

1445 Summit Street
Columbus, OH 43201-2105

tel. +1.614.292.0099
url. acuho-i.org



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Contact:

Erin A. Hennessy

(202) 664-4205 (cell)

erin@tvpcommunications.com

**NEW DATA HIGHLIGHTS POSITIVE IMPACT OF RESIDENTIAL CAMPUS EXPERIENCE IN
ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Most comprehensive study of student housing experience in decades

COLUMBUS, OH (July 14, 2021)—Students who participate in a residential college experience are more likely to persist year-over-year than those who do not, according to new data released today by the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I). This finding is included in the association’s new report, [“The Case for Campus Housing,”](#) which is the result of a multi-year research engagement with the Center for Postsecondary Research at the Indiana University School of Education in Bloomington.

According to data collected as part of the National Survey of Student Engagement, first-year students who live on campus persist to the second year at a rate 2.0 percentage points higher than those who live independent of their families off campus (92 percent vs. 90 percent). This difference is largely attributable to engagement in learning activities that took place in the residence, including the ability to attend classes, interact with faculty, meet with advisors, study and do projects with other students, use academic support services, and attend social, diversity-related, and wellness activities.

Sophomore students who live on campus persist to the third year at a rate about 2.2 percentage points higher (94.9 percent vs. 92.8 percent) than those who live independent of their families off campus. In addition, those sophomores who live further than 10 minutes from campus are less likely to persist than those who live within 10 minutes.

“Campus housing and residence life professionals have long been key to the health and well-being of college and university students,” said Mary DeNiro, CEO of ACUHO-I. “This new data helps quantify the impact that strong, well-resourced campus housing and residential life programs can have on the academic success of all students. Putting this data in front of campus leaders, parents, and our own members will help make the case for continued investment in quality programs.”

Other findings include that many students of color (Asian, Black, and multiracial) who picked their roommates perceived a significantly and substantially more welcoming campus environment. However, significantly fewer students of color (25 percent) choose their own roommates as compared to white students (40 percent).

The study also highlighted the benefits of living-learning environments. Specifically, students who reside in living-learning communities persist at a rate 2.2 percentage points higher than other on-campus students (93 percent vs. 90.8 percent). Among male students, the difference is considerable—those who reside in living-learning communities persist at a rate 4.7 percentage points higher than those on-campus male students who do not (95.5 percent vs. 90.8 percent).

“With a diverse data set of 33,000 respondents from 76 residential institutions, this is the most comprehensive study of the student housing experience in decades,” said Robert M. Gonyea, Ed.D., associate director of the Center for Postsecondary Research and co-author of the report. “The National Survey of Student Engagement is proud of our partnership with ACUHO-I in delivering affirming and consequential findings to residence life professionals, student affairs administrators, and other campus leaders.”

“The Case for Campus Housing” report and supporting research were made possible by the ACUHO-I Education and Research Foundation. In 2018, ACUHO-I launched the Sponsored Research Program with support from the Foundation. This program represents the Association’s largest single financial investment in research on behalf of the profession. The inaugural grant was awarded to the Center for Postsecondary Research to collect student housing data through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, pronounced “Nessie”). The data are from a representative sample of 33,000 first-year and sophomore students enrolled at 76 diverse residential institutions who completed NSSE in 2018. Following the core NSSE questionnaire, respondents completed an additional set of items related to their on- or off-campus living arrangements, including residential activities, experiences with roommates, living-learning communities, financial stress, sense of belonging, and the perceived benefits of housing.

“The ACUHO-I Education and Research Foundation is pleased to provide funding to advance this kind of research so that decision makers, practitioners, our students, and their families are able to access data to answer their questions about the value of housing and residential life programs,” said Shannon Staten, chair of the Foundation board. “It’s clear that the work our members do has real impact and this project is an important way of quantifying its value.”

Copies of “The Case for Campus Housing” and other related resources can be found on the ACUHO-I website at <https://bit.ly/acuhoi-nsse-study>.

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About ACUHO-I

ACUHO-I is the leading organization of choice for campus housing and residence life professionals and home to more than 17,000 professionals representing 1.2 million on-campus students from around the globe. The organization works to continuously optimize on-campus student living environments. With credible benchmarking data, research, and talking points, ACUHO-I demonstrates the positive impact that campus housing and residence life has on student recruitment, retention, growth, and achievement – helping to further elevate the profile of university housing departments, prioritize their needs, and inform decisions that boost the reputation of entire institutions. ACUHO-I invests significant resources in the development of research products, leadership tools, and training programs that housing departments can use to persuade influencers, perform better, and produce exceptional campus housing and residence life solutions. ACUHO-I members enjoy access – making it easy for them to create their own experiences and take advantage of valuable offerings delivered through an array of digital channels, live events, and publications. www.acuho-i.org