

## **External Review: Department of Residential Life, Carleton College**

**Dates of Review: May 6 – 8, 2019**

**Reviewers: Donna A. Lee and John W. Harp**

### **Executive Summary:**

This external review of Carleton College's Residential Life program focused specifically on identifying strengths and opportunities for enhancement with the departmental structure, organization, and roles and responsibilities. The following are highlights that emerged from the review.

### **Strengths of Residential Life's office, services, and programs**

- The program is viewed by the campus community as one that is central in achieving the mission of the college.
- Residential Life is the "go to" department as other staff members seek collaborators and student attendance.
- Many students see the program as core to their connection to the Carleton experience.
- Residential Life professional staff members are viewed as responsive and student-centered. Student staff members are appreciated and competent.

### **Opportunities for growth and enhancement**

- To develop collaborative partnerships within Division of Student Life.
- To establish faculty partnerships in activities and processes.
- To engage the Director of Residential Life in strategic leadership opportunities.
- To re-organize roles and update processes in the Residential Life Office.
- To review all aspects of the Area Director role to increase professionalism, consistency, and effectiveness.
- To engage experienced student staff members in conducting RA training and serving in advanced RA roles.

### **Student perceptions that warrant attention**

Resident Assistants:

- Do not see themselves as a part of Residential Life staff.
- Have professional expectations of Area Directors that are not always met.
- Reported that their concerns are not always heard.
- Have community-building and programming model recommendations.

General students:

- Have concerns about the dining program, meal plans, and room draw.
- Desire more access to the "Northfield Option".