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Housing and Residence Education

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To whom it may concern:

It is with great pride that I submit this nomination of Jason Fraser Nash for SEAHO's Graduate Student of the Year. I have had the pleasure to serve as the direct supervisor of Jason here at the University of Florida since May 2008 and I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience supervising and mentoring this young man as he plans a long career in Housing and Student Affairs.

Jason moved onto campus in May of 2008, Summer A Semester, and has worked every possible semester since as a Graduate Hall Director (GHD). Over the past 6 semesters, Jason has managed the day to day operations of at least one residence hall, supervising between 6 and 12 Resident Assistants, serving in a 24 hour on call capacity, advising an Area Government, and serving as a Judicial Hearing Officer. The 6 staffs that he supervised adored his leadership, dependability and the organizational skills he brought to the positions and to their lives.

Each semester, the RAs have a chance to anonymously evaluate their GHD. On a staff evaluation of Jason, one RA said, "Jason is the coolest GHD in the area. He is quick, efficient, and to the point....I like that. He also goes above his call of duty as GHD when it comes to certain RA issues: roommate, facilities and payroll issues. I feel comfortable speaking with Jason on every level as he performs his role as a GHD spectacularly. I can count on him and he's fun to talk to. He keeps the job lighthearted, but also knows when to be serious. I am comfortable talking to him about anything. Simply put, he is an amazing GHD." I could insert many quotes similar to this as his student staff members have consistently been impressed with his managerial style.

As a teammate to his five peer GHDs, he was a leader, mentor, helper and friend. He continuously developed systems that would make everyone's life easier, streamlining the programming model, the on call system and the desk scheduling system for the area. For all new GHDs, he was an outstanding mentor, constantly assisting in training them and sharing resources and advice with them. While he directly supervised between 6 and 12 RAs at a time, he was approachable to all 32 RAs in the Murphree Area. Everyone knew they could depend on Jason and they constantly looked to him in times of crisis and for accurate, consistent, dependable advice. Seeing the importance of building a great team, Jason also organized the

Murphlympics, a series of competitions in which the 6 GHDs and 32 RAs and I competed with one another to build community amongst staff. For the Murphlympics, Jason organized tournaments in basketball, billiards, racquetball, tug of war, hot dog eating, Wii games, board games and dodge ball to name a few. He truly believed in the importance of working hard and playing hard and he role modeled this to his peers and the RA staff.

He performed at the highest level possible in all of the above responsibilities, but the reason he is deserving of this award is because of the other responsibilities he sought out. He is a graduate student who eagerly involved himself on very possible committee, joined all feasible groups and crammed every experience he could into the two years and two summers he spent at the University of Florida.

Jason worked on the Compass Pointer Committee, which is the Housing Department's on-going staff training resource brain trust, producing weekly handouts to assist RAs with different aspects of the RA Position. He served on the Assistant Director of Housing Search Committee, served on the Corry Village Renovation Committee, and also worked on the weekly Contract Appeals Committee, reviewing appeals for housing contract release. He also volunteered to help the Coordinator for Residential Judicial Programs, JoCynda Hudson, hear higher-level student code of conduct judicial cases and helped her train her Judicial Graduate. He also co-taught a RA class and he assisted in Graduate Hall Director Training, co-presenting Student Development Theory to the GHDs who were not majoring in Student Personnel. The spectrum of committees on which he served and experiences he volunteered to take on will obviously enrich him as a professional and his willingness to always lend a helping hand was very beneficial to our department.

Jason's practicum experience took place at the Academic Advising Center at the University of Florida, where he sat in on academic advising sessions, developed a resource for first year students that can be used as a bookmark, and developed a progressive tracking letter for students. His internship experience took place at Santa Fe Community College, where he assisted the Orientation Coordinator by doing presentations for parents of incoming students, assisted front desk personnel and developed an orientation tracking system.

Jason also gained experience putting theory into practice as he was directly responsible for a sophomore experience learning community, the Returning Gators Program. Utilizing the sophomore identity theory of Dr. Molly Schaller, Jason worked with his RAs to create an educational residential learning experience for sophomores and upper division students who lived in his area.

With an eye towards being a great housing professional, Jason also mastered the facilities aspect of a housing position. He took tours of the machinery that

operates residence halls with the maintenance staff, served on renovation committees and volunteered to do inventories of graduate and family housing apartments. Jason, running a hall that had a wide array of unique rooms, took it upon himself to measure the dimensions of each and every room in his building.

Jason was the two time recipient of the Department's Student Personnel in Higher Education Scholarship and he is an excellent candidate for this recognition as he has demonstrated his dedication the housing profession, student affairs, and most importantly, the students here at the University of Florida.

Sincerely,

Ryan M. Winget  
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