

ACUHO-I Conference New Professional Scholarship – 2011

The ACUHO-I New Professionals Scholarship was established by NWACUHO in 2005 to provide new professionals with financial support to attend the annual ACUHO-I conference. The recipient of the scholarship will receive up to \$1000 USD toward registration hotel, meals, and transportation for the conference.

The purpose of this scholarship is to encourage:

- Critical thinking around relevant and important issues in the field
- Professional writing experience and practice
- Involvement in regional and professional organizations
- Innovative and creative approaches to important issues
- Professional development opportunities

The ACUHO-I New Professionals Scholarship opportunity is available to those who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- No more than three years of full-time experience in housing and residence life.
(Undergraduate and graduate experience do not count toward the “three year” limit)

In order to apply for the scholarship, you must submit:

- A 3-5-page paper outlining your response to the assigned case study
- A letter of interest addressing the question: *Why is the scholarship important to the candidate?*
- The scholarship recipient must also write an article for the fall edition of the Soundings about their experience at the ACUHO-I conference.

Application materials must be submitted by 5:00pm (Pacific Standard Time) on Friday, April 15, 2011. Please email submissions to Kelly Ammendolia at kammendolia@pugetsound.edu. The recipient of the scholarship will be announced by April 22, 2011.

Case Study:

You are a hall director for Residence Life at Northwest State University (Northwest), a large four-year public institution. Founded as a land-grant institution, Northwest is known for its agriculture, science and engineering academic programs. Northwest was established 110 years ago and is located in Happyville, a small, rural college town of approximately 30,000 people. Northwest enrolls approximately 20,000 traditionally-aged students and houses 4,000 of those students on campus. About 70% of the students come from in-state, 25% from out-of-state, and 5% are international.

It's December and the university is closed for the winter break period. Residence Life at Northwest operates one residence hall during the winter break holidays in order to provide housing accommodations for international and out-of-state students. This year, 200 students have opted to utilize this service and stay on campus during break. You are the hall director on-call during winter break and are supervising the 4 resident assistants (RA) who are paid a stipend to stay on campus to work in this open residence hall. Your apartment is located in a different building.

It is 1:00am on Thursday, December 30th, and you are watching movies in your apartment when you receive a panicked call from one of your RAs. She reports that she woke up when the fire alarm went off in the hall and discovered the hallways filled with thick smoke. Staff and residents evacuated the building. From the grounds outside, flames were clearly visible in windows on the 3rd and 4th floors. Police and fire crews had just arrived onsite when your RA called you. Only 2 of 4 RAs were in the building at the time of the incident. You tell your RAs to do their best to organize the crowd of residents and keep people calm. You quickly throw on a jacket and shoes and head over to the building.

Upon arrival, you encounter the following:

- The fire appears to be serious, with flames and smoke visible through windows on several floors of the 6-floor residence hall.
- Upon taking a quick headcount, a crowd of what appears to be approximately 100 students is waiting in the emergency gathering area across the street from the building. You note that many are wearing only pajama pants, light sweaters, and robes. It is about 30 degrees outside.
- You are aware that only approximately half of the total winter break residents are present outside the building, meaning that half are currently unaccounted for.
- Police, fire and medical crews are on scene securing the area, addressing the fire, and interviewing and treating some students.
- Your RAs inform you that they overheard some residents talking about a couple of students who had recently been joking about building smoke bombs, and that they may have been in one of the floor kitchens at the time the fire started.
- About 20 minutes into your work with the officials and students on site, you observe a local news van pull up to the scene.

Your Task:

In a 3-5-page written response, please describe what you believe to be the key issues in this case study and detail what you would consider to be an appropriate resolution process for the short and long-term.