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DEPARTMENT REVAMPS TO REFLECT TIER ONE MISSION

Houston, July 9, 2012 – It has been a year of change for the department known as Residential Life & Housing. In a short time, the department has brought forth new leadership, new enhanced services and a renewed department vision. With that change, the department will take on a new name and mission to demonstrate this new era – Residential Life & Housing has now become Student Housing & Residential Life.

“Over the past year, there have been several new staff members and initiatives that our department has been undertaking as we strive toward becoming a Tier One campus,” said Don Yackley, Executive Director for Student Housing & Residential Life. “Changing the department name and updating the mission statement to reflect new staffing and programmatic initiatives serves as a symbol to everyone that we are developing into a stronger, more intentional student housing and residential life department that will help the institution get to Tier One status.”

The name “Student Housing & Residential Life” was chosen to encompass all services provided to residents as well as to provide transparency to incoming students. The first component of the name, “student housing,” identifies what the department does and was selected to make it easy for incoming students and their families to find the department both online and in person. The second component of the name will describe the additional programmatic areas of the department.

“As a department, we want to make sure that incoming residents know that we are not JUST a location that houses students, but that there is a significant component to what we do in supporting students’ co-curricular experiences as they live on campus – this is their ‘residential life.’ As part of their residential life, we have paraprofessional and professional staff members living in their communities to support their growth and development as college students in order to build their skills and experiences as they become more ethically aware global citizens,” said Dean Kennedy, Associate Director for Residential Life.

The development of the name and mission statement began back in Fall 2011 with multiple weekly meetings where department staff members (student and professional), UH students and campus partners could come together and examine residential life and housing at the University of Houston. The group first heard a presentation detailing the direction and priorities of the University and Division of Student Affairs; then began brainstorming statements regarding Residential Life & Housing. The conversations were continuously shared with staff and campus partners for their feedback and after several weeks, the mission statement and name emerged.
The new mission statement is intended to give people a strong sense of who the department is, what they do, and how they do it. The mission states:

*A diverse community of students, staff and faculty who foster student success in living-learning environments by building relationships, promoting engagement and leading with an ethic of care.*

Kennedy said the mission statement guides those within Student Housing & Residential Life for direction in their every day decisions. For constituent individuals and groups outside the department, the mission statement will provide them with information about the department and its purpose.

The next step for Student Housing & Residential Life as it strives to develop UH into a tier one residential campus is to participate in the Division of Student Affairs Strategic Planning process where it will develop objectives to support the division as well as the university. Once these objectives are clear, the department will explore and develop learning outcomes in order to track the learning that occurs within the residential communities and continue to support student success.

For more information about Student Housing & Residential Life, visit [www.uh.edu/housing](http://www.uh.edu/housing).

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The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 38,500 students in the nation’s fourth-largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.