A Partnership:
Disability Support and Housing

Lindsay Northup-Moore
Director, Disability Support, ASAC

Chris Silva
Director of Housing, Housing & Residence Life

Nicole Nowinski
Associate Director, Disability Support

Schuyler Asman
Associate Director, Residential Facilities, HRL
Today’s Agenda

• Introductions
• Demographics of American University (AU)
• Requesting Housing Accommodations at AU
• Disability and Housing as a Partnership
• COVID-19
• Wrap-Up and Q&A
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Housing & Residence Life
Demographics of American University

- Private Research University in Washington, DC
- Approximately 7,500 Undergraduates; 7,000 postgraduates (including law school)
- 1000+ students registered with the ASAC
- Undergraduate housing only
- Housing options range from traditional doubles, singles, suite, and apartment-style
- Communal, private, and semi-private restroom options
Requesting Housing Accommodations

• Three-step registration process
• Documentation requirements
• Align deadlines with HRL
Building a Partnership

• Partner with HRL to consider reasonability of requests
• Knowledge of housing inventory
  – Tours of spaces for ASAC Staff
• Placement meetings
• Sharing of information
  – Access to housing software improves efficiency and reduces the wait time
It’s a Two-Way Relationship

• A valued partnership with disability services
• Intentionality with access
• Planned renovations for now and the future
• Tracking trends
• Creating systems & using data together
• Developing training programs
How to Get Housing Buy-In

• Start a conversation
  – What's worked? What hasn't worked?
• Identify common goals
  – Focus on the student experience towards graduation
• Have examples from peer institutions
  – This can take the pressure of blame away
• Look at the now and the future
  – What are the immediate needs and what can we look at for next year?
• Establish a cycle of review meetings to get ahead of the next year's process planning
• Opportunities for training and learning
Accommodation Collaboration Examples

- Physical Access—Retrofit
- Residence Hall Food Allergy
- Tortoise ESA
COVID-19

• Fall 2020
  – Aligned deadlines and communications
  – First year students are priority; limited spaces for others
  – Placed students with previously approved accommodations
  – Considering new requests
  – Ensuring equitability
  – Bandwidth for responding to risk

• How did we get to this decision?
COVID-19 Implications

• Accessibility and health/safety concerns for Fall 2020

• Future semesters
  – Spring 2021
  – Fall 2021

• Increase in future accommodation requests
Next Steps to Consider

• Connect with housing partners on your campus
• Establish (everchanging) shared plan for accommodations for Fall 2020
• Maintain communication channels
  – Students
  – Campus partners
• Creating shared processes
Questions?

Thank you for attending our session!

Our contact information:
Lindsay Northup-Moore lnorthup@american.edu
Chris Silva csilva@american.edu
Nicole Nowinski nowinski@american.edu
Schuyler Asman schuyler@amreican.edu