

## CASE STUDY Miles Community College



Miles Community College (MCC) is a rural, 2-year institution that serves approximately 500 students annually, 150 of whom live on campus. The college's mission is to provide opportunities for lifelong learning through quality programs, partnerships, and community outreach. As such, Housing not only places a high emphasis on elevating the voice of its students but also creating service programming that connects students to the local community, food sourcing, and green initiatives.

"We have created a culture of assessment which helps us know which direction the campus is going, build more targeted strategic plan goals that support our accreditation efforts, and serve out student body based on their changing needs."

Richard DeShields, *Dean of Student Engagement & Auxiliary Services*

### GOALS

The Miles Community College strategic plan emphasizes the use of assessment tools to inform planning and practices in all areas of the college. Student Housing contributes to this strategic plan by creating an environment where students "live in a village," engage with peers, and build community by cultivating personal ownership. These contributions require intentional and sustained efforts informed by the collection of relevant data.

### SOLUTION

Miles Community College implemented the ACUHO-I / Benchworks Resident Assessment to support their efforts to:

- ◆ Understand the experiences and perceptions of their on-campus residents to inform continuous improvement efforts
- ◆ Foster a culture of assessment for a community college housing department
- ◆ Pair data with campus-wide sources to inform strategic planning initiatives



## KEY INITIATIVES & INSIGHTS

### CAMPUS SERVICE INITIATIVES

MCC has hosted a campus-wide year of service initiative that encourages students and staff to volunteer in the local community. Given the rural nature of our area, many of the organizations residents volunteered with over the year related broadly to sustainability efforts, including recycling, litter clean-up, and farming-related initiatives.

### PROGRAMMING

To tie into campus-wide service initiatives, many of the programs hosted for MCC on-campus residents relate to sustainability, including recycling, the impact of the agricultural industry on the environment, and food equity. These programs are often sponsored and hosted jointly by local agencies and organizations.

### DINING OPTIONS

On-campus residents are required to have a meal plan, so the institution uses student feedback to shape dining services. MCC Dining recently added vegan options for the first time. Additionally, programming and messaging reflects this and MCC had worked to educate its residents about the importance of locally-sourced food options.

### EMPOWERING RESIDENTS

MCC staff have worked to show on-campus residents how the surveys they complete are used to make changes. From visibly showing portion sizes for food in the dining halls to adding more prominent suggestion boxes, MCC staff show residents their feedback matters.

### CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT

MCC staff have increasingly focused on using data to inform their efforts. In addition to implementing the Resident Assessment, MCC staff also administer a first-year student transition survey. Pairing RA results with other data collection efforts give Miles Community College meaningful insights to inform future improvements.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

MCC staff has begun using their Resident Assessment results to support and inform strategic planning and accreditation efforts across the campus, including those related to sustainability, community involvement, diversity, and civic engagement. They also present data to the governing board and use it to inform the overall direction of the institution.