

# RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA)

## LET'S TALK ABOUT **your RA experience:**

Resident Assistants provide peer leadership and mentorship to undergraduate students living within a campus residence hall. They serve informally as 'big brothers or sisters' to their peers, while formally aiming to build strong, inclusive, safe, positive, and healthy social communities. They plan weekly events for residents, they help them navigate the college experience, and they oversee duty responsibilities within the hall to support the health and safety of its residents.

## **the transferable skills acquired:**

**1. Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving:** As an RA, you uphold specific College procedures and protocols that you often have to enact on the spot. In times of crisis, you are presented with a problem that requires you to find a solution that follows the guidelines set forth by the College and also provides appropriate support for students. Some examples of situations that require quick problem-solving include facility issue responses, circumstances involving resident alcohol violations, and roommate conflicts. As an RA, you are trained to respond accordingly to these situations, while also maintaining your composure.

**2. Oral/Written Communications:** RAs complete weekly duty rotations to assess that the residence hall is in working order, and to ensure that students are healthy and safe. This requires you to complete building

logs and submit accurate reports as necessary. You also meet regularly with your Area Coordinator to discuss your role, your well-being, and how you are attending to student needs. This requires an adeptness with precise writing techniques and the ability to communicate in detail to your supervisor your goals, your work, and your concerns.

**3. Teamwork/Collaboration:** RAs are a part of a staff team. You work with ## other Resident Assistants who all have the same goal of building community within your residence hall. Together, you attend staff meetings, collaborate on social and educational programming opportunities for students, and you engage in group discussions that pertain to the needs, concerns, and well-being of your residents. This requires you to engage in staff development activities, trainings, and regular in-services to stay current on College policies



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# RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA) CONT.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT the transferable skills acquired: Cont.

and operations. The work of building a strong residence hall community requires synergy, cooperation, and strong communication amongst the team of professional staff, RAs, and students. You also encourage residents to get involved at the College by joining campus clubs and organizations that align with their interests.

**4. Global/Intercultural Fluency:** As an RA, you make a conscious effort to understand your peers and their backgrounds related to their race, ethnicity, gender identity, country of origin, culture, religion, and sexual identity. You also work to learn about relevant social movements and social justice issues (ie Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, etc.) that impact how identity may impact students' development, engagement in college, and understanding of the world.

**5. Professionalism/Work Ethic:** The RA role requires you to provide a level of supervisory oversight to your peers. You are not necessarily 'in charge' of residents, but you learn about them, engage with them regularly, and provide programming and guidance that helps them navigate college life and make good decisions. You must communicate regularly with your supervisor, arrive on time to meetings, and hold yourself accountable for your work. Much of your work is done in the evenings, on the weekends, and in between your academic course schedule. Employers seek out candidates who demonstrate this high

level of strong work ethic, priority management, and ability to manage multiple ongoing projects at once.

**6. Digital Technology:** The vast majority of student engagement in the residence halls is done in-person; therefore, the shift from in-person to remote work has brought challenges and opportunities to the role of the RA. You advertise to students through physical flyers, bulletin boards, and individual door decorations, while also developing online content to keep them educated and informed. You use apps and software programs to assist with graphic design and social engagement. You use platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom to meet with residents. You provide communication and connection via Twitter and Instagram.

**7. Leadership:** Ultimately, RAs are expected to be role models for their peers. You engage in a comprehensive, week long training, you uphold College policy, and you share your knowledge of tools and campus resources related to diversity, Title IX, Covid-19, and mental health services. You are required to demonstrate academic excellence by maintaining a minimum GPA and appropriately balancing your schoolwork, job responsibilities, and social life. Residents look up to you as a strong representative of the College.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT sample resume action statements:

- Negotiated interpersonal conflicts between multiple parties
- Fostered strong and healthy community-building within a residence hall of ### undergraduate students
- Oversaw basic building operations within a residence hall, communicating facility needs with campus leadership as appropriate
- Built strong community amongst ## undergraduate residence hall students through the development of educational and social programming on a variety of topics related to health and wellness, academic success, mental health and well-being, and diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Helped first-year students adjust socially and academically to the college experience
- Collaborated as part of a team, solving problems and responding to the social and health/safety needs of ## residents
- Confronted students who violated policy to educate them about their role in building a safe, positive, and healthy community

## CCPD TIPS

**Behavioral Interview Prompts:**  
Employers often ask questions about how you responded to specific situations.

For example:

- Tell me about a time when you experienced a conflict while working on a team.
- Describe a time when you had to work well under pressure.
- Give me an example of a time when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake, and how you handled it.

## S.T.A.R. METHOD

You can use STAR as a framework to structure your response to behavioral interview questions.

- Describe the context and background for a **S**ituation that's relevant to the question.
- Explain the **T**ask that needed to be completed. What was the goal?
- Outline specific **A**ctions you took. How did you exhibit transferable skills?
- Share the **R**esults of your actions. What was the outcome? What did you learn?

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Disclaimer: Because each student's experience will vary, use this resource as a general guide for telling your unique story.

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