

Resident Assistant (RA)

Job Description

General Description:

The Head of School hires the Resident Assistant (RA) year-to-year to engage in a highly significant, life-shaping role in the personal development of all resident life students. The RA is intended to be both an extension of the Resident Life Leadership Team (Director, Dorm Parents, Asst.) and simultaneously offer students an additional and different human resource. When fulfilled with the right attitude, motivation, and developed skill set, serving as an RA should be a life-impacting experience for the RA and all the students under his/her influence. Serving as an RA also provides an excellent opportunity to be mentored and better equipped for future ministries, especially those with a cross-cultural focus.

Ministry Description Summary:

The Houghton Academy employee has a calling to serve God as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is assured of personal worth and professional competence, both being in balance with the Scriptures; who leads a consecrated life before the Lord, co-workers, students, and parents, and is a committed follower of Jesus Christ. The employee shows high professionalism and responsibility in fulfilling their ministry as an employee of Houghton Academy.

Reports to:

Boarding Program Director

Evaluation:

Based on this job description, the Boarding Program Director evaluates the RA's performance regularly and annually.

Personal Requirements:

An RA must:

1. Be a mature and vibrant believer with a growing personal faith in Jesus.
2. Have lifestyle patterns based on Biblical principles and practices.
3. Be a role model worthy of emulation by the students.
4. Be organized, timely, and capable of reliable follow-through.
5. Exhibit self-control and use good judgment.
6. Practice the "no surprises" rule. Be out in front of things, plan ahead, and be prepared for multiple possible outcomes to life with students.
7. Be emotionally stable and capable of working with inevitable student highs and lows.
8. Remain approachable and open to conversations initiated by students.
9. Be capable of ensuring students complete their dorm life (cleaning chores, lights out, curfew, etc..) and academic (homework, schedules, meetings, etc..) responsibilities without "nagging,"

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED...

becoming a “pushover,” or becoming harsh. Instead, use “relational capital” and clear, understandable, consistent communication to accomplish goals.

10. Be capable of being entrusted with critical responsibilities.
11. Be capable of showing empathy for students who are sick or struggling with issues.
12. Learn, understand, and implement the necessary steps when noticing warning signs.
13. Become CPR certified.
14. Be capable of supporting and monitoring school discipline on students.
15. Be capable of learning, understanding, and implementing proper procedures during emergency or life-threatening situations.
16. Be capable of always thinking safety first and leading student activities accordingly.
17. Have a servant's heart and willingness to do whatever is necessary.
18. Be capable of teaching basic life skills (organization, prioritization, scheduling, etc.).
19. Gravitate towards students and tend to initiate conversations.
20. Be relational towards and seek to build healthy mentoring relationships with students.
21. Be transparent in sharing concerning interactions or valuable insights with supervisors.
22. Practice professional confidentiality by knowing how to handle information.
23. Retain a teachable spirit, always seeking advice from others who are more experienced.
24. Implement best practice student-adult interaction policies and procedures while staying above reproach within all relationships.
25. Make the HA school year and daily schedules work with personal and educational responsibilities.

Responsibilities:

RA's have administrative, supervisory, and relational responsibilities.

1. Schedule:
 - a. It's critical to understand that our Houghton Academy school year is more extended and has fewer vacation breaks than Houghton University's. Accordingly, we are looking for RAs who can commit to serving based on the Academy's schedule. We understand this is a big commitment. Accordingly, we are only looking for those capable of this commitment and passionate about this ministry opportunity.
 - i. HA starts the second to last week in August, breaks for half of a Thanksgiving week, two and a half weeks for Christmas, approximately ten days for an early April Spring Break, and finishes the first week in June. Because the Academy dorm serves international students, we continue to offer supervision during our

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED...

school vacations, either in terms of staying in our Houghton dorms or traveling on school-sponsored trips (Disney in Orlando, California, Hawaii, etc.).

1. Depending on interest, RAs may be eligible to attend our vacation trips as a chaperones.
 - ii. RAs are expected to work from late August to early June, except for 20 vacation days. These will be individually negotiated and scheduled before employment. It is then critically important that the RA follows through on this agreed-upon commitment.
2. Hours:
 - a. Be available (open door or in a lounge) to students during ON DUTY HOURS of 20 hours a week (scheduled) during the HA calendar year. We will work to develop a personalized schedule that takes into consideration the needs of the dorm students and the RA's academic schedule. During these hours, the RA is typically not alone as a supervisor in the dorm but must be fully attentive to student needs.
 - b. Responsible for all dorm activities and being available during SUBSTITUTE HOURS while Dorm Supervisors are off duty and occasionally off-site during the school year.
 - i. One evening each week (3-8 PM). These hours are considered to be included in the regular 20 hours or regular duty per week. During this time, the RA may be the only supervisor in the dorm.
 - ii. Five weekends during the school year. This responsibility is not included in the regular 20-hour-a-week calculation. While the RA or RAs are the sole supervisors on site, a backup dorm parent is always available close by. This support allows essential getaways and family time for Dorm Parents.
 - iii. Join our Resident Life Team for an average of one dinner meeting in the Houghton University dining hall every other week.
 - iv. Serve as Resident Life supervisor for half of the student meals eaten at Houghton University throughout each week.
 - v. Within one's overall schedule expectations outlined above, provide coverage during HA vacation times in collaboration with Dorm Parents and backups.
 - vi. On average, one monthly outing is available to attend based on schedules and accessibility. Their hours, ranging from 2-6, are considered in addition to those mentioned. Events could range from a paintball outing to a movie night, dinner in Olean, or a half-day shopping trip to Buffalo. The RA tags along during these events as an additional helper. The school covers the costs of participation or food.
3. Accessibility: You must remain accessible to the Dorm Supervisors, Boarding Director, and assistant by cell phone, email, and WeChat in case of emergencies or special needs.
4. Community: Create a healthy, orderly, supportive, joyful, fun, and exciting environment for students in the dorm.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED...

- a. You are responsible for celebrating successes and recognizing important events, holidays, and milestones.
 - b. You should decorate and individualize spaces to make the dorm welcoming.
 - c. You must not tolerate any form of bullying or mistreatment of others,
 - d. You are only responsible for communicating with parents or agents if instructed to by Dorm Supervisors.
 - e. You may not loan students money or allow the use of employee adult resources.
5. Academic: Assist students with homework questions and academic and language needs during ON-DUTY and SUBSTITUTE HOURS.
- a. Offer ESL assistance as able. RAS must interject themselves into the English improvement process of our Boarding Students.
6. Activities: Help create and lead activities and programs that meet students' holistic needs and contribute to positive resident life.
- a. Be a role model for enthusiastic participation.
 - b. Assist with chaperoning outings when schedules allow.
7. Spiritual: Be available for spiritual conversations when students show interest, and be sensitive to various spiritual backgrounds.
- a. You can participate in the church attendance supervision, but remember that our primary focus is not to turn church attendance into one more academic task.
8. Medical: Responsible:
- a. To be CPR trained.
 - b. To know where available emergency resources are kept in the dorm.
 - c. For helping to monitor the overall health of our students.
 - d. Know where medical forms, insurance cards, and approved medicines are kept.
 - e. To provide Dorm Parents input as they make "parenting diagnosing" every day of student medical needs.
 - f. If they are on duty alone, they should use medical resources (school nurse, local medical facilities, Program Director, Med-help lines, local urgent care, etc.).
 - g. Consult with the Program Director if Dorm Parents are not available.
 - h. Call 911 and use emergency services if the situation appears to require help. Do not hesitate. Error on the side of getting more help than less.
 - i. Look for creative ways to create alternative and stimulating worship experiences.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED...

9. Standards: Orientate, educate, and hold students accountable to all dorm and school standards (behavioral, safety, cleaning, room maintenance, restroom routines, laundry, curfew, etc.).
 - a. Support and enforce the discipline implemented by Dorm Supervisors.
 - b. You are required to report any serious violations of standards and are generally not responsible for establishing disciplinary responses.
 - c. You are also not to be altering existing standards or granting exceptions.
10. Communication: You must communicate, timely, reliably and comprehensively, all needed information to students.
 - a. Keep all announcements and communication updated and visible on announcement boards and electronic networks.
 - b. Know and be able to use all emergency procedures and emergency contacts.
 - c. You are required to report any concerns about any form of abuse, unhealthy dependencies, depression or strong emotions, suicide concerns, unusual fears, eating disorders, sexual-related concerns or suspicions, etc., to the Dorm Supervisors immediately.
 - d. Create and turn in written reports on student behavior, conversations with students, or observations concerning the Dorm Supervisor.
 - e. Do not promise students confidentiality. You are responsible to report/share anything of adult concern with Dorm Supervisors.
11. Meetings:
 - a. Meet weekly (regular time to be established) with Dorm Parents and other RA's.
 - b. Attend a day of orientation and training (to be mutually scheduled) before student arrival.
 - c. Participate in pre-HA school orientation for boarding students.
 - d. Help plan and participate in our back-to-school Boarding Program Retreat.
 - e. Continually collaborate with all Student Life and Resident Life adults.
12. Administrative Tasks:
 - a. You are responsible for bringing takeaway food from HU for students in your dorm who are missing a meal due to an official school event (game, practice, etc.) or illness. We do not bring take-away meals based on convenience or laziness on the student's part.
 - b. Assist Dorm Supervisors with record keeping and building security.
 - c. Responsible for ensuring cleaning supplies are stocked and available.
 - d. Assist with check-in/check-out processes at the beginning of the year, the end of the semester, and the end of the year.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTINUED...

- e. Responsible for organizing and maintaining lounges, kitchenette, entryway, laundry room, storage areas, and garbage removal areas using student workers.
- f. Complete duties as assigned by Dorm Parents in a timely fashion.

13. Representation:

- a. Be actively advocate for HA and the Boarding Program and look for opportunities to share positives publicly.
- b. Share any concerns about HA and the Boarding Program privately with the appropriate supervisors.
- c. Remain in good standing with their educational institution.

14. Feedback:

- a. RAs must initiate a Quarterly Review Meeting with their Dorm Parents to ask for feedback on their performance. The Dorm Parents are responsible for giving the RA feedback in writing, copied to the Program Director, which includes commendations and areas of improvement.

Employee Signature

Date