

HOW THEY USED DATA

University of Northern Iowa
Department of Residence



University of Northern Iowa (UNI) is one of three winners of the 2020 Benchworks Assessment and Impact Award in Housing for high performance related to housing facilities. UNI's Department of Residence used data from the ACUHO-I / Benchworks Resident Assessment to:



Inform Technology Investments

UNI used survey data to inform strategic investments in housing-related technology. For example, UNI looked at building- and floor-level survey data to identify spaces where Wi-Fi access was problematic. The department worked with their IT department to add Wi-Fi infrastructure to address student concerns.

UNI took a similar approach in other areas. From a webpage to help students find open washers and dryers in laundry rooms to implementing electronic monitoring and tracking of mail packages, UNI used survey data to inform strategic investments in housing-related technology.



Adapt and Improve Physical Spaces

Data from the Resident Assessment informed strategic modifications to existing facilities in order to improve the student experience. For example, UNI noticed that students didn't like having laundry facilities in the basement. As they begin to update buildings, they have moved from large, building-specific laundry facilities to smaller, floor-specific rooms. UNI also noticed in survey results that residents wanted more mixed-purpose spaces to use for both studying and socializing, like they might find in a coffee shop. UNI has focused efforts on modifying existing residence hall spaces to accommodate this need.



Show Housing Staff the Value of their Efforts

UNI's efforts also included sharing of results with housing staff—from frontline facilities staff to student workers—to highlight the value of their efforts and how they contributed to the positive experiences of their residents. Sharing data internally allowed team members both to receive praise for their efforts and better identify opportunities for improvement.



"Skyfactor has allowed us to focus on improving our services and operations as a whole. The ability to use longitudinal data to compare years of responses has enhanced our efforts to make larger, more system-wide improvements."

Nick Rafanello

Director of Residence Life
University of Northern Iowa