The 2010-2011 year has been filled with new beginnings, improvements, and opportunities. Despite budgetary and staffing level challenges we have had a tremendous year and that is the focus of this summary.

For the fourth consecutive year (since 2007-2008) we opened in August with over 100% occupancy. The high demand for on campus housing continued with nearly 60% of on campus students from previous year indicating a desire to return and an increase in transfers and current UNC Asheville students who were living off campus wanting to move on. We used transitional spaces again throughout the residence halls and continued the collaborative work with Residential Education staff to make the transition and retention of these students a top priority. Unfortunately we still had to inform nearly 80 students who had applied for on campus housing that we would not be able to offer them on campus housing.

In addition to the retention and demand of students living on campus, Housing Operations continued to see the same trend with student employment and students desiring to work with us. This is an area of excitement and energy for our staff as all Housing Operations staff are educating and mentoring these student leaders in practical and learning outcomes. This year we were able to bring about several new services and initiatives to improve the residential experience.

* wireless hot spots throughout all residential areas
* renovation in Founders Hall to include community kitchen, lounge space, and Community Director Office (with this renovation, all residence halls now have kitchen facilities)
* moved student mail to newly built and centrally located “Student Mail Center” in Highsmith University Union and implemented efficient and paperless package tracking software

We also implemented two new strategies involving people and staff to better meet our sustainability goals and the after –hours facility and operational needs of our students. In collaboration with SGA and the Student Environmental Center we strategically placed “EcoReps” throughout the residence halls who were students signed up to live on campus with a passion for sustainability efforts. We also moved one of our housekeeping staff members to a “live-on” housekeeping position to be able to respond more quickly and on an as-needed basis to weekend and evening student needs. These first year trials have proven tremendously successful for students, Residential Education/Housing Operations staff, and our facility goals and needs. We plan on continuing these for the immediate future.

The final highlights of 2010-2011 include planning and construction phases of two long awaited projects.

* Extensive renovations of Governors Village residence halls (5 buildings) are underway with plan of reopening for fall 2011. The Village will house 100 students in single rooms within 4 person suites. Each building will be a 20 person community with kitchen, lounge, and laundry facilities.
* Planning nearly complete, underground electrical work complete, and construction to begin soon on new 300 bed residence hall. Students will be housed in 4 and 6 person suites with living area. Building will include dining destination, multipurpose meeting space, study lounges, kitchens, laundry space, and many sustainable amenities which are still in planning phase. This facility will open for fall 2012.

One of the most exciting aspects of these projects is the level of involvement and engagement we have facilitated with our students. Closing Governors Village in December, input on design elements, furniture and finish selections, groundbreakings, and plans for reopening are all areas that communication and information gathering/sharing have been critical and couldn’t have gone better.