Resident Student Association Advocacy Toolkit

What is this toolkit?
- This is a guidebook for any student leader who is up for the challenge of making positive change in his or her community.
- This provides a step-by-step guide to navigate advocacy, a useful contact list of UD administrators, examples of advocacy in action by CCC members, and some funding options if a project requires money!
- Use this as a basis for a change you are passionate about; however, this is not the only way to advocate for something.

Who is an advocate?
- Someone who actively supports some sort of initiative/idea
- Someone who makes the effort to be a change agent
- Someone who is persistent and passionate

What does this have to do with my CCC position?
- As elected representatives of your building, your position goes beyond just programming.
- Your peers have elected you as advocates for your respective residence halls.
- You can make a huge impact in your community.
- You are student leaders on campus; thus, by nature, you have the ability to be change agents!

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How can I be an advocate?

Step 1:
In addition to having your CCC town halls/meetings/etc. where residents are able to voice their concerns and comments, you can do a community scan to identify some additional issues your peers/residents care about or want to see change.

You can do this via online survey (Google Forms; quicker and easier to analyze data) or going door-to-door and asking residents (more visible/personal, interactive).

Step 2:
Before jumping to conclusions and taking action, contact your Residence Hall Coordinator or Complex Coordinator (they are excellent resources for students; they may be able to address the initiative themselves or direct you to certain contacts).

You can ask your RA for their contact information or look it up on the Res Life Staff Directory. (https://www.udel.edu/reslife/about_us/staffdirectory.html)

Step 3:
Go to RSA for smaller-order concerns such as complaints about a specific meal in the dining hall or general feedback about the bus shuttles on campus.

The Vice President of Intra-Collegiate Affairs’ job, among other things, is to support and promote advocacy among the CCCs. You can come to RSA meetings to voice small-order concerns or feedback or submit a concern on the “For the Good of the Campus” form located at the following link on the RSA website (https://docs.google.com/a/udel.edu/forms/d/18u4SAedvxsSpG28vyIIMa_I1nqrPILqycbDgTraAE-o/viewform)

What department does your comment relate to? *
- Dining
- Housing
- Transportation
- Facilities
- Public Safety
- Other: ___________

What would you like to change/report? *
Be as specific as possible (include date of incident, specific location, etc if applicable). Pictures are sometimes helpful at describing the problem (you can send these to reslife@udel.edu).

Do you have a suggestion about how to fix the problem?
Creativity is welcome!
Step 4:
If it is a larger-order concern (and RSA and the Res Life staff can’t really help much), contact the necessary administrators to determine feasibility of proposed change.

You can look at pg. 4 for a contact list of many UD administrators (if not listed, just do a Google search or ask your advisor for help!). When you contact them via e-mail, be professional (introduce self, have a positive/cooperative tone, etc.)! Although ideal, setting up an in-person meeting may be difficult due to busy schedules, so try to at least set up a meeting through the phone so you can best explain the situation. If you must explain situation via e-mail, be as thorough as possible; this may require including some pictures related to the issue if relevant.

Step 5:
Gather data to show student support if applicable.

You can do this via survey or student testimonials to include when you contact/meet with administrators.

Step 6:
With the approval of the administrator, develop a detailed plan of action including a timeline, costs, benefits, goals, etc. and implement it however necessary!

Look at pg. 6 for sources of funding to cover some costs if applicable.

Step 7:
If successful, make sure to evaluate its effects every few months.

You can collect data on usage or ask your peers for feedback.
List of Useful Contacts

**Dining:**
Robin Moore (Director) ➔ R_Moore@facilities.udel.edu
Debra Miller (Nutrition) ➔ dml@udel.edu

**Parking & Transportation Services:**
Richard Rind (Director) ➔ rrind@udel.edu

**Facilities:**
Harold Alan Brangman (Vice President) ➔ brangman@udel.edu
Michael Loftus (Assistant Director of Grounds) ➔ mloftus@udel.edu
Mike Guns (Electrical Manager) ➔ mguns@udel.edu
Elizabeth Bolt (East Campus Custodial Manager) ➔ elizbolt@udel.edu
Judee Cunha (Central Campus Custodial Manager) ➔ jcunha@udel.edu
Steve Ashby (West Campus/Independence Hall Custodial Manager) ➔ smashby@udel.edu
Judy David (Laird Campus Custodial Manager) ➔ jdavid@udel.edu

**Residence Life & Housing:**
Kathleen Kerr (Executive Director) ➔ kkerr@udel.edu
Jim Tweedy (Senior Associate Director) ➔ tweedy@udel.edu
Michele Kane (Associate Director) ➔ michelon@udel.edu
Karen DeMonte (Associate Director-Housing Assignment Services) ➔ kdemonte@udel.edu
Jimmy Howard (Assistant Director for Student and Community Advocacy) *good for sustainability-related projects ➔ jimmyh@udel.edu

**Public Safety:**
General E-Mail ➔ publicsafety@udel.edu
Yvonne Simpson (Business Administrator) ➔ Yvonne.simpson@udel.edu
Advocacy in Action

ROCC’s “Before I Die” Wall

1. We planned how we were going to accomplish the Before I Die Wall logistically
2. Scheduled a meeting with Mr. Singleton, former Vice President of Facilities and Jim Tweedy, Senior Associate Director of Residence Life.
3. Presented our idea to them in order to get the support and assistance of facilities.
4. They asked for us to take pictures of the location we wanted to have the wall placed and send it their way.
5. They loved it, asked us to buy all the necessary materials and prepare it for facilities to come and install it (free of charge).

“This was an amazing experience because it was the first time I had the chance to interact with someone at such a superior level in our institution. Learning how to interact with professionals at high levels is important because it teaches how to be professional and how to remain composed in moments of pressure. Also, it was a really great project that West Campus thoroughly enjoyed and made our CCC proud.”

- Rachel Zolotarsky

The first thing I noticed when I moved into Ray Street were the desolate basketball courts next to the parking lot. The cement was cracked with weeds growing out of it, there were little remnants of paint left on the court, and the backboards were missing hoops along with some pieces. I decided to run for President of Ray Street Advisory Community Council in Fall 2012, and I made this the main focus for our executive board. Once we told our adviser, she was very proud that we decided to choose such a huge project to advocate for; however, she reminded us she tried to tackle the basketball court project unsuccessfully. My committee and I were very adamant about fulfilling this though. The first attempts to contact facilities during the fall semester were usually left unanswered. Then, we got a petition going, getting more than 90% of Ray Street to sign the petition. We sent it over to the recreational facilities and they approved the project to be executed immediately. They started working on the project about a week later and once we all arrived back from spring break, we were met with not only hoops and paint but a fully renovated basketball court that is still used to this day!

One piece of advice I can give to any student that wants to advocate for something that they truly believe in is to never give up and to always have the numbers on your side. Get more students behind you and voice the changes you would like to see until you get your end result!
ISSA’s (former name of ICE) Lounge Whiteboards

“At one of ISSA’s monthly town hall meetings I was asking people what they wanted to see more of in Independence and a couple of residents suggested the idea of white boards. So I ran with it! I wrote a petition asking for a white board in one of the lounges on every floor of Independence East, Independence West, James Smith, and Thomas McKean. At ISSA’s next few events the rest of the executive board and I passed around the petition to gather 100 signatures-25 from each building. From there, we submitted the petition to Mark Mankin in Facilities, with a nicely worded email asking him to complete the project. Luckily, he was very receptive to us and our goal. Just before finals week, Mark and his team began installing the white boards. By summer, they finished the project!”

-Bobby Willoughby

GRCC’s Universal Fobs 2011-2012

“Task: Gaining FOB access to connect North and South buildings in an effort to enhance complex community.

1. **Ask:** the RAs and Reslife staff in GR if it would be something they would support. (Surprisingly most of the RAs were cautious to join in, yet the RHCs and CC were on board, which gave us the ability to do research.)

2. **Research:** We made a couple different surveys that the CC approved and sent out to the entire complex. In addition we surveyed students entering and leaving the building and recorded their thoughts as well as the thoughts of the CCC general assembly at the time.

3. **Data Mining:** to prove that there was strong support of this action in the building we compiled all of the data/responses that we had received. We also discussed what rules would be in place to make the access more appealing for the RAs. We wanted full access but we knew the ability to compromise on the terms would be important.

4. **Proposals:** In presenting our findings to the RAs and ResLife staff, again with our conclusive data, we gained full support. After this, with the help of the CC, we submitted the proposal to the Office of Residence Life and the University Key Center (which controls the fob systems and has the ability to adjust policy/protocol). At this point we met little opposition and full access was arranged two weeks later under the terms that this was a "Pilot" test and the if the students abused the privilege than it would be revoked. In addition I believe at certain times students would not have full access for security reasons (Late night, early morning).

5. **Inform:** let the residents know that this change had taken place, and educate what the proper use of the access would concern, hoping that it would not be quickly revoked. Also it is always enjoyable to share good news. “
What if my project requires funding?

The UD Sustainability Fund Grant
(http://www.udel.edu/sustainability/footprint/sustainability_fund_apply.html)

- This is a good option if your project is related to sustainability and UD’s Climate Action Plan!
- They have a pool of ~$20,000 for projects
- To read the Climate Action Plan, follow this link:

Your CCC budget

- This might be the best option if your project is a low-budget one that can benefit your CCC for years to come!

Ask an RSO to co-sponsor the initiative

- If there is an RSO on campus that’s mission is represented by your initiative, reach out to them for co-sponsorship and support.
- Here’s the Student Central page where you can browse through over 300+ RSO’s on campus:
  https://studentcentral.udel.edu/ Organizations

Meet with respective department

- They might have funds available for new projects or can allocate funds for the next year’s budget.

Meet with RSA’s Vice-President of Intra-Collegiate Affairs

- If the initiative is “programmatic,” you can request funds from the general RSA programming budget!