



Benchworks
by Elentra

HOUSING CASE STUDY

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA



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MĀNOA

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is one of three winners of the 2024 Benchworks Assessment and Impact Award in housing for high survey scores related to satisfaction with hall programming and student staff. With its continuous goal to meet the evolving needs of students, UH Manoa housing used data from the ACUHO-I/Benchworks Resident Assessment to provide residential experiences that are inclusive, respectful, and conducive to academic success.

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We prioritized the very individualistic nature of students, ensuring they feel supported, heard, and seen. By collecting information and putting that data in front of leadership, staff, and RAs, we continually examine and enhance the student experience.

KENNY LOPEZ, PhD | *Associate Director of Residence Life*

HOW THEY USED DATA

DATA-DRIVEN INITIATIVES



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Strengthening RA Teams

Resident assistant selection is crucial because they play a pivotal role in fostering a positive living environment and promote well-being while serving as community leaders. In response to survey feedback, we made significant changes to our selection process by prioritizing candidates with diverse, transferrable skills. To support this vision, we advanced community standards among student staff and implemented the Certified Peer Education Program through NASPA. This approach resulted in a more skilled and cohesive RA team that was better equipped to engage with students and positively impact our community.



Value-Centric Programming

We value a residential experience that not only promotes personal growth but also fosters understanding of oneself and the dynamics of diverse communities. Transformative changes were needed in our training approach to align with our commitment to a values-driven community. As a result, we introduced individualized preparatory work to ensure staff readiness and alignment with our objectives. By emphasizing our five residential values and providing practical applications in program planning and interactions, we have cultivated a campus community rooted in kindness, respect, responsibility, and personal growth.



Building Community through Connection

Addressing the unique needs of our residents is central to the mission of our housing department. However, survey data highlighted that our distinct upper and lower division programming structure was not effective. We introduced a new face-to-face programming model to foster engagement and connection among residents and added requirements for staff to make genuine connections throughout the semester. This cultural shift departs from a one-size-fits-all model and moves towards a more intentional, personalized approach that fosters 'Ohana and provides a more uniform experience.