

# ***ACUHO-I Strategic Plan***

**2024-2026**



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Housing Officers – International  
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## ***ACUHO-I Strategic Plan: 2024-2026***

In his book *The Truth About Innovation*, author Max McKeown noted that “change is inevitable, progress is not.” That spirit was present as ACUHO-I volunteer leaders created the latest iteration of the Association’s strategic plan. Its application is even more germane when considering that the previous guiding document was released as the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically forced campuses and associations alike into an approach that was anything but business as usual. Change had come in force.

That change, for all its challenges, also exposed opportunities to rethink entrenched approaches, lagging applications, and overlooked viewpoints. These lessons were all part of the strategic planning process used by the Association of College & University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) Executive Board to identify long-term goals and objectives. The strategic plan supports the organization’s vision and mission statements by outlining the high-level plan to achieve both. It gives members a broad, long-term understanding of ACUHO-I’s priorities and transparency into how resources will be used. And it is an intentional method of assessing opportunities and risks and determining approaches for the Association’s work in service to the profession.

In addition, the 2024-2026 strategic framework comes at a time defined by significant pressures on higher education and the professionals who make it their calling. It is accepted that campus housing is a primary and predictable differentiator in a student’s journey. From the time eager potential students take a campus tour, accept their admissions offer, and arrive for move-in campus housing shapes their experience through their academic and co-curricular endeavors. Campus housing programs provide support and safety to residential students. They help students effectively navigate campus resources and persist in their studies. They are responsible for the facilities, financing, software, marketing, and everything in between. In short, campus housing sculpts residential students’ life-long impression, satisfaction, and relationship with their campus. Considering the large responsibility these departments and their staff hold, they deserve and require a professional association to provide them with the tools, resources, network, and opportunities they need to succeed.

### **The Strategic Planning Process**

To learn about its members and their needs, ACUHO-I re-engaged Association Laboratories for a membership survey and benchmarked results against those received in late 2019 and early 2020. Approximately 1,400 individuals provided feedback via the research conducted by Association Laboratory. Other members engaged in planning sessions and additional group settings to share their perceptions of ACUHO-I’s unique member value, areas to leverage expertise, and opportunities to amplify the importance of the work of ACUHO-I and campus housing professionals. This research project included two phases:

- **Qualitative Research (January 2023)**
  - A brief open-ended questionnaire was sent to selected ACUHO-I members, stakeholders, and leadership, such as the Executive Board, Foundation Board; committee chairs, select industry experts, etc.
  - The survey included the same questions asked in 2019-2020 to identify environmental changes since the previous pre-COVID research.
  
- **Quantitative Research (March-April 2023)**
  - A quantitative survey was sent to all member and nonmember contacts in the ACUHO-I database.
  - Because it was a benchmarking survey, most questions were unchanged to allow for comparisons, although some questions were changed to incorporate findings from the qualitative research.

This engagement reinforced the commitment to develop a strategic plan that includes global stakeholders and positions ACUHO-I for long-term, sustainable growth and professional leadership grounded in data. Against this backdrop, it was determined that ACUHO-I will focus on the following areas over the next three years to provide members with the tools they need to be successful.

- 1. Provide professional development and learning opportunities for campus housing professionals at all levels of career trajectory by utilizing a future-focused lens of a post-pandemic world.**
- 2. Serve campus housing professionals effectively and efficiently with omnichannel and modular formats for member products, services, and research. This includes but is not limited to, online and in-person events, webinars, virtual roundtables, podcasts, self-paced learning, and more.**
- 3. Deliver the comprehensive Future of the Profession Initiative recommendations, particularly the high-interest areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion; health and well-being; and workforce sustainability.**
- 4. Pursue partnerships with regions, peer associations, external organizations, campuses, and other organizations to engage and promote the work of campus housing.**
- 5. Amplify the importance of campus housing by engaging chancellors, presidents, provosts, policymakers, and other influential stakeholders in our work.**
- 6. Provide volunteer opportunities that enhance members' experience, skill set, and the Association's goals.**

This plan acknowledges that in the three years since the last plan was created, much has changed in the world, higher education, and the profession. Yet, many of the core attributes of the 2021-2023 plan still resonate with members and have meaning. Thus, this plan honors the opportunity to fulfill some of those goals and objectives delayed by the pandemic.

## ***Core Values and Beliefs***

Along with member input, an understanding of the professional environment, and an honest assessment of resources, the ACUHO-I Strategic Plan must be driven by established and agreed-upon core values and beliefs that genuinely reflect who ACUHO-I members are and the work that they do.

- We value inclusive excellence and fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable membership that can influence staff and students' sense of belonging and engagement.
- We value leadership and engagement that supports, challenges, and inspires our members to greatness while serving our students with humility and care.
- We value advocacy and responsiveness that champions the profession's concerns and leverages resources for action.
- We value cultivating global knowledge within the housing profession to transform it into meaningful content expertise that guides our practice.

## ***Vision Statement***

ACUHO-I will be the preeminent resource and champion for the global campus housing profession.

## ***Mission Statement***

ACUHO-I will cultivate a diverse, inclusive, and equitable profession that delivers transformative residential student experiences. We will do so through extensive knowledge resources, innovative operational models, courageous advocacy, and resolute community connections.



## Education

### Goal Statement

**ACUHO-I’s professional development and educational opportunities will prepare those in campus housing to positively impact and transform higher education, their programs, and the students they serve.**

### Objectives

1. Leverage current educational opportunities and the recommendations generated from the Future of the Profession Initiative to meet the changing needs of campus housing by focusing on eight imperatives that the process identified as critical.
2. Integrate Student Affairs Educator Certification into members’ professional development plans.
3. Capitalize on technology innovation to develop multi- and omnichannel approaches that increase access and engagement, raise the quality of educational opportunities, and establish efficiencies that decrease time-to-market.
4. Forge partnerships that are based on the strategic desire to bring campus housing expertise to other associations and bring needed expertise from other associations or industries to the ACUHO-I membership.

### Possible Strategies

1. Integrate resources, programmatic elements, and subject matter experts identified through the Future of the Profession into existing symposia, institutes, and other educational programming.

2. Utilize a just-in-time (half-day, drive-in, and region-focused) programming model to provide access to content from the eight imperative areas for professionals in various geographical locations, institutional environments, and career trajectory levels.
3. Provide ongoing education regarding Student Affairs Educator Certification, its target audiences, the benefits of achieving certification, and how this program will address professional pipeline issues for campus housing.
4. Secure intentional partnerships with professionals in the field and other associations to develop skills-based educational program opportunities of high interest for campus housing. For example, ACUHO-I can expand its online learning presence by:
  - a. refreshing the occupancy management course based on what was learned during the pandemic;
  - b. developing an introductory occupancy management course for professionals who do not currently work directly in occupancy management but wish to have a greater understanding of this area of the operation;
  - c. cultivating a partnership to develop a course focused on higher education finance, which will help prepare housing professionals to participate in and influence the outcomes of critical campus decisions.

## ***Knowledge Resources***

### **Goal Statement**

**The campus housing profession will advance through ACUHO-I's cultivation, generation, and dissemination of useful and timely resources.**

### **Objectives**

1. Tell the story of campus housing using research and data.
2. Expand members' awareness, knowledge, and support of research relevant to the field and the campuses and students they serve.

### **Possible Strategies**

1. Develop a plan for the creation and intentional timing/release of reports and resources of varying levels of depth using Campus Housing Index data (traditional reports, one-pagers, blog posts, the *Talking Stick* and the *Journal of College & University Student Housing*, infographics, PowerPoint decks, etc.).
2. Expand the network of partnerships from which to cultivate data and resources.
3. Curate and promote new research (e.g., dissertations, theses, etc.) that contribute to the ongoing understanding of campus housing, residence life work, and complementary areas.
4. Continue to develop themed issues of the *Journal of College & University Student Housing* that address issues of importance to the field.

# Community

## Goal Statement

**The campus housing community will benefit from expanded opportunities for engagement that support identity, areas of practice, geography, and career trajectory.**

## Objectives

1. Increase ACUHO-I's visibility to individuals in the profession, especially professionals early in their career and those working at traditionally under-resourced institutions (e.g., small colleges and universities, minority-serving institutions, etc.).
2. Expand opportunities for engagement around practice, affinity, geography, job roles, and career trajectory.
3. Cultivate meaningful and lasting relationships with faculty invested in higher education and campus housing.

## Possible Strategies

1. Continue ACUHO-I's efforts around programming that is most accessible (e.g., virtual offerings) for professionals with fewer professional development dollars, as this is one of the first points of entry for these audiences. Develop offerings and other delivery methods aligned with these audiences' needs and interests.
2. Identify opportunities for micro-volunteering (short-term and low commitment) to gain awareness of the value proposition of ACUHO-I and create a pathway for deeper volunteerism in the future.
3. Evaluate volunteer roles (committees, advisory groups, networks, etc.) for effectiveness and consider ways their roles can be modified to be more meaningful and meet the expectations of today's members.
4. Create opportunities for representatives from key community stakeholder groups of interest (e.g., regions, faculty, etc.) to come together with representatives from ACUHO-I to discuss challenges, opportunities, and ways to support each other's goals better.
5. Execute communications campaign to promote ACUHO-I's work to graduate preparatory programs and similarly invested faculty in the field of higher education administration/campus housing
6. Develop and communicate meaningful engagement opportunities with varying levels of time commitment for faculty that benefit their career progression, their campuses, their students, and the Association.

## *Influential Leadership & Advocacy*

### **Goal Statement**

**Higher education will benefit from ACUHO-I's influence on public policy in campus housing as it amplifies the importance of campus housing.**

### **Objectives**

1. Engage members with diverse areas of expertise and experience to share knowledge across key campus areas.
2. Align strategically with other higher education associations that engage successfully in advocacy efforts.
3. Support enhancing professional practice within college and university housing departments so that members are better situated to be influential leaders.

### **Possible Strategies**

1. Identify thought-leaders within ACUHO-I membership through member and staff-referral efforts.
2. Leverage active engagement with the Higher Education Consortium for Student Affairs Certification and ACUHO-I's collaborative partnership with Active Policy Solutions.
3. Create advisory services products to assist members with reviews, operational enhancement, and sharing of best practices.

### ***Strategic Planning Committee***

- Gay Perez, ACUHO-I President-Elect  
University of Virginia (VA)
- Kathy Bush Hobgood, ACUHO-I Vice-President  
Clemson University (SC)
- Olan Garrett, ACUHO-I Finance and Corporate Records Officer  
Temple University (PA)
- Vinnie Birkenmeyer, Volunteer Representative  
Pace University (NY)
- Linda Kasper, Volunteer Representative  
University of Georgia (GA)
- TJ Logan, Volunteer Representative  
The Ohio State University (OH)
- Kenny Mauk, Volunteer Representative  
University of Houston (TX)
- Vern Rogers, Volunteer Representative  
Case Western Reserve (OH)
- Nyerere Tryman, Volunteer Representative  
Auburn University (AL)
- Mary DeNiro, ACUHO-I CEO
- Holly Stapleton, ACUHO-I Senior Director of Business Operations and Chief of Staff
- Sheila Meyer, ACUHO-I Senior Director of Finance and Administration
- Peter Galloway, ACUHO-I Past President

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- Susan Norton, Workforce Sustainability Director (ex officio)  
University of Alabama (AL)
- Mary DeNiro, ACUHO-I CEO

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