



# Larissa Jiron

A joyride through college  
Weber State University  
Distinguished Service Award

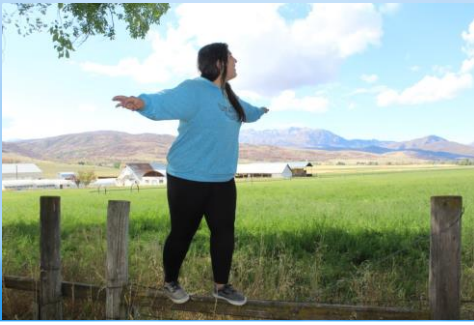


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# Livin' Like Larissa

Larissa is from West Jordan, Utah and moved up to Ogden to go school at Weber State University to study communications, emphasizing in digital media with a Spanish minor. With a 3.4 GPA, She regularly publishes articles for the school newspaper, the Signpost, regularly volunteers at the GOAL foundation, and is looking towards a career in residence life.

- Favorite:
  - Animal: 3 toed sloths
  - Food: cheese
  - Thing about housing: building interpersonal relationships and having an outlet for creativity
  - Amusement Park: Universal Studios
- Hobbies:
  - Snowboarding
  - Photography
  - Producing videos
  - Hiking
  - Night swimming
  - "Sleeping is life"

Larissa has been to 15 states and 3 countries!

She traveled to Costa Rico to study Spanish this past summer, living in a home, where she saw beaches, and rural and suburban culture.



"School is the longest emotional rollercoaster I've ever been on -- good thing I'm obsessed with amusement parks!"

-Larissa Jiron

# The Beginning: RHA

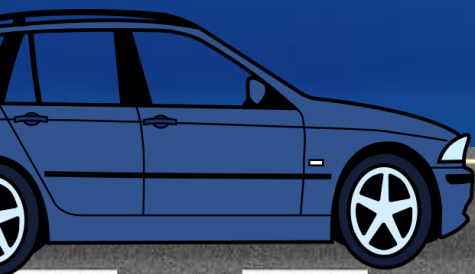
Larissa's journey in housing and res life began her first year in Fall 2014 when she stumbled in to a Residence Hall Association meeting hoping to learn more about how to become a Resident Assistant. "I just knew I wanted to be involved with housing," Larissa remembers as she came to the RHA meeting her freshman year. She immediately fell in love with it and hasn't looked back!



Larissa's first Conference: IACURH 2014!

She became involved in all of RHA's endeavors, and became involved in monthly programs, like helping establish the advocacy initiative of the 21+ Living Community. In addition to coming to IACURH 2014 as a delegate, she even stepped up when the club was in need and went as acting president to the No Frills 2015 Conference. She did battle of the sexes. RHA wasn't big her first yea and she helped build it up (helping turn our chapter into a building block worthy chapter!)

Her trip may have started as a happy accident, but her impact has been lasting and was just a small glimpse of the road ahead of her!



"Because the greatest part of a road trip isn't arriving at your destination. It's all the wild stuff that happens along the way."



# Becoming an RA

In the Spring of her Freshman year Larissa saw an opportunity to expand her horizons, and she applied for an RA position at the on campus apartments for the 2015-2016 school year.

After being selected to serve as an RA for the 2015-2016 year, Larissa drove herself hard to become an RA she envisioned herself to be: she wanted to see her residents become successful throughout the school year and support them.; she wanted to build a tight knit community with her residents.

Larissa performed an excellent job her first year, she was honored in being a part of University Village's Program of the year – the haunted maze for Halloween and she was nominated for Buddy of the year!



Larissa getting injured for being too scary at the Haunted Maze

Some of the programs Larissa produced to connect with her residents:

- Sex-Ed Program: Larissa made stress balls out of condoms. Condom stress relief , talked about sex statistics (STDs/etc)
- Protect Your Balls Program: Everyone got their own ping pong ball, and had to protect it . There were 3 groups: 1 group had their ping pong ball , and had it signify something important to them. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> group tried to do whatever they could to get those ping pong balls from them. At the end they had a discussion about why its important ot keep what is sacred to you, even if there's lots of tempting offers. Why did people give up their balls so easily, why they pritected it so hard and did good.
- Cupcake diversity program – baking, diff food coloring, each color meatn something different , people put colors in that matched them (out of state student, worked, ) see how they turned out and how people can be the same but different
- Ice blocking – social program to help her bond with her residents by ice blocking down a hill nearby on campus
- Halloween program – creating and setting up a haunted maze in the community center, acting as a scarer in the maze with her far-reaching scream

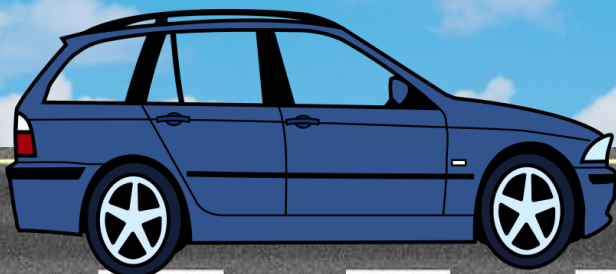
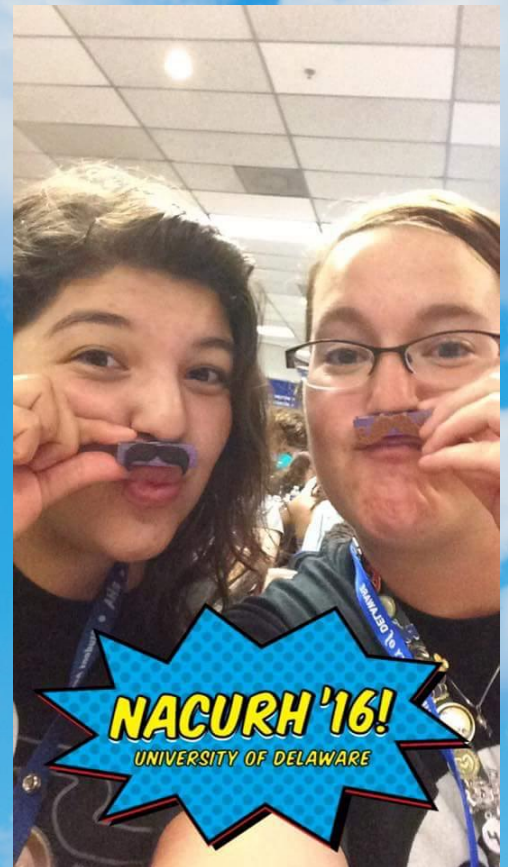
“ I wanted to be an RA because it forced me to be more outgoing, RHA was the beginning light but I knew I wanted to help out in more ways than just RHA”- Larissa



# The Road Continues: RHA 2015/16

Most the time, when we hit an intersection or a fork in the road, we pick one way or another to go, but not Larissa! While she was able to serve residents in her hall at RHA, she was able to serve the community as a whole by continuing in RHA as the RA-RHA liaison position.

Larissa continued to be an integral part of our chapter's RHA. She helped write a winning bid for RHA Building Block, she helped get signatures for our ongoing petition to create a 21+ Living Community, and most importantly she helped foster growth in RHA and create communication to the rest of res life!



"Life is a roadtrip – enjoy each day and don't bring too much baggage."



# Gas Petal: RA 2016



Halloween Program 2016

This year, Larissa continued her wild ride with housing with being an RA. She went to RAppin' 2016 and has been stepping up in a variety of ways.

Larissa has stepped up to many positions that needed to be filled in res life at University Village. One of the tasks she took on was the RAMP position (resident assistant of management position), which is a peer mentor position, working with EAST (Engineering, Applied Science and Technology) engineering. In that position, she acts as the liaison between students and their college EAST. She programs towards their interests, such as her water balloon program with a home-made trebuchet or an xbox gaming contest program. Her goal with this position is to connect students of similar interest to each other, the community, and other resource to promote their individual growth and wellness, as well as build relationships.

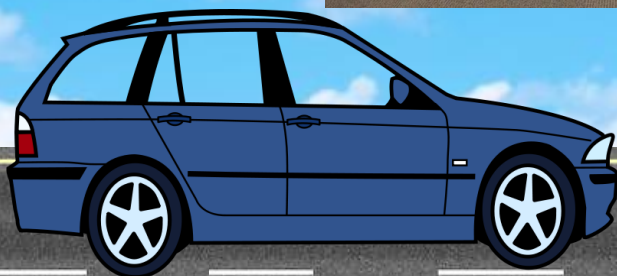
As far as her usual RA duties go, Larissa has put on successful programs such as a "positive picture" program to build self esteem and raise awareness of suicide and talk about QPR training (question, persuade, refer). She has an upcoming program, "lets taco bout it" discussion program, talk about controversial subjects (like, "if you were god, would you have a hell? What's more important love or trust?") She hopes to bring the community closer, and as a whole let others gain new perspectives on these hard subjects.

Larissa was also AIMHO nominated for outstanding undergraduate student award – an award for an outstanding student in housing who has gone above and beyond in their work and also possibly going into student affairs. Larissa will find out before the end of the semester if she receives the award or not.

"She's dedicated to what she does – she cares." – Shelby Orr, one of Larissa's residents



RAppin' 2016



"Roads were made for journeys, not destinations." - Confucius

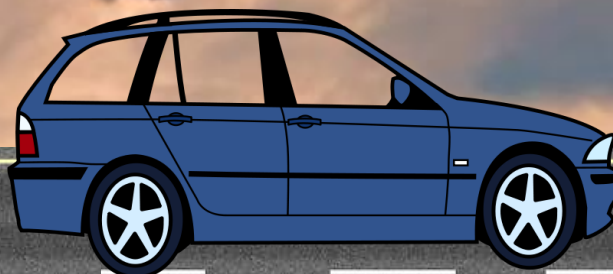




# Truckin' along: Junior year RHA

As her third year with RHA, Larissa is still truckin' right along with the club. With Larissa getting the opportunity to serve as the Residence Hall Senator, she does not currently have an official title for her position in RHA. Despite this, she has been one of the most integral parts of the club; while we were rebuilding she stepped in the place of president position while we were rebuilding our RHA after many members graduating the year before. Larissa helped recruit people to bring in new faces and get more residents showing up to meetings and fill our exec board for the 2016-2017 school year.; one of her residents became our president!

This year, RHA has put on several programs such as grocery bingo, having a booth at the Halloween Festival painting pumpkins, and a Halloween Door Decorating contest.



"Sometimes, you find yourself in the middle of nowhere, and sometimes, in the middle of nowhere, you find yourself."



# Scenic Route: Senator

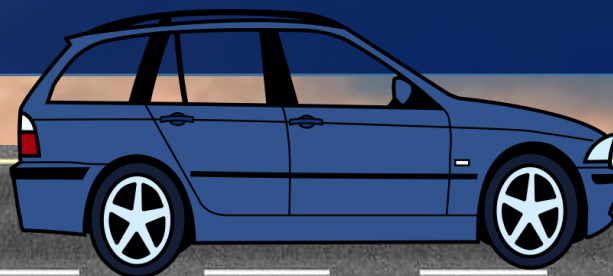
For the 2016-2017 school year, Larissa got the opportunity to widen her view on res life and become the Residence and Housing Senator for Weber State University Student Association. As a senator, Larissa plays the roll of communicong between constituency (residents) and campus officials. This has given her the unique ability to builde a bridge and directly communicate to residents and the university through the lens of a student and staff member.



Left: Larissa at Project Lead, a leadership conference at WSU to helps teach the delegates how to apply leadership techniques to the real world

Larissa has many different tasks as senator, including several commitees:

- Food service advisor committee – Provide productive and specific suggestions, insights, and feedback to the weber dining team. Also includes discussing how to improve dining on campus and within res halls
- Housing appeal – When residents get evicted and want to appeal, this committee handles the appeal cases for those residents and helps find solutions
- Union board committee – Make decisions on construction and revisements and improvements within the union
- University Scholarship Committee – Deal with numbers, deciding how the scholarships should be distributed within each college within the university and activities such as athletics
- Bylaws and Constitution Committee Chair – create legislation for the university and make revisements to the constitution



"Wherever you go, go with all your heart."



# Seeing the stars

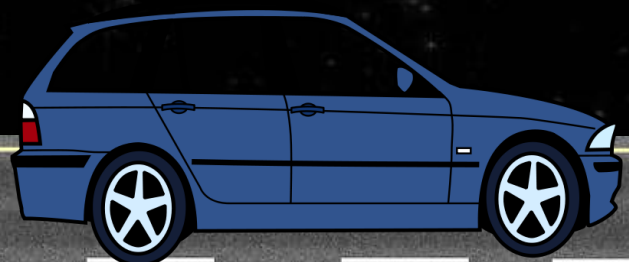
Over the past two years, Larissa has dedicated her heart to residence life, and it shines through as the road continues into her third year at Weber State University. To sum up Larissa has been recognized for her efforts in several ways from being AIMHO-nominated for the outstanding undergraduate student, being awarded Program of the Year and nominated for Buddy of the Year as an RA, to helping RHA write a winning bid for the 2015-2016 year. Although her journey has only expanded as time goes on, she has done a great job of balancing between academics, and all the different facets that her residence life encompasses.

Larissa possesses a remarkable ability to understand people in a way that makes her a unique and exceptional RA. –fellow RA Tim Maserang



## Pit Stops along the way:

- IACURH 2014
- No Frills 2015
- RAppin' 2015
- IACURH 2015
- NACURH 2016
- RAppin' 2016
- Diversity Conference
- Project Lead
- IACURH 2016







Hey IACURH!

I am writing today to heartily give my recommendation that Larissa Jiron be awarded the IACURH Distinguished Service Award this year. Larissa is a phenomenal student leader and her commitment to her school and region for the last three years truly distinguished her from her peers.

Larissa's opportunity in Housing began in Fall 2014 when she stumbled in to a Residence Hall Association meeting hoping to learn more about how to become a Resident Assistant. Her journey may have begun as a happy accident, but her experience since that day has been intentional and has benefited the community at Weber State University in so many ways.

In just the past year, Larissa has served as: RHA RA Liaison, Housing Senator with Weber State University Student Association, Living Learning Community Peer Mentor, and in the employment role as a Resident Assistant. Larissa has also been selected to represent Weber State at IACURH 2015, NACURH 2016, and RAppin' 2016. Then, in April 2016, Larissa helped to bring to life the first ever Utah Programing Conference which brought student housing leaders from all across the state together.

These are just her qualifications, however the things about Larissa that would truly make her a great recipient of this award are the things that don't get put on a resume. Larissa makes a lasting impact not because of the many positions she's held or the conferences she has attend, but because of the intangible characteristics of devotion and inspiration that are consistently present in her work.

In a team, Larissa is always a leader by example if not in position. In any environment she is seen as the facilitator who often brings all sides and perspectives in to an organized plan of action. Larissa is intentionally inclusive in her interactions with others and is seen by her peers as a mentor to newcomers. Larissa is the type of student that we dream about getting to work with and helps reinforce that the work we do is important. Although Larissa would deny it if anyone asked, I think the reason she does so much for our organizations at Weber State Housing is because of how much this experience has brought her. As Larissa's supervisor and advisor it has been a privilege to watch her develop and nominate her for this Distinguished Service Award.

Sincerely,

Brandee Bernat  
Area/Residence Education Coordinator  
Weber State University Housing & Residence Life





October 28, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of recommendation for Larissa Jiron regarding the IACURH Distinguished Service Award. Larissa has served in the Housing & Residence Life Office for many years. She has been an RA for two years, she has served in RHA, and is currently the Residence Hall Senator.

Larissa is well respected by the residents under her supervision and by the team she works alongside. She is a trusted student leader within the department and is often looked to by peers for guidance on any number of issues. Larissa has done well in the area of community development in her area as well, taking on an additional Peer Mentor role with our Engineering and Applied Science Technology living learning community.

Larissa serves as a student representative on two University Committees that I also serve on. She represents herself and her constituents well on both of these committees. On the University Scholarship Committee she listens to understand the issues and asks questions related to areas that would affect Student Affairs and students. On the Housing Appeals Committee she engages with the rest of the committee to consider appeals from students.

I recommend Larissa for the Distinguished Service Award. Her commitment to Housing & Residence Life and Weber State is evidenced in her hard work and energetic attitude.

Sincerely,

Daniel Kilcrease, Ed.D.  
Director of Housing & Residence Life

# Citations

- **Backgrounds**
- Map- [outel.org](http://outel.org)
- Cloud- [smarterbacker.com](http://smarterbacker.com)
- Evening Sky- [www.natures-desktop.com](http://www.natures-desktop.com)
- Night Sky- [i.ytimg.com](http://i.ytimg.com)
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