individuals living within University Residence Halls may apply for additional funds from the RHA Funding Board (RHAFB), General Assembly’s only standing committee. Funding Applications will be available on the RHA website at the beginning of the first semester and the first Funding Board meeting will occur on September 20th.

GA Representatives are extremely important when it comes to funding because residence halls are only eligible to receive funding if a representative of their hall is regularly attending GA meetings. Three absences from GA meetings will result in the ineligibility for your hall (Community Council, RAs, etc.) to receive funding for the first or second semester, depending when your hall first reaches that threshold. Five absences will result in a funding freeze for the hall for the duration of the year. Note that alternates from your hall may sit in on a meeting if the GA representative from your hall is unable to attend and your hall will not accrue an absence.

Below are the Funding Board guidelines as listed in the RHA Constitution.

Article III: Committees
Sec. 1 RHA Funding Board:

A. The Funding Board shall use the following criteria when considering programs submitted for funding by Community Councils or student groups within the Residence Halls:

1. Any Community Council, Office of Residence Life Student Staff Member, or Advisor may apply for funding.

2. Funding requests must be submitted no later than 14 calendar days after the activity for which funding is being sought has taken place.

3. Receipts, invoices, or other proof of payment must be submitted to the Chair no later than seven (7) days after the receipts, invoices, or proof of payment have been received. Failure to do so will result in loss of funding.

4. Funding Board appointments may only be missed once. If a person seeking funding fails to appear at their second appointment without giving notice to the Chair, funding will not be given.
5. Funding Board will generally not pay for food and beverage related costs associated with a program or event. Exceptions will be considered by the board on a case-by-case basis.

6. Funding Board shall encourage programs with an educational component, but this does not mean that all programs with an educational aspect will or must be funded.

7. Funding Board shall request that programs receiving funding acknowledge financial assistance from RHA in any advertisements or recruiting items.

2. **MUvie Channel**

On-Campus Channel 17 is designated as our on-campus movie network (The MUvie Channel), sponsored by Miami University and moderated by RHA, most directly by the Technology Director. We are pleased to announce we have an agreement with Residence Life Cinema/SWANK Motion Pictures for 2010 - 2011. Every month, RHA selects a number of movies to run periodically on the MUvie network ranging in a variety of topics and genres, sometimes pertinent to the time of year. We have a wide range of movies to select from, and have access to many recent releases and older movies.

If Community Council members, RAs or Advisors wish to request movies to show in their community as programming tools or just for fun, we take requests at any time. Here's the procedure in order to request a movie on the MUvie channel: Requests can be made on the RHA website, under the MUvie channel section. Make your movie request by the end of the month, two months prior to the desired airtime. For example, if you want to show a movie in November, it must be requested by the end of September. We have a limited number of titles to choose from every month, so contact us if you’re looking for something specific and we’ll check it out for you! This is a great resource for Community Councils, RAs and Advisors. For more information and to have questions answered please contact our Technology Director.

3. **Website**

RHA’s website is [www.muohio.edu/murha](http://www.muohio.edu/murha). We currently have information on the website so feel free to check it out! The RHA website will serve as a great resource for both Community Councils and you, the Community Council Advisor. On the website you will be able to find a variety of information on up coming and past RHA events, important announcements, general information on RHA, contact information, the MUvie Channel schedule and a variety of resources (funding applications, legislation templates, program evaluations, and information on programming to name a few). Our Technology Director is also working on a new Hall Blog system that will allow anyone to post comments and communicate with other hall’s Community Councils. We hope to have this ready to go by the start of the academic year. Overall we hope by the time the website is done we will have built a great source of information for both you and your Community Councils and hopefully it is something you will keep listed under your favorite websites.
August
13 – Executive Board Early Move-In
23 – Classes Start
29 – RHA @ Mega Fair (1-4 PM)
30 – Community Council Info Sessions hosted by RHA Executive Board
   7:00PM and 8:00PM, Location TBD
31 – Community Council Info Sessions hosted by RHA Executive Board
   7:00PM and 8:00PM, Location TBD

September
1 – Community Council Info Sessions hosted by RHA Executive Board
   7:00PM and 8:00PM
2 – Names of those running for GA Rep or Senator due
8 – Community Council Elections (GA Rep and Senator: on Blackboard)
9 – Election Results Due to RHA President by 5:00PM
13 – 1st General Assembly Meeting/Training
   7:00PM / MacMillian Hall Great Room
25 – Community Council Training
   Benton Hall / 9:30AM to 2:00PM (w/ Registration beginning at 9)
20 – First Funding Board Meeting
   6:30PM/ MacMillan / Room TBA

October
3rd Annual Homecoming Bonfire
   Wednesday October 20th on Millett’s front lawn. Carve/paint pumpkins, roast
   marshmallows, play games, and socialize with friends! More information coming soon...
TBA – Safe Trick-or-Treat
   Residence Halls are opened to the kids of Oxford to come in and trick-or-treat in a safe
   and friendly environment. More information coming soon...

November
12 – 14 – CAACURH 2010 @ University of Maryland-College Park
   The regional conference RHA members annually attend in the fall. Look for applications
   on our website near the beginning of the semester and at training, and encourage all
   student leaders to apply!
22 – Letter of Intent Due for the election of Leadership Director @ 7:00PM at GA
Elections will take place for the position of Leadership Director-Elect, who will serve alongside the current Leadership Director during the Spring Semester, and the following academic year. Look for application information on our website and throughout October and November.

TBA—Interviews for Leadership Director-Elect

**December**

TBA – RHA Formal  
*Shriver Heritage Room, Time TBD*

6 – Final GA of the Semester 😊

**January**

10 – Classes and GA Resume
22 – All RHA Spring Retreat/Training  
*Time and Location TBA (This Event includes all Community Council Members)*

24 – Funding Board Resumes

**February**

4 – 6 – CAACURH No Frills 2010 @ Miami University!  
*Look for more information regarding how to get involved with this conference before Spring Semester…*

**March**

21 – Executive Board Letter of Intent Due  
*Elections for President, Vice-President, Finance Director, Campus-Wide Programming Director, Internal Programming Director, Communications Director, Community Service Director and Technology Director.*

28 – Elections for 2011 – 2012 Executive Board

**April**

4 - Elections for 2011 – 2012 Executive Board
16 – 17 – Fourth annual RedHawk Hunt! From 8:00PM until 8:00PM  
*RHA’s 24-hour photo scavenger hunt throughout Miami’s campus and Oxford, Ohio, last year this event drew over 350 students to participate. Look for more information in the spring semester; we expect this year’s event to more amazing with even better prizes!*

18 – Final Funding Board Meeting
18 or 25 – Final GA Meeting
29 – Classes End

**June**

TBA – NACURH 2010 – Western Illinois University  
*The national conference RHA members have the chance to attend.*