

Residence Life

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January 5, 2009

Dear SEAHO Awards Selection Committee,

I would like to nominate Jodi Marani for the SEAHO Conference Fee Waiver Scholarship. Jodi is in her first year as a Resident Director in the Office of Residence Life, supervising staff within Kirwan Tower, a hall of over 600 residents. She is very deserving of this scholarship and I fully support her application.

Jodi has actually been involved with the Office of Residence Life as a Graduate Hall Director the past two years. Although she did not come from a Residence Life background, she proved to be a positive influence on her RAs and modeled the right attitude towards doing the job. This fall, Jodi has successfully transitioned from the Hall Director position to a full-time Resident Director position. With this move the size of her residence hall, as well as the size of her R.A. staff, has more than tripled. Jodi has handled this transition with ease and has done a masterful job of defusing situations - involving both resident and staff conflicts - that might have become larger problems under other staff members.

One example that truly speaks to Jodi’s character came last spring during hiring for Senior RA positions. Although most Hall Directors were looking to promote someone already on their staff, Jodi realized -after looking at the candidate pool - that the R.A.s who had applied from her hall did not measure up to some of the other candidates. Instead of taking the easy way out, Jodi selected an R.A. from another hall and effectively stood up to the criticism and disappointment from her staff that was a consequence of her decision. In doing so, Jodi hired a very effective Senior R.A. who deserved to be hired, while letting her own staff know that they would have to “step up” if they wanted to be promoted.

Overall, Jodi has spent countless hours answering questions, helping students, and advocating for her residents needs. She has been the first one to bring up specific issues within the hall that need to be worked out and she has done whatever she could to help in the meantime. Jodi has truly proved to be an advocate for her residents and staff in Kirwan Tower.

As a relatively new full-time staff member, Jodi is still just learning about the world of Residence Life and Student Affairs. She will be attending SEAHO for the first time this year and is looking forward to the opportunity for growth this will bring. Being able to attend SEAHO would help continue her development as a professional staff member and give her an opportunity to learn more about our field. It has been my pleasure to supervise Jodi for the past two years and I would be honored to have her represent the University of Kentucky at the 2009 SEAHO Conference in Birmingham.

Sincerely,

Stephen E. Stauffer

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University of Kentucky