

# STUDENT LIFE *Year in Review*

2021-2022



**“As we move away from the pandemic, the lessons we learned continue to inform our work. Versatility, responsiveness and flexibility remain key to our work and only help us serve our students better. We are looking forward to the 2022-2023 year with excitement and commitment.”**

## **2022-2023 GOALS**

Ensure Student Life programming, services and systems positively impact Russell Sage College's student success agenda.

Continue to examine and evaluate Student Life policies and practices determining action and change needed to support a diverse, equitable and inclusive Russell Sage College student experience.

As a part of the Thrive initiative, imbed student health and well-being into all facets of student life programming and services.

## **Executive Summary**

This annual report shares the **2021-2022 accomplishments of the Russell Sage College Student Life Division**. Using both direct and indirect assessment measures, we demonstrate how students at Sage have benefited from an extracurricular experience flush with learning, leadership and fun!

Assessing our work allows us to reflect upon what we have done well and to welcome the challenges and opportunities to do better. **With an eye toward broader institutional assessment and goals**, this year we look to assess our progress toward our Student Life Goals for 2021- 2022:

### **1. Ensure and guide Student Life initiatives that support Russell Sage College's commitment to:**

- One Sage
- Thrive@Russell Sage
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Navigate

### **2. Ensure Student Life programming, services and systems positively impact persistence and retention.**

### **3. Examine and evaluate Student Life policies and practices, determining action and change needed to support a diverse, equitable and inclusive student experience.**

As Russell Sage College continues to grow and evolve, we understand the **important role that the student experience plays in the satisfaction of our students**. It could be on the athletic field, at an event or relaxing with friends in the student center or Freddie's Student Lounge. We know that all of these are opportunities for connection and learning.

The Student Life staff remain committed to delivering **a quality student experience**. By helping our students learn and grow, respect and support one another, and develop new skills, we create a community and sustain an environment where students succeed.

**Trish Cellemme**  
**Vice President for Student Life**



# GOAL 1

Ensure Student Life programming, services and systems positively impact persistence and retention.



Vinny Prucknick '22

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Vinny Prucknick, a 2022 graduate in Childhood Education, still remembers a special moment from his first semester at college.

Dean of Students Stacy Gonzalez, after only meeting him once, saw him walking on campus and called to him by name.

"Sage is a place that makes you feel like you're not alone," Vinny says. "You know that if you have a problem, there's someone ready to help you."

When Vinny became a resident assistant he said he did it at first for the economic benefits. But it wasn't long before he understood that it helped him learn to be a leader.

"Everybody here wants you to succeed," he says. "It's actually pretty amazing."



## GOAL 1

### RESIDENCE LIFE

Meetings and programs held by Resident Advisors outlined policies, expectations and built community among individual floors and in halls.

86% of students agree that they have been able to make meaningful friendships as a result of living on campus.

86% of respondents agree, or strongly agree, that they feel welcome in their residence hall.



### DEANS OF STUDENTS/ STUDENT ACTIVITIES



96.7% of respondents felt supported by the Student Life office and connected to campus.

Russell Sage College saw a 28% increase in unique visitors to Freddie's Student Lounge in Albany and a 20% increase in usage at the McKinstry Student Center in Troy.

By implementing changes to the structure of the CARE (Campus Assessment, Response and Education) Team and creating a shared workload, 90% of CARE reports were responded to within 24 hours and 97% within 48 hours.

18 clubs rechartered for next semester, a 125% increase from eight active clubs during the height of the pandemic.



# #RUSSELLSAGEREADY



# GOAL 1



## CAREER PLANNING

All work study positions were posted in Handshake, an online employment recruiting platform. A total of 165 positions were posted in 2021-2022, improving access to opportunities for students – and 466 applicants applied for the positions.

125 students participated in Sage Engaged – a day of service to the Troy and Albany communities – on Sept. 29, 2021. 100% of student-participants surveyed said they learned the importance of community service and what future opportunities are available.

Career Planning held 408 one-on-one appointments with students in 2021-2022.

100% of students who attended workshops reported greater awareness of the career-readiness skills needed for their success and the services offered by Career Planning.



## WELLNESS



259 people attended the inaugural fall “Fresh Check Day,” which offered resources and support focused on preventative mental health.

85% of students were satisfied with options for recreation and fitness opportunities during the 2021-2022 school year.

The Fitness Center utilization was increased on both campuses by 75-150 sign-ins per month, compared to the 2020-2021 school year.



## ATHLETICS

85% of respondents are aware of the support resources available within the Athletics Department, such as academic support.

Student-athletes attended a program featuring mental health empowerment speaker Ivy Watts. 99% of respondents said the topic was relevant to their student-athlete experience.





# GOAL 2

Examine and evaluate Student Life policies and practices to determine action and change needed to support a diverse, equitable and inclusive student experience.



Lizbeth Paez '24

## MORE TO EXPLORE

Lizbeth Paez connected with Russell Sage College through the variety of programs and learning opportunities.

"The people here are great at helping you feel like you fit in," Lizbeth said, noting the diverse help from Admission to Advising to Residential Life.

She joined the Admission team as a student-ambassador and the Residence Life team as a resident assistant. Admission and Res Life "really helped me get settled into the school," she said.

She looks forward to helping future students make good college choices.

"I will tell them, if you don't know what type of major you want, there's a bunch of different majors you can look into. Whether you have an idea or not, this school has a lot to offer."



## GOAL 2

### RESIDENCE LIFE



Worked to equalize pricing between the Albany Campus Residence Hall and Troy housing beginning in fall 2022 (\$3,215 per semester).

The college adapted meal plan options to allow students to travel between campuses and utilize their meal plans at any dining location.

85% of students who identified as LGBTQ felt welcome in Russell Sage College Residence Halls. 85% of students who identify as transgender, nonbinary or gender non-conforming felt they are treated equally through the common set of values supported by institutional policies and procedures in the residence halls.

82% of students who identify as an ethnic/racial minority felt welcome in college residence halls.

Implemented a restorative justice model for student conduct allowing students options for sanctions.



### DEANS OF STUDENTS/ STUDENT ACTIVITIES



The 2022 Student Life Retreat focused on a DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness and conscientiousness) assessment, addressing working styles and ways of working better together.

Students voted and passed a new student government constitution, allowing for balance in positions and campuses.

25 members of the Student Life team joined in a summer book club to read "How to be an Antiracist." Weekly discussions helped identify strategies for more inclusive planning.

Student Life created an inclusivity statement placed in all Student Life offices and areas.

After review, updates were made to the discrimination and harassment policy to more explicitly address bias.





## GOAL 2

the future is accessible.

### WELLNESS

The Awareness Fair was educational and provided resources for Accessibility Services, which will assist students to develop an understanding of Accessibility culture on campus. A student survey indicated 75% were satisfied with relevant information, preparedness, resources and felt more knowledgeable about services offered.

The Virtual Care Group allowed for more equitable and expanded access to mental health services.

### CAREER PLANNING

Career Planning hosted an "Identity in the Workplace" panel that featured alumni who discussed how race, gender identity, accessibility and culture have affected their workplace experience.

Solely utilized Handshake for student employment allowing for equity in student hiring

### ATHLETICS

The Athletics Department hosted DEI week. Student feedback included, "Athletes who engage in DEI become more well-rounded and more of a team-oriented person, which I think is the basis of what it means to be an athlete."

The Athletics department pursued NCAA ethnic and minority grants in continued support of professional development.

TEAM





# GOAL 3

Ensure and guide Student Life initiatives that support the college's commitment to: One Sage, Thrive, Navigate and DEI.



Aleca Pardo '23

## MAKING SPACE

Aleca Pardo helped launch the Queer Collective, a club for LGBTQIA+ students at Russell Sage College.

"The Queer Collective is a student-run organization that creates a safe space for individuals who identify or are allied with the LGBTQIA+ community," said Aleca, who is the club president.

Aleca wants to ensure the college remains welcoming for everyone.

"Safe spaces are necessary for marginalized communities, especially for those who are fighting oppression on multiple fronts," said Pardo, who uses they/them/theirs pronouns. "Members can get together and talk about their experiences, ask for guidance and/or vent about current world problems. This will allow some of us to learn about ourselves and other members of the group."



## GOAL 3

### RESIDENCE LIFE

Created a Resident Assistant programming model that aligns with and achieves Thrive outcomes.

As a result of living on campus, 92% of students agree, or strongly agree, that they met students with a diversity of life experiences and backgrounds.



"SET," part of the "READY! SET! GO" orientation initiative, kicks off the college's week of welcome and includes move-in for resident students and programming, events and activities.

### DEANS OF STUDENTS/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Each of the Student Life associate vice presidents served as leaders on colleges initiatives, including Navigate, DEI and Thrive.

93% of first-year Russell Sage College students, and 90% of transfer students, felt that the "SET" program helped them get ready to start their career at Russell Sage College.

92% of first-year (95% transfer) students said that they had a positive experience during "SET."

94% of first-year students said that they learned valuable information and how to use it during the DEI session at "SET."

99% of first-year students said they learned valuable information and how to use it during orientation sessions.



# RESPECT



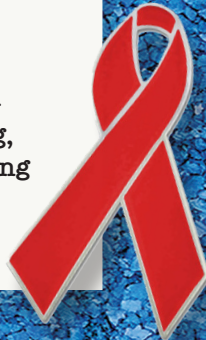
## GOAL 3

### WELLNESS

The Wellness Center successfully hosted events in collaboration with Thrive to foster positive change in Individual Wellness, Thrive Across the Curriculum, Welcoming Diverse Students and Populations and Program-Branded Events.

The Virtual Care Group option was offered to students, allowing online mental health services for RSC students.

The Wellness Center health promotion activities included giving out condom bags, rapid COVID testing, holding flu shot and HIV-testing clinics and supplying menstrual products.



### CAREER PLANNING

240 students completed the Focus2 Assessment in 2021-2022 academic year, which assisted in their self-development understanding.

After taking the assessment, 80% of students rated their career and self-development skills as highly developed.

Career Planning presented in all RSC 101 classes and presented at four co-curricular hours. 82% of RSC 101 students agreed that "I am better prepared to apply the techniques learned to my own career planning" after attending the co-curricular programs.



### ATHLETICS

Held a Student-Athlete-specific DEI Focus Group to gather feedback about the student-athlete experience.

Three coaches became institutional student success advisors, sharing intrusive advising and support practices with Russell Sage College students.





# WHAT STUDENTS SAID



## RESIDENCE LIFE

"I love living on campus because of the friends and memories I have made here."

"Living on campus allows me to become more involved on campus and learn about RSC traditions."

"All of the RAs are so sweet and helpful and do their best to make the Albany residence hall a safe space."

"I think overall the setup of Kellas helps to better get to know your peers. I think it helped me to make a lot of friends and stay connected with them. I wish more of the dorms were set up in this way."

## DEANS OF STUDENTS/STUDENT ACTIVITIES

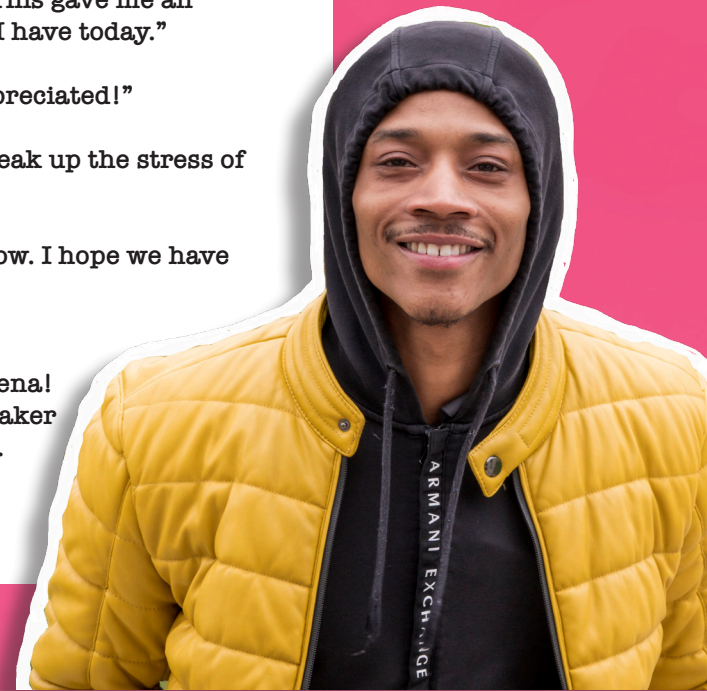
"The cruise was really fun, and it was cool seeing everyone on both campuses. I loved the games with other people. This gave me an opportunity to meet many of my closest friends I have today."

"Keep doing the amazing things you do – it's appreciated!"

"Thank you for having these events they help break up the stress of classes."

"I really enjoy the Black History Month Gameshow. I hope we have more like this."

"Overall, I thought it was a nice commencement ceremony, and I enjoyed having it at the MVP arena! I think it was done beautifully, and the guest speaker gave a wonderful – but not too lengthy – speech. The communication beforehand was helpful, and I felt celebrated and excited throughout."





## CAREER PLANNING

"The Career Closet was essential for me to acquire the professional clothing I needed."

"The presentation made me feel much less stress about finding the 'perfect job' right out of college. After hearing the presenters' personal experiences with multiple jobs, I feel more relieved that it is OK to not know what you want to do or be — and that I may have to work at multiple jobs before discovering what I really enjoy."

"Representation of the Latin community was very helpful! Especially here at Russell Sage, I would like to hear more about this."

"I think that the best part of the appointment was being able to share my worries and concerns and feeling reassured that I could overcome any issues that I think may be actual problems."

## ATHLETICS

"My coach is awesome, caring, supportive, dedicated and is always striving for success. She loves to push us to do our best. She has made us all better players this season."

"A great head coach! Understands that academics come first, wants the best for the team, works hard on providing us with everything we need and a great mentor!"

"My coach is always willing to help both on and off the field. He is one of the most knowledgeable and caring coaches that I have ever had."

"She is the best coach I have ever had. I was a newcomer on the team this season but i never felt that way. She made the intimidating process of learning a new sport fun and enjoyable. From day one I felt like I had a place on the team and that my new teammates and coaches were all my new family."

## WELLNESS

"The staff were wonderful, and the care I was provided with was perfect."

"My counselor's experience makes me feel very comfortable as a survivor. They are an excellent and quality counselor and always meets my needs."

"The presentation by Tawana Davis really stuck with me throughout the rest of my day. I really enjoyed and liked the fact that the whole class was included in an activity. The activity helped me stay more engaged and focused, when I tend to lose focus after a while."

"I love the comfort animals. They help me relax before class. Can we have more animals at events?"

WHAT  
STUDENTS  
SAID



# HIGHLIGHTS

## Residence Life

Created a new approach to Resident Assistant programming and planning, including a new programming model based on Thrive.

Resident Assistants received campus honors, including being chosen as a Gator of the Year and elected as SGA President.

Created a new visitor log system through ResLife Portal which streamlines the visitor check-in process for RAs and Public Safety, allowing staff to track visitor vaccination status and number of times visited.

Adapted meal plan options allow students to travel between campuses and utilize their meal plans at any dining location.

Started monthly meetings with Residence Life and facilities to ensure that maintenance requests and other building issues can be addressed in a timely manner.

Moved 75 students in three hours to new room assignments following a fire in the Kellas residence hall. Affected students also received laundry service, volunteers to assist with moving items and counselors available during that time for extra support.

## Student Activities & Deans of Students

La Fiesta Fantastica and Afrofuturistic drumming — collaborations with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — attracted 175 participants.

A Student Government Association gift to renovate Freddie's student lounge allowed for new furniture, games, lockers and lighting.

Student Activities and campus clubs held 179 events during the academic year, including weekday, weeknight and weekend options.

Russell Sage College Student Activities increased its social media presence with a TikTok account.

Events including "Slipping Out of the Semester" and carnival attracted more than 200 students.

Russell Sage College held commencement at the MVP Arena in Albany, allowing for students to have unlimited guests in a comfortable and great location.





# HIGHLIGHTS

## Career Planning

Career Planning collaborated with Athletics to present an “Alumni Career Night” featuring four alumni from four different occupations and sports. More than 85 student-athletes attended.

Career Planning presented in every RSC 101 class to discuss services and the path to a “dream job.”

In RSC 301, all students were required to submit their resume for review to staff, and the office presented on resumes and elevator pitches to prepare students for the Service Learning Showcase.

Career Planning and a consortium of eight schools hosted the STEM and Health Care Internship and Job Fair virtually in November. The event featured 52 employers, and 220 opportunities for students to meet individually with employers. Career Planning hosted a “Careers in Health Care Panel” as part of the programming.



## Wellness

The Wellness Center provided unvaccinated HEOP students with 48 surveillance rapid COVID tests.

Recreation and Fitness offered a variety of group fitness opportunities through “Featured Fitness” programming – Zumba, Pound Fitness, self defense, martial arts, yoga and HIIT Bootcamp.

The Wellness Center hosted flu shot clinics, providing nearly 200 flu shots.

Recreation and Fitness hosted its first annual “Carnival Color Blast Fun Run/Walk,” bringing together 80 members of the Russell Sage community and 16 volunteers/staff members to celebrate the end of the semester.

Recreation and Fitness held the grand opening for the new Albany FitStop in the Armory in October.

The Wellness Center donated 80 feminine hygiene products to the Afghan Refugee Drive, which was organized by The Women’s Institute.





# HIGHLIGHTS



In its inaugural season, Sage baseball made it to the post-season.

61 Athletes made the President's list in fall 2021.

In the spring 2022 semester, the cumulative GPA for all 276 athletes was 3.21. (276 Athletes had a GPA of 3.15, 28 had a GPA of 4.0 and 189 had a GPA over a 3.0) It was the 22nd consecutive semester that our athletes had a GPA over a 3.0.

Sage had two Empire 8 Rookies of the year: Maddie Cherry in Tennis and Syrita Faraj in Women's Basketball.

Sage had two Empire 8 Players of the Year: Maddie Cherry in Tennis and Ari Pappas in Softball.

Sage had three All Region selections: Ari Pappas for First Team Softball, Taylor Dieranin for Third Team Softball and John Coddington for Men's Indoor Track.

Both the Men's Cross Country and Women's Cross Country teams were selected as All-Academic teams.





## **RESIDENCE LIFE**

The RAs asked for more team bonding: we provided sessions with athletics and a trip to the Thatcher Park ropes course.

Students did not like the POM device as a personal safety tool. In fall 2022, we are moving to the RAVE app for better ease of use.

Based on student feedback, improvements were made to the residence hall lounges.

RAs in Albany asked for more consistent administrative support. As of spring 2022, there is a full-time staff member in the Albany campus residence hall.

## **DEANS OF STUDENTS/ STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Students came forward with concerns about dining options. We worked with Sodexo to make adjustments and changes.

Students asked for another “smash room” event, and we offered one during finals week in the spring.

Students asked for more video games and equipment in Freddie’s and McKinstry. Both were purchased in the spring.

Students came forward with concerns about facilities and cleanliness. A professional cleaning service was hired to address the issues.





## CAREER PLANNING

Instead of having only in-person services, we continued to meet students via Zoom. Students and alumni have appreciated more access and options for meeting.

Instead of offering four hours for walk-ins on Wednesdays, we shortened it to two hours, with more times for appointments (the preferred method for meeting with students).

After receiving feedback from students that Career Planning resources should be easier to find, Career Planning resources such as Handshake and career guides were added to Moodle menus.

After great evaluations and feedback from the Identity in the Workplace panel in spring 2021, we hosted another alumni panel in April.

## ATHLETICS

Student-Athletes were looking for a specific space to train. We opened a strength and conditioning room specifically for student-athletes in the fall.

WE  
HEARD  
YOU

## WELLNESS

Based on student requests, we provided basketball intramural opportunities, extended fitness center hours during the week and weekends, added Zumba classes on a weekly basis.

The Carnival Color Blast Fun Run/Walk will become an annual event, based on student response.

Students had concerns about the Accessibility Services testing process. We responded with an easier process for completing testing forms to set up exams, adding clocks in testing spaces and increasing hours of testing to accommodate student needs.

Based on student feedback, we changed the online accommodations allowing students to set up accommodations for the year.

We provided exempt and surveillance students free at-home rapid COVID tests.







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