



THE RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION

Letter from the Outgoing President

Dear on-campus community,

I am pleased to be able to share with you a brief selection of RHA's achievements during the spring semester.

From move-in to move-out, our members have been laying the groundwork for a close-knit, welcoming community. We hosted at least 100 different events to foster civic engagement, promote charity, build community, and recognize service excellence.

Our programs prioritized philanthropy and sustainability. We committed to using only disposable plates and utensils certified as compostable. We supported efforts to reduce campus food waste by raising funds for the Food Recovery Network. We partnered with Facilities Management to preserve environmentally sensitive areas of land. More than ¼ of our hall council events promoted a philanthropic cause or social issue.

Additionally, we engaged on-campus students in key campus policy changes. We provided feedback on proposed changes to the Code of Student Conduct, advocated for textbook affordability, and explored innovative programs to better connect students with opportunities in the nation's capital.

The personal growth and leadership development of our members remain our primary priority. We hoped to have created spaces for our members to introspect and dialogue about their different identities, experiences, and perspectives as student leaders, campus residents, and active citizens.

Our successes could not have been recognized without the collaborative, cooperative, and productive working relationships among campus administrators and student leaders. I am honored to have been able to lead this organization and to work with you during this past academic year.

Steve Chen

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ABOUT RHA

RHA is the primary student-run governing body that represents the interests of the over 12,000 residents at the University of Maryland. Each of the RHA's fifteen hall and area councils works to represent the interests of their hall or area's residents and to build community through fun and engaging events.

RHA prides itself on its ability to effectively communicate student concerns to university administrators. RHA regularly serves in an advisory capacity to the Departments of Resident Life, Residential Facilities, Dining Services, Transportation Services, and the Office of Sustainability. The organization also advocates on behalf of students living on campus for resident-driven policies and priorities.

RHA is committed to empowering its student leaders to work to facilitate community development and campus engagement. It hopes to nurture a generation of leaders, ready to tackle the challenges of tomorrow.

ADVOCACY

During Spring 2017, RHA's advocacy has been impactful. From increasing transportation access to decreasing textbook costs, we have worked diligently to improve the residential experience as an invaluable component to a student's journey at the University of Maryland. As a result of these efforts, RHA has grown as an organization, serving as a guide and avenue that students and administrators turn to when seeking expertise in addressing and resolving matters affecting resident students.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The RHA Senate evaluated the proposed changes to the Code of Student Conduct, presented to Senate by representatives of the Office of Student Conduct and Department of Resident Life Office of Rights and Responsibilities. During the meeting, Senators inquired about the impact of the changes on students, details of the adjudication process, and thoughts of the administration in order to draw conclusions regarding the proposal. Ultimately, of the proposed changes, the Senate voted to support refinements to terminology and reducing attorney presence, but rejected lowering the standard of evidence to preponderance for all infractions.

ADVOCACY

TRANSPORTATION

Back in February, the RHA Senate voted to implement a transportation subsidy that would lower the cost of WMATA bus and metro services for community members. Our hope in spearheading this measure is that a WMATA subsidy will allow students of all socioeconomic backgrounds to pursue internships in our nation's capital, as well as take advantage of the city's innumerable educational and cultural opportunities. Since passage of the legislation, we have collaborated with fellow on-campus organizations to expand this program to all students, notably the Graduate Student Government which overwhelmingly passed a resolution in support of the subsidy.

Our Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) spearheaded the WMATA subsidy all while grappling with the imminent shortage of parking due to construction on campus. Members of the committee assessed proposed solutions by the Department of Transportation Services, one of which included the construction of new parking garages. TAC was instrumental in helping to consider the financial and environmental impacts of these proposals. By and large, TAC navigated an onslaught of issues affecting campus and formulated RHA's greater vision of transportation services.

TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY

This year, RHA also worked heavily to continue past successes on issues of academic and residential affordability. Recognizing textbooks as a significant cost to students, above that of tuition and housing, RHA was not alone in our interest to lower the costs of textbooks to students. Other organizations, including the Student Government Association, Graduate Student Government, and Maryland Public Interest Research Group, as well as the University Libraries, partnered during this past semester to spearhead a textbook affordability initiative.

The project is structured with two major goals: a long term goal of encouraging faculty to use open source and other low cost textbook options, and a short term goal of building a wider textbook sharing program. We successfully launched a campus student survey on textbooks, gathered over 4,000 responses, and held a week-long textbook donation drive in collaboration with Trash to Treasure. The donation drive was a huge success with around 260 books being donated total and more than 70 of which were from the Top 100 Textbook List. The initiatives and partnerships are intended to continue in future years.

ADVOCACY

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND SAFETY

One of the most challenging issues facing our campus community was that of the University's potential designation as a Sanctuary Campus. After the Fall 2016 passage of a resolution urging RHA to explore the Sanctuary Campus designation, the Resident Life Advisory Team (ReLATE) examined the services and policies the Department of Resident Life provides for undocumented students and members of other minority communities. As an advocacy body, we committed ourselves to a thorough understanding of the existing policies and services provided by the University, as well as using a critical eye for evaluation and improvement. To follow through on our commitment, Senate unanimously passed a resolution urging that the University administration bolster the resources provided to such communities, and increase the available spaces and forums that encourage productive dialogue within our diverse student body.

The Residential Facilities Advisory Board (ReFAB) continued to oversee the implementation of RHA's initiative to install security cameras in residence halls around campus. The introduction of cameras has unequivocally contributed to a greater sense of safety for all our residents and building staff.

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Sustainability Committee (SCOM) this semester undertook Green Week, an annual series of events put on by the committee in collaboration with fellow campus groups to further educate and incentivize students to live sustainably. SCOM further examined how RHA as an organization could become more sustainable through their hall and area councils, resulting in successful legislation to mandate compostable materials and sustainability-themed events. This will allow RHA members themselves to exemplify the very norms that SCOM seeks to establish, and encourages a 'practice what we preach' methodology for our organization.

ReFAB also worked to install more distilled water bottle filling locations and to expand composting services within the residence halls

PROGRAMMING

HALL COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The RHA values recognizing leaders for their hard work. Some current recognition efforts include Liter (Leader) of the Week, Of-the-Months (OTMs), and the HOTS (Hall of the Semester) competition. A new initiative RHA undertook this year is the monthly "Hall Council Highlight" that recognizes the work that a specific hall or area council has done for the RHA community. Some factors include attending Senate meetings, hall and area council events, and Executive Board office hours; participating at regional conferences; planning events for their residents; and more.

Hagerstown Hall Council was awarded the Winter edition of "Hall Council Highlight." After increasing their organizational efficiency, the Hagerstown Hall Council took the winter to become an event planning powerhouse. Hagerstown held a Sunday Morning Cartoons event and a Super Bowl Party, both of which drew in a lot of support and attendance.

In February, the hall council highlight was South Campus Commons Area Council. Their hard work the past few months had been very evident. One exciting program they hosted was their Valentine's Day "Sweet for Sweeties" event, which supported TerpThon and the Children's National Health System in Washington, DC.

For the month of March, we decided to honor the North Campus Carnival Planning Committee with the Hall Council Highlight. While the North Campus Carnival Planning Committee isn't a council itself, it is made up of members of the ten North Campus Hall and Area Councils that collaborate to plan the annual North Campus Carnival, one of RHA's large-scale community events. This committee has been working tirelessly to put together the most successful Carnival yet, and in March they really stepped it up. The members of the committee were incredibly dedicated and worked really well together, working especially hard in this last full month before the event to make sure all members were on the same page.



PROGRAMMING

LARGE-SCALE COMMUNITY EVENTS

The **North Campus Carnival** on April 21st was a massive success. After braving an unpredicted hailstorm, the members of all the North Campus hall councils hosted over 500 residents on La Plata Beach. These residents enjoyed carnival games, food, music, giveaways, and prizes. Thank you to everyone who came out and to everyone who supported this effort!



The Commons Area Council, South Hill Area Council, and North Hill Area Council joined forces on April 20th when they hosted the **South Campus Pot Party**. This event featured small terracotta plants to be painted, soil and seeds for residents to plant their own flowers, as well as yummy snacks like brownies to be enjoyed. The weather on the Prince Frederick lawn was ideal for this outdoor program.

The South Campus Pot Party was followed by the **South Campus Block Party** just one week later on Friday, April 28th on the Washington Quad. Residents tie-dyed the white t-shirt giveaways, played giant jenga and human-size billiards, enjoyed popcorn, Rita's Italian Ice, and Qdoba, and won prizes from the Maryland Bookstore. Fun was had by all!



On the same day, the Leonardtown Area Council threw their own **Leonardtown Block Party** in the Leonardtown Community Center. Attendees enjoyed free Chipotle and plants, jammed out to music, and played games. There were even puppies for attendees to pet as a stress relief before finals started!

PROGRAMMING

PHILANTHROPY AND SERVICE EVENTS



Philanthropy and service are two of our core priorities. Each semester, we have two main philanthropy events: the Dining Dollar Donation Drive and Maryland Beautification Day.

The Dining Dollar Donation Drive, or D3 Drive, is a one-day service event where RHA members ask for Dining Dollar donations from students entering and exiting all three dining halls to benefit a certain charity. The recipient of this semester's Dining Dollar Donation Drive was the Food Recovery Network, a national nonprofit organization begun at the University of Maryland that recovers surplus perishable foods from campuses and surrounding communities and donating it to people in need. This semester's Dining Dollar Donation Drive raised over \$900 for the worthy cause!

We also hosted again Maryland Beautification Day, our collaboration with other campus organizations to clean up the campus. This spring, we collaborated with the living and learning program CIVICUS to help the Campus Arboretum spruce up campus grounds for Maryland Day.

Other philanthropy initiatives included the Program Good Challenge, where hall and area councils planned programming around certain themes such as pediatric cancer, sexual health awareness, sexual assault prevention, and environmental awareness. The Executive Board also worked to provide resources for hall and area councils to implement socially responsible programming.

We also implemented smaller service-social events for members to bond while doing good. For example, we invited our members to assemble a healthy trail mix snack for Martha's Table while watching High School Musical. We also collaborated with Gift to Uplift to design and make bookmarks for children currently undergoing treatment in local hospitals. Both events were huge successes.



REGIONAL REPORT

After a successful fall semester earning the regional Student Award for Leadership Training, RHA set its sights on loftier goals. We applied for the regional awards of Student of the Year, Outstanding Advocacy Initiative, School of the Year, National Communications Coordinator of the Year, National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) President of the Year, and the Hallenbeck Service Award, the latter four of which won and were submitted to the national level.

In addition to winning those awards, a small delegation of RHA and NRHH members attended the Central Atlantic Regional Business Conference at Robert Morris University, where they learned and shared best practices with other universities. The delegation also created a brand new award for the region - the Commitment to Sustainability - so that Maryland's spirit of sustainability can be shared with every institution in the region.



Finally, a large delegation of RHA and NRHH members attended the national conference at Purdue University at the end of May.

THE MD/DC RHA SUMMIT



We invited the Residence Hall Associations from Maryland and Washington, DC to our campus for a day of fun and learning. Each respective chapter shared individual highlights from the year, issues faced, and ideas. Each respective chapter shared individual highlights from the year, issues faced, and ideas For example, we presented on our advocacy efforts. This summit was an absolute success and we plan to make it an annual event!

YEAR END RECEPTION SUMMARY

Congratulations to everyone who were awarded the following prestigious recognitions!

Council President of the Year

Alexya Brown
Centreville Hall Council

Rookie of the Year

Matt O'Brien
North Hill Area Council

Building Block Award

Leonardtwn Area Council

Golden Pen Award

Rick Mikulis

Outstanding Advisor of the Year

Ray Nardella
Centreville Hall Council

Hall of the Semester

Fall: North Hill Area Council
Spring: North Hill Area Council

Martin A. Taylor Distinguished Service Award

Sasha Galbreath

Richard Stimpson Award of Excellence

Steve Chen

Outstanding Service Pins

Bryan Gallion
Val Kologrivov
Jane Nnadi
Ben Reichard
Dana Rodriguez
Sarah Williamson

Bronze Pins

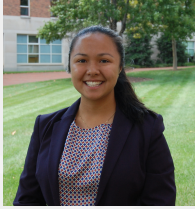
Sam Bingaman
Steve Chen
Jacklyn Gentile
Tracy Kiras
Helen Liu
Rick Mikulis



2017-2018 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dana Rodriguez - President

- *Previous Position:* SGOL
- *Year:* Rising Senior
- *Major:* Finance and Government and Politics
- *Fun Fact:* Just like the actual Fort Knox used to hold all the gold of the USA, my goldfish named Fort Knox holds all the love of my heart.

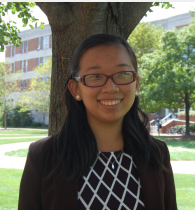


Tzvi Glazer - Vice President

- *Previous Position:* Senator-at-Large
- *Year:* Rising Senior
- *Major:* Sociology and Government and Politics, Human Development Minor
- *Fun Fact:* I have been in three other countries but have never had my passport stamped

Cana Curtis - Student Groups and Organizations Liaison

- *Previous Position:* Senator for Hagerstown Hall Council
- *Year:* Rising Sophomore
- *Major:* Criminal Justice and Math, Spanish Minor
- *Fun Fact:* I had a pet monkey named Boa



Helen Liu - Public Relations and Outreach Officer

- *Previous Position:* Public Relations and Outreach Officer (PRO)
- *Year:* Rising Senior
- *Major:* Marketing and Information Systems, Business Analytics Minor
- *Fun Fact:* I've kissed a stingray

Val Kologrivov - National Communications Coordinator

- *Previous Position:* Chief Information Officer (CIO)
- *Year:* Rising Junior
- *Major:* Economics and Government and Politics
- *Fun Fact:* In my free time, I enjoy Facetiming with one of my 6 siblings

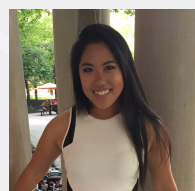
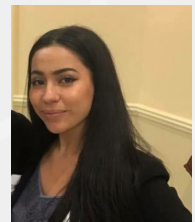


Bryan Gallion - Chief Information Officer

- *Previous Position:* President of North Hill Area Council
- *Year:* Rising Junior
- *Major:* Multi-platform Journalism, Professional Writing Minor
- *Fun Fact:* I was once a baby model

Celeste Corona - Finance and Philanthropy Officer

- *Previous Position:* Chair of Sustainability Committee of Maryland (SCOM)
- *Year:* Rising Sophomore
- *Major:* Government and Politics and Environmental Science and Policy
- *Fun Fact:* I can successfully lick my elbow



Annie Bao - Admin Officer

- *Previous Position:* President of Cumberland Hall Council
- *Year:* Rising Sophomore
- *Major:* Computer Science, Technology Entrepreneurship Minor
- *Fun Fact:* I visit Starbucks at least 4-5 times a week. Some may say I have a problem.

Letter from the Incoming President

Dear friends,

It is a great honor to serve as the Residence Hall Association (RHA) President for the 2017-2018 academic year. My own involvement in RHA began nearly three years ago as a freshman in La Plata Hall, where I became an active member of my residence Hall Council and the RHA Senate. I was simultaneously challenged and supported, eventually prompting me to continue my service in increased capacity. During this time, I watched RHA grow tremendously as an organization, working to represent and convey the voices of resident students. RHA has also witnessed a shift toward a stronger and more proactive advocacy effort, collaborating with fellow student organizations to play a greater role in impacting the on-campus experience. Our success in past years has been recognized on both regional and national scales, designating the University of Maryland RHA as one of the best in the country.

Big changes and new challenges, however, are always ahead. As developments continue to affect resident students, RHA is compelled to bring forward concerns and input for the campus agenda. RHA's ability to effectively represent resident students rests on a few key factors: one, a strong foundation of engaged and empowered RHA community members; two, an informed and active resident population; and three, a transcending willingness to listen and collaborate. Taking this next year to prioritize goals of magnified grassroots dialogue, civic engagement, transparency, and communication will provide increased support for the three factors that shape RHA's responsiveness and success. Ultimately, RHA is part of the larger community at the University of Maryland looking to make a positive change. As the campus mobilizes to support initiatives of diversity, sustainability, health, among others, RHA recognizes its shared vision of a vibrant campus experience for all.

I am very excited to work with our incoming executive team in leading our organization to new heights. Our team is also looking forward to continuing our collaborative work with fellow student organizations, campus departments, and university administration. Here's to a successful upcoming year (but first, a relaxing summer)!

With best wishes,
Dana Rodriguez

SPECIAL THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

RHA Advisors: Aaron Hood, Tracy Kiras, and Steve Petkas

Senate Committee Directors: Lisa Alexander, David Allen, Jon Dooley, Deborah Grandner, Maria Lonsbury, and Colleen Wright-Riva

Hall Council Advisors: Jordan Adams, Lisa Alexander, Coty Behanna, Amanda Bogdan, Jack Breffle, Chamika Ellis, Tiffany Harris, Erica Harvey, Ashley Ladyman, Ray Nardella, Allison Panila, Aspen Shackelford, Karlena Walker, Ray Ward, and Carli Weldon

Conference Advisors: Coty Behanna, Sarah Williamson, and Jacklyn Gentile

University Staff: Catherine Carroll, Linda Clement, Jay Gilchrist, Andrea Goodwin, Marsha Guenzler-Stevens, Mary Hummel, Sharon Kirkland-Gordon, David McBride, John Zacker, and Wallace Loh

All Department of Resident Life Staff