



All Things Ignatian



Advanced Horizons Project – Residence Hall Staff Training

Department of Residence Life

Each year the Department of Residence Life hires upper classmen (juniors/seniors) to become Resident Advisors to freshman and sophomores living on campus. The Advanced Horizons Project is an assignment during the introductory Student Staff Course (COU 390) to provide student staff a experience of putting themselves in a situations that is “not the norm” for them. They are encouraged to experience the event as “another or a visitor.” New student staff members in Residence Life are encouraged to challenge themselves and their conceptions of self in an other cultures. They are then asked to journal about the experience and explain the following:

- What they did or where they went, and why the project was a challenge for them.
- What they learned as a result of participating in the experience and whether or not they enjoyed the activity.
- They are asked if the felt their perceptions of other changed during the project and if so to explain how and why.
- They are asked to discuss the project with peers and to journal about the why their peers responded.
- They are asked to reflect about the impact this type of activity would have on them as RAs and whether or not their perceptions of the Resident Advisors position changes as a result of this and similar activities.

Recent Reflections from the Horizons Project

“I learned that starting up conversations with people can be fun, and it can help you learn a lot about people that you do not normally encounter. I also learned that you have to be able to accept that some people do not want to talk to you and that we should allow them to have that decision even if it goes against the goals that we set for our experience.”



Expanding Horizons helps RAs create programs such as Tunnel of Oppression.



Many students choose to go to down town Omaha to engage with others they normally would not engage.

“The experiences of my group during the Advanced Horizons Project contributed to my perspective as an RA. In addition, we learned much more about our Omaha community as a whole.”

“I hope that these experiences will help me to understand the diversity of residents on my floor. Experiencing the different cultural parts of Omaha and their differences with other parts of Omaha will help me to differentiate the different backgrounds that other students bring to my floor.”

“This experience made me change all my perspectives of the area, and the things that I had always been told about the area all seem like a myth now. I believe this experience has helped me shape for the better, and to expect changes in everyday perspectives and views.”

“The advanced horizons project was definitely one of the most eye opening and changing experiences of all the training sessions. It for sure made me rethink of my preconceived notions and judgments that I often give out to people and locations that I am unfamiliar with.”

“When I saw Lee standing by the bus stop, my mind instantly told me to steer clear and not make eye contact—a stereotype I developed from my experiences strangers. But when we started a conversation with him, we found that he was perfectly capable of having a discussion about his struggles to find adequate transportation around the city.”



Develop



Create

~Division of Student Life~

We Develop, Create, Partner and Encourage



Partner



Encourage

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