RHA Community Programming Initiative

The Residence Hall Association is committed to building community within the residence halls through programming. This commitment is demonstrated in numerous ways, one of which is the allocation of a portion of the RHA Budget to Student Staff members, who share the goal of community building in residence halls. To this end, RHA will commit funds to Student Staff members on an academic year basis. Student Staff may use these funds to put on larger programs in order to promote community in the residence halls.

For the 2014-15 academic year, the Residence Hall Association is allocating 6% of its annual operating budget to the Community Program Request. This program will be evaluated on an annual basis by RHA for its effectiveness and continued viability.

Policies, Procedures and Practices

Introduction

These funds are restricted to enhancing the living community within UMass Amherst residence halls. Policies related to what these funds may be used for, funding request and approval processes, and proposal deadlines are presented below.

There are three basic intents of this program... to improve campus residential community, to support Student Staff members in the shared goal of community building, and to enhance the student residential experience at UMass Amherst.

Funding provided by RHA will be available only for the academic year for which it is allocated. Half of allocated funding will be reserved for fall semester, with the other half reserved for use during the spring semester.

It is the commitment of RHA to fund and support this program until it no longer responds to its mission, or is no longer financially viable.

Policies

1. **Scope:** Funding may be used only for programs or initiatives that contribute to community building within the residence halls. Possible funding allocations include building/cluster wide programming that Student Staff members would not normally perform or provide due to budget limitations.

2. **Eligibility:** The Student Staff member must provide proof that a needs assessment was conducted. The student staff member must also attend the RHA meeting prior to their request presentation in order to familiarize themselves with the organization and confirm that their request has been pre-approved.

3. **Funding Limits:** RHA may fund up to 40% of the cost of a program, up to a maximum of $500 per program.
4. **Allocation Calendar:** In order to receive consideration for funding, completed requests must be submitted on or before the following deadlines (requests received after these dates will not be considered):

   **Fall:**  
   November 11th  
   **Spring:**  
   March 10th

   The presentation of the request and subsequent voting will take place at the RHA General Body meeting a week from the date that the proposal was submitted. However, the Director reserves the right to adjust this timeline as necessary.

5. **Procurement:** UMass Amherst policies will apply to all expenditures of funds.

6. **RHA Liaison:** RHA will utilize its Outreach and Advocacy Committee (OAC) to facilitate this program and to work with Student Staff members.

7. **Approvals:** All projects considered for endorsement by RHA must first be approved by the OAC. The Student Staff member(s) making the request must then come to an RHA meeting to present the request.

8. **Conditions of Funding:** Any promotional materials for a program that is approved for funding by RHA must include the RHA logo. Please contact the Associate Director for the file.

**Procedure**

The process for requesting funds has been created to ensure effective use of the allocated budget.

The process begins by asking student staff members to assess the needs and wants of their communities. This may occur through surveys, polls at programs, suggestion boxes, conversations with residents, etc. Once needs have been determined, students should research the estimated cost of the program as well as work with others in their cluster/on campus to locate other sources of funding. Students will need to complete the Funding Request form, which can be found online at [http://www.housing.umass.edu/getinvolved/rha/index.html](http://www.housing.umass.edu/getinvolved/rha/index.html).

As a part of the process, students will be asked to attend an RHA meeting prior to their proposal presentation to familiarize themselves with the setup of our meetings before their presentation. They should also check-in that their proposal has been pre-approved by the OAC.

A flowchart for the process is included below. Additionally, contact the Director with any questions, concerns, or to turn in a request.

**Director’s Contact Information:** Sam Kamlarz – umassamherst.rhadirector@gmail.com
• Student Staff Member determines needs/wants of community members
• In conjunction with their advisor, Student Staff Members complete the funding request form
• Should include price, specific program details, and program goals

• Outreach and Advocacy Committee meets to review the CPI request and ensure it meets all pre-requisites and eligibility guidelines
• Form is submitted to RHA Director for final pre-approval

• The Director will invite the Student Staff member to present their proposal at an RHA meeting
• RHA General Body will vote on whether to fund the request (Proposals will be voted on as they are received)