Educational Sessions

Sessions	Description	Presenter
(Re)Building a Successful Housing Tour Program	Do you have a housing tour program or are you thinking of starting one? Housing tour programs can be a great way to provide a positive experience for students, collaborate with other departments to ensure accurate information, and provide an opportunity to share information about your housing program. In this session, we will review the process of re-starting a housing tour program through both in-person and virtual offerings. We will cover topics inclusive of hiring practices, sustaining a tour program, training, and collaboration. In addition, the session will focus on lessons learned and how a housing tour program can be scaled to any campus context.	Janie E. Sacco II
A Regional Desk Model: Features, Benefits, and Challenges	Join us for an insightful session exploring the benefits of implementing a regional front desk model, inspired by the successful approach at the University of Washington's Housing and Food Services Desk Services unit. This session is tailored for mid- to senior-level residence hall housing professionals looking for innovative solutions to enhance operational efficiency and resident satisfaction through centralized service delivery.	Tasjaray Komotios-Newton
AI Unplugged: Demystifying Artificial Intelligence	Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer just a buzzword; it's a transformative technology reshaping various industries, including higher education housing. This beginner-friendly session aims to demystify AI and demonstrate its accessibility, regardless of your technical background.	Sommer Dunlevy
Better Together: How Shared Greek Housing Can Create Shared Value	As part of ongoing efforts to build a reputation for safe, healthy Greek life fully integrated with campus values, the University of Nebraska at Kearney worked with BWBR and KWK Architects to upgrade the campus's fraternity and sorority communities through the design of both a new residence hall and the renovation of a 1950s dormitory.	Anna Pratt AIA
Building a Digital Campus: Engaging Stories and Future Communicators	Learn how you can leverage passionate student employees, your brand, strategic partnerships, and pop culture to provide a glimpse into life on campus and cement your social media channels as the go-to repository for information. This session will focus on building out an ambitious digital presence centered around telling the stories of our residents, while also providing student employees with the necessary skills to be the next generation of digital communicators.	Ricky Bryant
Bull Haul: Move-in Assistance Program	The University of South Florida's Housing & Residential Education team is ready to share their secrets of how to streamline the move-in process while helping students build community on campus before the school year begins!	Elizabeth Fry
Collaboration in an Emergency... No Heat in the Heart of Winter	In mid-January, during the heart of winter, there was an issue with our steam plant that affected the heat in several occupied residence halls. A collaboration between departments was necessary in handling this emergency affecting over 900 students. We had to consider and combat the most important issue which was the health risk to students. We also had to manage the resolution in such a way as to keep to a minimum disruption to their daily lives. There was the potential threat of damage to infrastructure that had to be considered. In addition, there was negative impact to finances of the university.	Elfrida Mensah

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Developing and Empowering Student Leads	This session is designed for organizations aiming to add student leadership positions to their Desk Services teams. We'll share insights from our experience at Desk Services at the University of Washington on cultivating effective leadership in our student-employee program. You'll learn actionable strategies we use to empower our student leaders in recruitment, training, and performance management. This approach equips your organization with tools to develop student leadership, boost team performance, and foster a culture of growth. Dive into valuable techniques to plan strategically and run effective training sessions for success.	Tasjaray Komotios-Newton
Enhancing the Student Housing Experience through Individualized Check-In Processes and Effective Communication	In this session, we aim to share insights into our tailored approach towards managing large-scale residence life operations at Georgia Tech. Our primary objective is ensuring each resident feels catered to from the moment they decide when they're coming to campus until they complete their journey with us through check-out.	Alison Southern
Fostering Opportunities for Inclusion and Belonging by Expanding Engagement through "Space"	Space is regularly changing and can be intentionally created. Space is not only physical or location-based. Space is community. We acknowledge that the pandemic caused deletion of space and community. Many felt a transition from work as a place of community to work as individualistic, with feelings of survival mode overtaking senses of belonging. How do we reclaim and reconnect to "space"?: space as community, as a safe environment, as a place you belong. We need to actively create intentional space to provide senses of belonging and comfort for our colleagues, students, and the community.	Chelsea Buffington
From public to private: Transitioning a property out of the portfolio	Many housing professionals have experience opening a new building, but what does that process look like in reverse? The University of Washington recently transitioned a student housing apartment to a private property manager in the middle of the year as part of a unique public-private partnership – with an overarching objective of making the transition as seamless as possible for residents and staff. This session will include background on the public-private partnership, the process and team structure that was established to support the transition, and some of the mechanics behind moving a property to private management. Additionally, we will discuss surprises, lessons learned, and how a cross-functional team model can be applied to other complex projects.	Josh Gana
Housing Operations Employment as a Catalyst for Major-Related Work Experience	Cooperative education was invented at the University of Cincinnati in 1906. Experiential learning has been a cornerstone of the UC experience ever since. Housing Services has created roles in Human Resources, Interior Design and Operations Management that provide opportunities for these student workers to directly apply what they are learning in the classroom. In addition, we provide an immersive experience to our ACUHO-I interns that allows them to learn more about the issues they will learn about in their Student Affairs/Higher Education programs.	Margaret Fogler

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How did they do that? Overhauling a housing system in only four years.	Enrollment declines, high levels of deferred maintenance, increasing cost of operations and shrinking funding – sound familiar? These are just some of the challenges Eastern Michigan University (EMU) faced when confronted with how to address critical needs and strategic goals for their on-campus housing. Following a 2018 Housing Master Plan, EMU overhauled their entire campus housing inventory in an aggressive four-year campaign that included demolition, renovation and new construction. Through a panel discussion format, this program will explore how EMU's housing master plan addressed strategic objectives; why a P3 development model was leveraged to deliver the project; how the partnership is structured; and, how the project responds to key drivers of affordability, equity and elevating the student experience.	Jordan Gatewood
Integrated Planning: How to Take Your Housing Facilities & Operations to the Next Level	The panel session "Integrated Planning: How to Take Your Housing Facilities & Operations to the Next Level " focuses on the process the University of Nebraska is currently undertaking to develop and gain buy-in for a transformational housing facilities masterplan in a challenging enrollment and institutional budget climate.	James Vigil
Investing in Excellence: Elevating Your Student Employees	The student workforce is vital to on-campus operations, yet it often presents challenges for supervisors. Join our panel, composed of experienced supervisors from the Kent State University Housing Department, as they share valuable insights on effectively investing in student employees.	Sommer Dunlevy
Learning From Failure: How Idaho Overcame a Housing Portal Crash	In the Spring of 2023, the University of Idaho experienced a portal crash when over 1100 students attempted to select their room for the 2023-2024 academic year. We will share how the Housing Operations team navigated and overcame this issue, what changes were made to 2024-2025 application process to prevent another crash, lessons learned and considerations that are being made for the future. We will provide an brief overview of our application process, how we leveraged existing features within StarRez and communication methods used to inform students and campus partners of changes and timelines to our housing application process.	Daniel Urrutia
Living in a Branded House not a House of Brands	The session will also discuss how a well-defined brand can positively impact student recruitment, retention, and satisfaction. By maintaining a consistent brand, universities can create a sense of belonging and pride among students, fostering a positive and cohesive community.	Sommer Dunlevy
Managing Move-In 2024	Wondering about move-in management strategies at your institution? Whether you handle it within your department, collaborate as a committee, or take on the task solo (gulp!), this roundtable is your opportunity to delve into the intricacies of managing Move-In. Join us to explore, discuss, and exchange insights on all aspects of this essential process!	Duane J. Lindsay

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Maximizing Collaboration and Impact with Campus Partners	While navigating a series of flood and fire emergencies, Loyola University Chicago Department of Residence Life discovered opportunities to advance practices to support large scale facility concerns in the residence halls. Through these crises, Residence Life leadership spearheaded a new university-wide crisis response standard operational procedure. In this session, participants will have an opportunity to learn about Loyola University Chicago Residence Life procedures to support large scale facility concerns involving relocating students on-and-off campus. Participants will also hear narratives through storytelling about the journey of maximizing knowledge sharing and communication to support the student experience through a crisis.	Des'mon Taylor
Navigating Gender-Inclusive Housing Policies at Private Institutions	As institutions continue to evolve to support students of all identities, it is imperative that assessment and analysis of our processes highlight potential inequities that may harm or push students away. Students seeking gender-inclusive housing options are one population that may be impacted by implicit barriers built into our systems. In this session, presenters hope to foster dialogue with other professionals at private colleges and universities on topics such as navigating conversations with campus administration and current best practices to support the student experience.	Jordan Ahlersmeyer-Huang
New Technology Solutions – Building a Foundation for Success	As department, divisional, and institutional work and objectives continue to evolve, the reliance on technology to provide solutions increase. Many professionals may find themselves evaluating current software use and find they may need to look towards new solutions. Additionally, housing staff may be asked to support the implementation of adjacent software solutions across the institution. This session will share insight from two different direct software implementations and the lessons that were learned so that other institutions can avoid pitfalls. Additionally, time will be spend on creating the best team when taking on the challenge of a software implementation that will lead towards success. Lastly, we will discuss how to support other units in adjacent implementations while advocating for shared information.	Daniel Rosner
Operations for Free.99	Technology use today in no longer a want, but an essential for operational needs. However, this essential often comes with numerous software needs and ultimately thousands of dollars in cost. Is it not time for us to finally start to learn and use technology to better our departments, at a fraction of the cost?	Brett Strohkirch
Purchasing and Converting Off-Campus Buildings to On-Campus Housing Inventory: Factors to Consider	Considering purchasing a hotel/motel/condo/townhome property to convert to your on-campus inventory? If you are consistently at or above capacity and need room to grow this option can be appealing, especially if the property is close to campus and has a history of housing students. The excitement of adding space in an expeditious way is understandable. However, there are many facets to consider when going down this rabbit hole beyond proximity, additional space, and added revenue. This session will identify critical facilities factors to be vetted prior to completing the purchase and assigning rooms. The presenter will review three examples of purchasing off-campus residential buildings and what it took to operationalize them as on-campus inventory.	Gary Thompson

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Start Small, Think Big: A Guide to Implementing Equitable Business Processes	This session explores how UC Davis Student Housing and Dining Services created more equitable business processes within our residential operations. We'll explore real-world examples like gender-inclusive housing, housing fee adjustments, and contract term changes. Learn how to break down processes into manageable steps and foster open communication to gather valuable feedback. Discover how data can be leveraged to identify areas for improvement and guide equitable decision-making. We'll also discuss strategies for securing buy-in from leadership to ensure your efforts have lasting impact. This session equips you with actionable strategies, empowering you to "Start Small, Think Big" when building equitable processes within your own operations.	Faye Perata
Summer Transition Mastery: Strategizing for a Seamless Process	Join us as we discuss how to juggle operating and preparing for your summer school housing program, housing orientation program, camps and conferences program, and managing deferred maintenance projects while also in the begging stages of planning new construction during the summer "down time." The presenters will share experiences of successful operations in what works at FSU and also discuss some of the pitfalls that come with having too much going on at once. Presenters will refer to data collected from their Housing Satisfaction Survey and information provided during special focus groups discussing new construction ideas and concepts.	Joe Czaja
The Four Senses of Facilities	University of Houston Student Housing has explored several approaches for student staff room inspection training and found it to be effective to teach them on a sensory standpoint. We seek to give them an understanding that it takes more than just looking when walking their rooms. It also includes touching, listening and even smelling to determine a room's readiness for incoming residents. This session seeks to give the audience insight on our process.	James Aguanno