

# RAs, FAs employ people skills, leadership to manage residents

Working for free room and board and a stipend, housing staff keep residents in line

By Chelsea Duncan  
News Reporter

Whether it's enforcing rules among their peers or finding a burning sofa in a trash bin, resident assistants and Freshman Interest Group academic assistants face an array of challenges throughout their time as University residence-hall employees.

Residence Life Director Sandy Schoonover said being a residence-hall staff member can be difficult but rewarding.

"I think you really have to want to do the job," she said.

For those who want to give it a shot, Wednesday is the last day to apply for a position as an RA or FA for the 2004-05 school year. Students selected to work

as RAs receive free room and board for the academic year and a stipend of \$600 — \$650 for returning RAs — while FAs get a stipend of \$250 and free room and board.

Residence Life Assistant Director Tem Sedgwick said RAs and FAs are required to enforce University Housing policies in the residence halls and build community. They create programs for residents such as movie marathon nights and dances. FAs are also required to assist with fall term Freshman Interest Group classes.

Schoonover said having good people skills is probably the most important quality a residence-hall staff member can have.

"Being a good community developer is the No. 1 rule," she said.

Throughout the hiring process, she said, applicants are evaluated for their abilities to interact and work well with others.

In February, applicants will go

through an interview process, which includes a group interview, an individual interview and group exercises to evaluate how applicants handle situations they may face with residents.

"The goal of the exercise is to see, how do they interact and communicate with each other as a group?" Schoonover said.

After the interview process, applicants attend a spring-term training course. This year, applicants will not know if they have been hired or chosen as alternates until about halfway through the course, Schoonover said.

"When they're in the class, we're better able to assess their strengths and weaknesses," she said.

About 125 students apply each year, she said, and about 30 to 50 are hired depending on how many current employees return to work the next year. About 15 applicants are placed on an alternate list.

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## FPEP

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pregnancy rate among youths 10 to 17 years old and increase the number of men receiving services from publicly funded family planning clinics.

She added that she encourages students to apply for the services.

"It has been an extremely positive program for the students," she said. "Students are getting the information that they need, whether they're sexually active or not."

However, Dehaven-Murdoch said students are limited in the quantity of services they can receive. Women are limited to one annual exam per 12 months and a maximum of 13 months worth of birth control at a time.

Also, men and women are limited to

100 condoms per day, and FPEP will not cover non-symptomatic STI screening and treatment, or medications and supplies relating to treating infections.

Since July 2000, 9,580 women have been FPEP-eligible and 25,350 visits have been billed to FPEP, Dehaven-Murdoch said.

There have been 1,610 men who participated in the program so far.

FPEP does request that a student's insurance be billed first if the student has it. However, if a student wants to maintain confidentiality from the insurance or parents, FPEP will cover the services and the information will stay at the health center, Dehaven-Murdoch said.

University junior Michael White felt that only students without insurance should get FPEP services.

"If they are covered on their parent's

insurance, I don't think it's a good idea that they are able use the program," she said.

Senior McKenzie Gibson disagreed, saying the services should stay accessible.

"I think it's a good way for students to be able to take care of their health," she said. "I'm really glad the grant was renewed."

She added that many students can't afford birth control on their own and FPEP helps them to receive it and educate themselves.

In the future, FPEP will provide vasectomies and female sterilization, according to the Oregon Department of Human Services Child and Family Health division's Web site.

Contact the crime/health/safety reporter at [lisacatto@dailymerald.com](mailto:lisacatto@dailymerald.com).

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