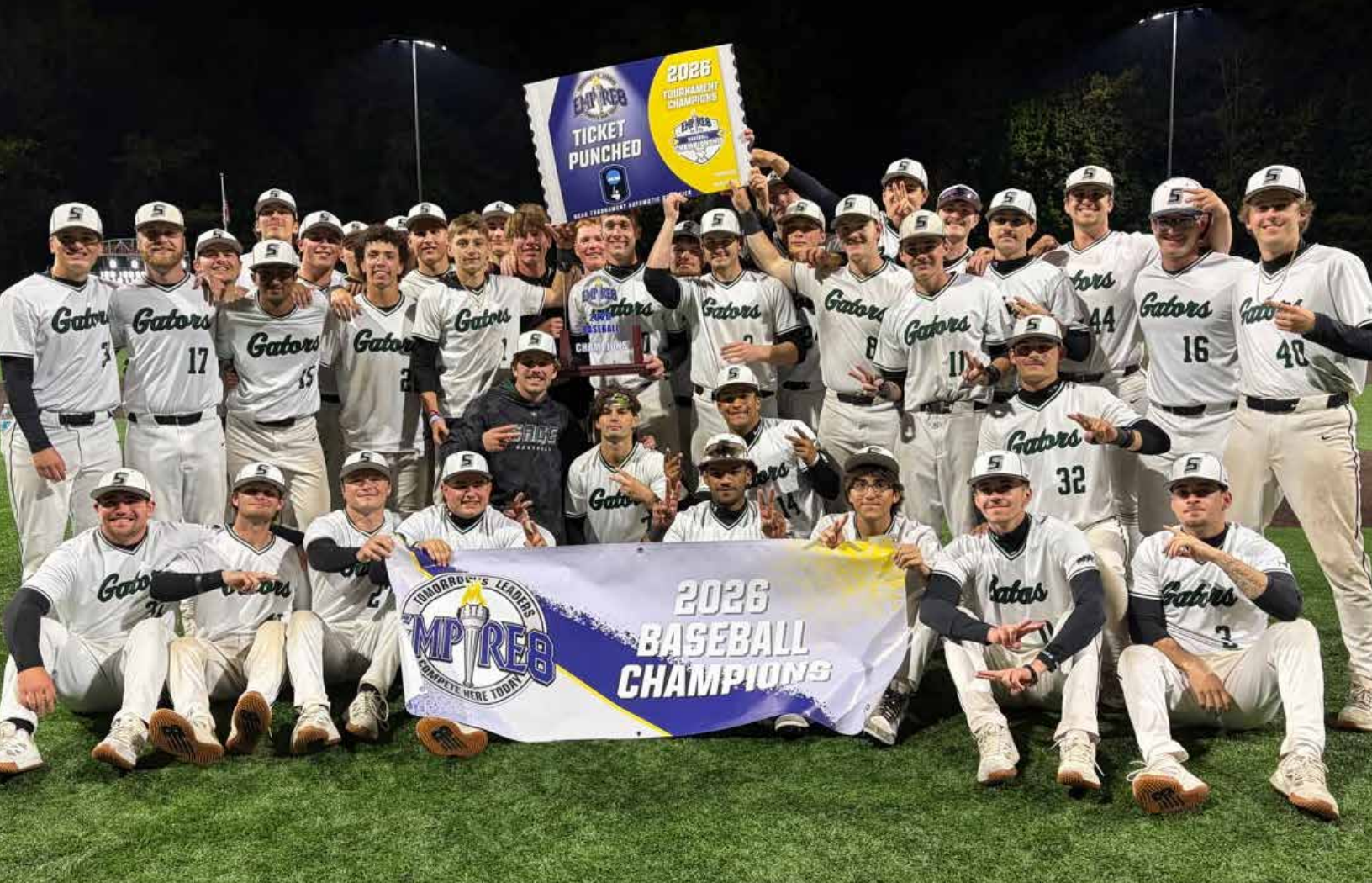


STUDENT LIFE YEAR IN REVIEW

RS RUSSELL SAGE COLLEGE



2025-2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE 2

Executive Summary

PAGES 3-7

Goal 1

PAGE 8

STORIES OF DISTINCTION

Jacqueline Rock-Pérez

PAGES 9-13

Goal 2

PAGE 14

STORIES OF DISTINCTION

Mara Little

PAGES 15-19

Goal 3

PAGE 20

STORIES OF DISTINCTION

Serina Garmendiz

PAGE 21

**We HEARD You, Voices of
our Students and Milestones!**

PAGE 25

STORIES OF DISTINCTION

Skylar Zygmunt

PAGE 26

**Alcohol EDU Training and Climate
Survey Outcomes**

PAGE 27

Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)



STUDENT LIFE YEAR IN REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As we move into the 2026–2027 academic year, our community stands at an exciting and transformative moment. Building on a year filled with progress, connection, and resilience, we are energized by what lies ahead.

This year brings continued investment in our student experience, highlighted by the renovation of Sage Hall, addition of new team rooms, and enhanced shared spaces that foster belonging, pride, and collaboration. These physical improvements reflect our deeper commitment to creating environments where students can thrive—academically, socially, and athletically.

Our athletics programs continue to reach new heights, with the success of our coaches and student-athletes serving as a powerful point of pride. Their dedication, teamwork, and achievements inspire our entire campus and strengthen the sense of community that defines us.

At the same time, we are engaged in meaningful merger planning, shaping a future that is both innovative and student-centered. Our work is complemented by continuing to welcome ACHPS colleagues in partnership, dialogue, and strategic planning. These efforts position us not only for growth, but for long-term sustainability and excellence.

Perhaps most importantly, there is a renewed energy among our students. Connections are deepening, engagement is increasing, and a sense of excitement is building across campus. From residence life to student organizations, from classrooms to athletic fields, our students are showing up, getting involved, and shaping the culture of Sage in powerful ways.

This year we are proud to share our “stories of distinction”. These stories demonstrate the impact RSC has had on some of our student leaders. We are excited to celebrate them and all our students who bring their individuality and lived experience to RSC.

The Potential for Success

All signs point to a year of tremendous potential. With strong leadership, dedicated faculty and staff, thriving athletics, improved facilities, and a highly engaged student body, the foundation for success is firmly in place. The momentum we are building is not just about what we have accomplished—it is about what we are becoming.

We are also proud to share our assessment outcomes as part of this journey, using data and feedback to continuously improve and strengthen the student experience. This commitment ensures that our progress is both intentional and impactful.

We are confident that the year ahead will be defined by growth, achievement, and connection. The future is bright, and we cannot wait to see all that our community will accomplish together.

It's a great time to be a Gator!

Trish Cellemme

Vice President for Student Life



GOALS 2026-2027

#1

CONTINUE to blend RSC and ACPHS systems, processes, structure, and community to support the July 2027 merger completion

#2

ADVANCE Student Success and Persistence Through Integrated Support Systems

#3

FOSTER Intentional Skill Development Across the Student Experience

#4

DEEPEN Engagement and Belonging by actively connecting our programs and services to the THRIVE Framework, Inclusive Programming, and Athletics

BE. KNOW. DO.

GOAL #1

Ensure Student Life initiatives align with Thrive@Russell Sage and contribute measurably to the holistic success of every student.

Goal Summary:

Our assessment findings indicate strong alignment between Student Life initiatives and holistic student success outcomes. Across Wellness, Student Activities, Residence Life, and HEOP, students consistently reported increased belonging, stronger social connection, reduced stress, and positive engagement experiences. Multiple measures exceeded expected benchmarks, with many programs reporting outcomes above 90%. Data suggest that intentional relationship-building, inclusive programming, and coordinated support systems contribute positively to student well-being and persistence.



GOAL #1 WELLNESS



RELAXATION SPACE ASSESSMENT:

100%

100% of respondents felt the space helped them feel more relaxed, centered, or recharged.

100%

100% were satisfied with amenities.

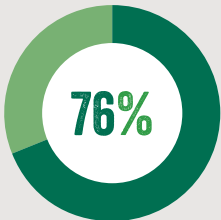
88%

88% were satisfied with accessibility and availability.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:



85% of students felt fully supported while engaging with Accessibility Services staff



76% of students found that the weekly check in emails from Accessibility Services made them feel more connected and supported.

DANCE FITNESS OUTCOMES:

100%

100% felt classes were inclusive.
100% felt welcomed and a sense of belonging.
100% reported improved mood/stress reduction.



100%

PICKLEBALL LEAGUE: 100% reported stronger social connection, lower stress levels, and an inclusive experience.

100%

NAMI WALK AND STAY & PLAY PROGRAMMING:

100% reported stress reduction.
100% felt welcomed/included, as a part of Team RSC.



GOAL #1 DEANS OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES



89%

89% of responders agree that student life staff responded with care and flexibility when students need support.



97.2%

97.2% said Student Activities events are welcoming and inclusive.



93.8%

93.8% said events are accessible to all students.



96.6%

96.6% found programs engaging and enjoyable.



100%

100% of RSC 201 participants connected educational content to campus initiatives.

82 *HEY!*

Monthly Say Hey Friday's averaged 82 students per event

↑ 24%

Increased Student Activities Programming over 24/25 by 24%



GOAL #1 RESIDENCE LIFE



95% of RAs agreed DEI/leadership training strengthened inclusive leadership practices.



90% of residents had intentional RA conversations; 100% reported a sense of belonging after these interactions.



71% reported residence hall living helped build healthy habits.



72% reported living on campus contributed to belonging.



100% of RAs agreed initiatives contributed to belonging to the staff community.

PROGRAMS:

68 total RA programs for the 25-26 academic year, all based on the THRIVE model.

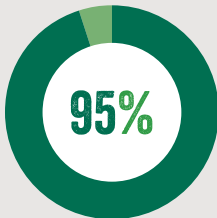
149 total RA bulletin boards completed based on THRIVE.



91% of residents who attended RA programs strongly agreed or agreed that they felt a sense of community and belonging at the event.



95% of residents who attended RA programs agreed that attendance at these events had a positive impact on their mental health.



95% of residents who attended RA programs agreed that attendance at these events had a positive impact on their mental health.



- 86% 86% of student-athletes feel that their head coach actively supported and checked in on their academic progress.
- 86% 86% felt that their experience as a student-athlete has prepared them for life after college.
- 88% 88% of student-athletes felt supported in balancing academics, athletics, and personal well-being.

- 90% 90% felt respected and included by their teammates and coaches.
- 89% 89% feel that their team created an environment where everyone feels they belong.
- 80% 80% felt that their team completed meaningful community service projects this year.
- 85% 85% felt their experience as a Sage Gator helped them to understand how to make an impact beyond athletics.



95%

95% of student-athletes agreed that they are proud to be a Sage Gator.



STORIES OF DISTINCTION



JACQUELINE ROCK-PÉREZ

Dancing Through Every Opportunity

“I would like to be remembered as someone who was always kind and supportive, and who loves to dance no matter the location.”

That’s the legacy Jacqueline Rock-Pérez hopes to leave behind at Russell Sage College—and one that reflects the energy and positivity she brought to campus every day. Throughout the story, Jacqueline’s reflections are shared in her own words.

Jacqueline shared that one of the biggest lessons she learned during her time at Sage was “to do your best in all that you do and to not be afraid to make connections with new people.” Those connections ultimately became some of the most meaningful parts of her college journey.

Her most impactful experience came through the opportunity to study abroad in her father’s home country, the Dominican Republic. For Jacqueline, it was more than travel—it was a deeply personal journey.

“I was able to connect with my culture more, learn more about how to communicate with my family, and make lifelong friendships,” she shared. “This experience has opened doors for me that I would have never imagined. I am so grateful to Sage and CIEE for allowing me to achieve my lifelong dream.”

When reflecting on what kept her motivated, Jacqueline immediately points to the people around her. “The friends I have made along the way, including best friends, dance team colleagues, the RA staff, and even my professors and coworkers,” she said. “Everyone has been so kind and supportive; they are my motivation to keep going every day.”

BE. KNOW. DO.

GOAL #2

Embrace the RSC values of distinction when designing and implementing student life programs and services

Goal Summary:

Our assessment results demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing programs and services grounded in the institution's values of distinction, inclusion, accessibility, and student-centered practice. Outcomes across Wellness, Residence Life, Student Activities, and HEOP showed high levels of satisfaction, preparation, learning, and perceived support. Students and staff reported increased confidence, stronger understanding of resources, and positive learning outcomes resulting from training and programming efforts. Data suggest that departments are intentionally designing experiences that prioritize quality and student impact while continuing to strengthen leadership development and inclusive practices.



FACULTY/STAFF ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING:



SOCIAL MEDIA:



DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY OUTCOMES:



95% reported enhanced living/learning experiences and identified empathy, advocacy, and inclusion as primary takeaways.



FRESH CHECK DAY:

Fresh Check Day aims to create an approachable and hopeful atmosphere, where students are encouraged to engage in dialogue about mental health, and helps to build a bridge between students and the mental health resources available on campus, in the community, and nationally. Survey results from Fresh Check Day included:

- 70.45% became more aware of mental health resources
- 62.5% more likely to seek help
- 57.95% more comfortable discussing mental health
- 53.41% better prepared to help peers

GOAL #2 DEANS OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

 **84%**

84% of responders agree that Student Life programs help them succeed.

 **95%**

95% of responders know where to go if they need physical, mental, or accessibility support.

 **81.8%**

81.8% of participants felt club officer training prepared them for leadership roles.



 **92%**

92% of responders feel welcome, included, and respected in campus spaces.

 **93%**

93% of responders agree that the college supports students from all backgrounds in achieving upward mobility and empowerment.

 **93%**

93% of responders feel they have equitable access to opportunities in leadership, events, or resources regardless of their background.

GOAL #2 RESIDENCE LIFE

 **100%**

100% of RA's said that programming training clarified expectations and delivery.

 **82%**

82% Students indicated RAs create welcoming and supportive environments.

 **85%**

85% Professional staff culture supported inclusion and well-being.

 **94%**

94% agreed that grief response training strengthened RA confidence.

 **100%**

100% of RAs agree that Residence Life has provided them with meaningful opportunities to build and strengthen a sense of community and belonging among their residents.

 **94%**

94% of RAs agree that they are developing real-world competencies and are able to recognize the skills they have gained from being an RA.



OUR RA'S ARE CAREER READY!

Learning and using these skills daily to grow personally and professionally!

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines career readiness through eight core competencies:

- Career & Self-Development
- Communication
- Equity and Inclusion
- Critical Thinking
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Technology
- Professionalism



83% believe Sage Athletics prioritizes a “students-first” approach.



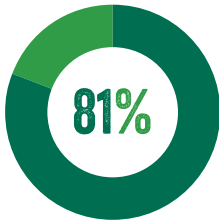
85% felt a strong sense of belonging and community within Sage Athletics.



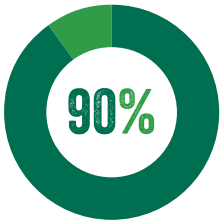
88% of athletes agreed that their head coach showed genuine care and concern for them as a person, beyond their athletic performance.



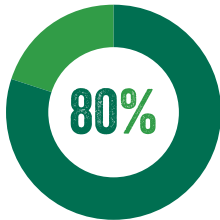
80% agree that their head coach helps them to set personal goals to allow them to grow and thrive.



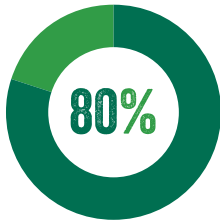
81% say that they received constructive feedback that helped them grow as an athlete.



90% of athletes felt supported by the Athletic Trainers in their recovery, injury prevention, and overall wellness.



80% of athletes felt the Athletic Communications staff positively represented them and their team.



80% felt that their athletic achievements were celebrated and shared equitably across programs.

STORIES OF DISTINCTION



MARA LITTLE

Leading with Inclusion,
Kindness, and Positivity

Throughout her journey, Mara learned a lesson that transformed her college experience: balance matters.

"I came into college very focused on my academics and responsibilities, often at the expense of my own well-being," Mara reflected. "Over time, I realized that it's okay to step back, prioritize myself, and invest in relationships."

She found that saying yes to time with friends helped her feel recharged and grounded. "The connections I've made here are incredibly meaningful, and I know they'll stay with me long after graduation."

One of Mara's most meaningful experiences was helping found the Future Educators Club and serving on its Executive Board for nearly three years.

Through organizing school supply drives, planning events for local students and families, and creating opportunities for future educators, Mara discovered her passion for making an impact.

She also credits key relationships for helping shape her Sage journey. Professor Kelly Smith, she shared, "has been an incredible mentor," while Chet and Karen Opalka provided encouragement and support through her experience as an Opalka Scholarship recipient.

"Their kindness, support, and insight have had a lasting impact on me," Mara said.

BE. KNOW. DO.

GOAL #3

Embed continuous improvement into daily operations by empowering employees to identify opportunities and implement positive change

Goal Summary:

Our findings indicate progress toward establishing a culture of continuous improvement through assessment, reflection, staff development, and process enhancement. Departments implemented new systems, training approaches, and feedback mechanisms to improve operational effectiveness and student experiences. Several initiatives substantially exceeded goals, including wellness resource utilization and student engagement efforts. Data also demonstrate strong staff and student worker satisfaction and preparedness. Continued opportunities include formalizing assessment practices across all areas and using findings more consistently to guide future improvements and strategic decision-making.



GOAL #3 WELLNESS

KONA ICE TRUCK OUTREACH:

100%

100% reported increased campus connection and wellness awareness.



WELLNESS VENDING MACHINES:

The wellness vending machines provide students with quick, automated access to affordable health and self-care essentials.

1,659 PRODUCTS



Distributed **1,659 products**, exceeding KPI by **829.5%**; top items included Plan B (24%), Ibuprofen (16%), and Tampons (13%).

100%
PARTICIPATION

REFLECTION RETREATS:

100% fall participation; 90–100% reported stronger connection and reflection.

82%
SATISFACTION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

82% satisfaction; 91% relevance; 100% rated sessions excellent.

100%
FELT SUPPORTED

RECREATION AND FITNESS STUDENT WORKERS:

100% felt supported, valued, and confident; 94% planned to return.



95%
REPORTED STRONGER
SOCIAL CONNECTION

100%
ENGAGING
EXPERIENCE

Color Blast 5K Run had **60 participants + 22 volunteers** who reported **95%** stronger social connection and **100%** engaging experience.

GOAL #3 DEANS OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

 **92%**

92% of responders agree that they feel comfortable providing feedback to Student Life Offices.

 **68%**

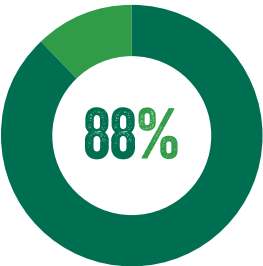
68% of responders feel that the college makes visible improvements when students raise concerns.

 **67%**

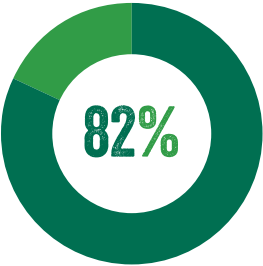
67% of students have seen positive changes in programs or services based on student feedback.



BETTER CHOICES AND LEARNING ALONG THE WAY



88% of RAs agreed that RA training on RA software including the RA Resource Hub provided them with a better understanding of how they can use this system to fulfill their duties as an RA.



82% of RAs agreed that having multiple opportunities to share feedback about their RA experience has positively enhanced their experience in this role.



4 DAYS → 4 HOURS!

New housing selection increased the efficiency streamlining process from 4 days to 4 hours!



Student accountability numbers in formal proceedings decreased as Gator Central provided a comprehensive view of each student, allowing staff to address policy violations more informally or through restorative approaches, leading to more effective and holistic support.



100%

All coaches trained and active in Gator Central, allowing them individual and easy access to student information. Coaches say this makes them more efficient, and improved their ability to quickly gather information and connect with students



STORIES OF DISTINCTION



SERINA GARMENDIZ

Appreciating the Memories You Make Along the Way

But beyond accomplishments, Serina says one lesson changed her perspective.

“My RSC experience taught me that while goals are important, it’s just as important to enjoy the process and the memories you make along the way,” she shared. “That mindset helped me stay positive and get more out of the experience.”

Two moments stand out as especially impactful. The first was making it to the Empire 8 Finals with her softball team during her junior spring season. The second came during her senior spring semester.

“I focused on appreciating my final moments with my friends and embracing my whole graduation process,” Serina said.

When asked about the connections that meant the most, Serina highlighted Sharon Murray, Erica Faas-Li, and Chelsea Ahl.

“I’m incredibly grateful for these three women, who supported me from my very first day and continued to believe in me through both my difficult and happiest moments throughout my time at RSC.”

We HEARD You, VOICES OF OUR STUDENTS AND MILESTONES!

RESIDENCE LIFE

Responsiveness in Action

In response to requests for additional communal and academic environments:

- ✔ **Installed new whiteboard equipment in Slocum Hall within a forty-eight hour window.**

Addressing student needs for residential facility enhancements:

- ✔ **Integrated adjustable fixtures within shower facilities.**

Honoring requests to reinstate cherished campus customs:

- ✔ **Successfully executed the return of the Haunted Hall tradition.**

Voices of Our Students

“The availability of collaborative study zones transforms our residence into a genuine community.”

“I appreciate that my RA prioritizes my personal well-being alongside my academic progress.”

“It is empowering to see tangible improvements following student recommendations.”

Strategic Milestones

- ➔ **Completion of Slocum Hall infrastructure project:**

- *Refurbished vanity units*
- *Installation of overhead ventilation fans*
- *Comprehensive bathroom modernization*

- ➔ **New housing software implemented in Fall 2025 that provides better housing operations management for staff and more user friendly housing selection processes for students. New software reduced the housing lottery from 3 days to 4 hours and eliminated 2 days of manual colleague data entry for staff!**
- ➔ **In Fall 2025, 8 RAs earned 4.0s. The average staff GPA was 3.61, the highest it has been in 4 years. Spring 2026 average RA GPA: 3.54 and 4 RAs with 4.0s. 25-26 average RA GPA: 3.575**
- ➔ **Residence Life implemented the “Polaroid Positivity Project”. A chance for RA’s to show and share their support of one another in a fun and engaging way. Building stronger connections and creating a positive work environment.**

STUDENT LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

Responding to Campus Needs

- ✓ Incorporated additional security protocols (on campus cameras and fobs) based on student advocacy.
- ✓ Mitigated transit concerns through the expansion of available parking.
- ✓ Utilized direct input (what do you want to see in Student Activities) to customize programming and incentive structures.

Student Perspectives

“These organized activities provided the bridge I needed to find my social circle.”

“The constant stream of events fosters a deep sense of institutional belonging.”

“The breadth of opportunities encouraged me to engage more than I originally anticipated.”

Engagement Highlights

- ➔ Increased the scope and frequency of “Say Hey Fridays.”
- ➔ Broadened cross-departmental programming partnerships.
- ➔ Prioritized data-driven strategies to enhance student involvement.
- ➔ 156 different students completed 238 heritage month fun fact quizzes.

WELLNESS, RECREATION & INCLUSION

Advancing Student Well-being

- ✔ Provided extended access (weekend hours) to recreational facilities per student feedback.
- ✔ Upgraded athletic equipment (dumbbells, barbells, yoga mats) to meet evolving fitness requirements.
- ✔ Enhanced the variety and depth of holistic health programming.

Impact Stories

“Weekly fitness sessions serve as an essential outlet for managing academic stress.”

“The welcoming atmosphere created by the instructors (fitness) makes participation accessible for everyone.”

“I felt consistently seen and supported by the dedicated accessibility services team.”

Achievement Metrics

- ➔ Delivered 228 unique recreational sessions.
- ➔ Integrated new preventative wellness resources for student use.
- ➔ Augmented clinical counseling and health promotion services.

GATOR ATHLETICS

Commitment to Excellence

- ✓ We now have a departmental certified Strength & Conditioning Coach. He uses an app to create all weight room programs allowing student-athlete to have access to their workouts
- ✓ Drastic improvements to the student athlete weight room. \$27,000 of new equipment in the space. The new large cable machine, Sage branded racks, and dumbbells are helping our athletes get stronger and compete on a higher level.
- ✓ Brand New Athletic Field with our Sage Logo! New facilities optimize student-athlete performance.



The Athlete Experience

"Our coaching staff invests in our growth as individuals, not just as competitors."

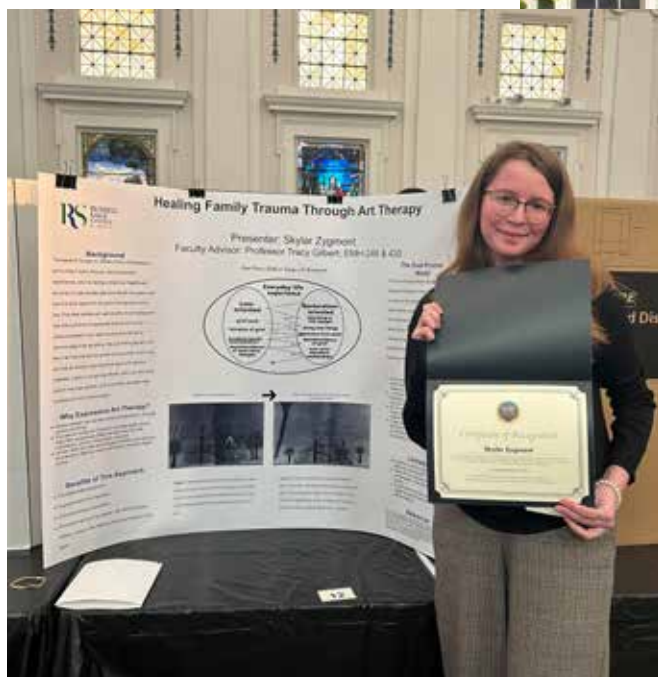
"The athletic program was the primary catalyst for my integration into campus life."

"The bond within my team provides a support system akin to a family."

Competitive Successes

- ★ eSports Valorant Completes Undefeated Fall with an ECAC eSports Divisional Championship
- ★ Empire 8 1st Team: Baseball (6), Softball (1), Flag Football (1), Men's Volleyball (1), Women's Basketball (1), Men's Basketball (1)
- ★ Empire 8 2nd Team: Baseball (3), Softball (2), Flag Football (3), Men's Basketball (2), Women's Volleyball (1), Field Hockey (1), Men's Soccer (1), Women's Soccer (1), Men's Golf (2)
- ★ Empire 8 Third Team: Baseball (2), Women's Lacrosse (1), Men's Volleyball (1), Women's Volleyball (1), Field Hockey (1)
- ★ Major Empire 8 Awards: Baseball Pitcher of the Year, Baseball Defensive Player of the Year, Baseball Rookie of the Year, Men's Basketball Defensive Player of the Year
- ★ Trainer Joe Schildwachter successfully completed his Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist training and is serving as our departmental Strength & Conditioning Coach
- ★ Men's Basketball Empire 8 Regular Season Champions
- ★ 3 Empire 8 Coaching Staffs of the Year: Golf, Men's Basketball, & Baseball
- ★ Baseball Empire 8 Regular Season & Tournament Champions, Empire 8 Tournament MVP
- ★ Baseball finished ranked 12th in NCAA Power Index for Division 3- Selected to Host a Regional Round for the NCAA Baseball tournament

STORIES OF DISTINCTION



SKYLAR ZYGMONT

Building connections and
meaningful relationships

"I have loved being an RA for two years and an active member in the Honors Program and Psychology Club," she shared.

One lesson stood out above all others during her college experience: "The best lesson I learned during my RSC experience was to build connections with faculty and networking."

That lesson came to life through one of Skylar's most memorable opportunities—being selected for a student assistantship at the New York Mental Health Counselors Association Conference in Albany.

"I got to network with mental health counselors and get my foot in the door for the field I want to go into," Skylar said. "I met so many new people and it was an experience I will never forget about my senior year!"

One connection in particular had a lasting impact: her minor advisor, Tracy Gilbert.

"She is one of the nicest people you will ever meet and cares deeply about every one of her students," Skylar shared. "I was introduced to Expressive Mental Health because of her and fell in love with it."

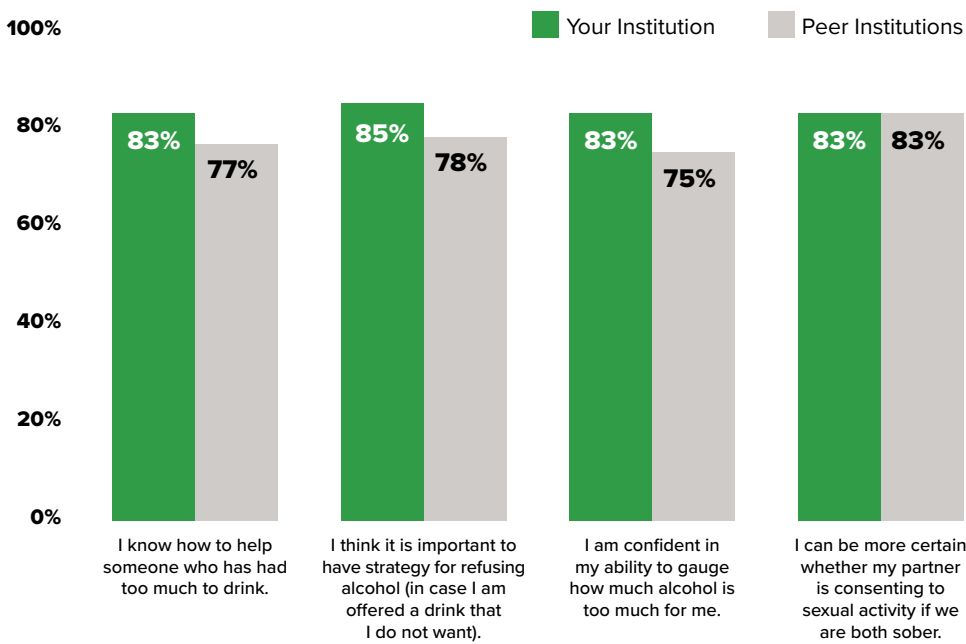
Skylar leaves Sage with meaningful relationships, valuable experiences, and a strong foundation for her future journey.

ALCOHOL, CLIMATE, AND CARE — TAKING CHOICES, ENVIRONMENT, AND INTERVENTION IN NEW DIRECTIONS

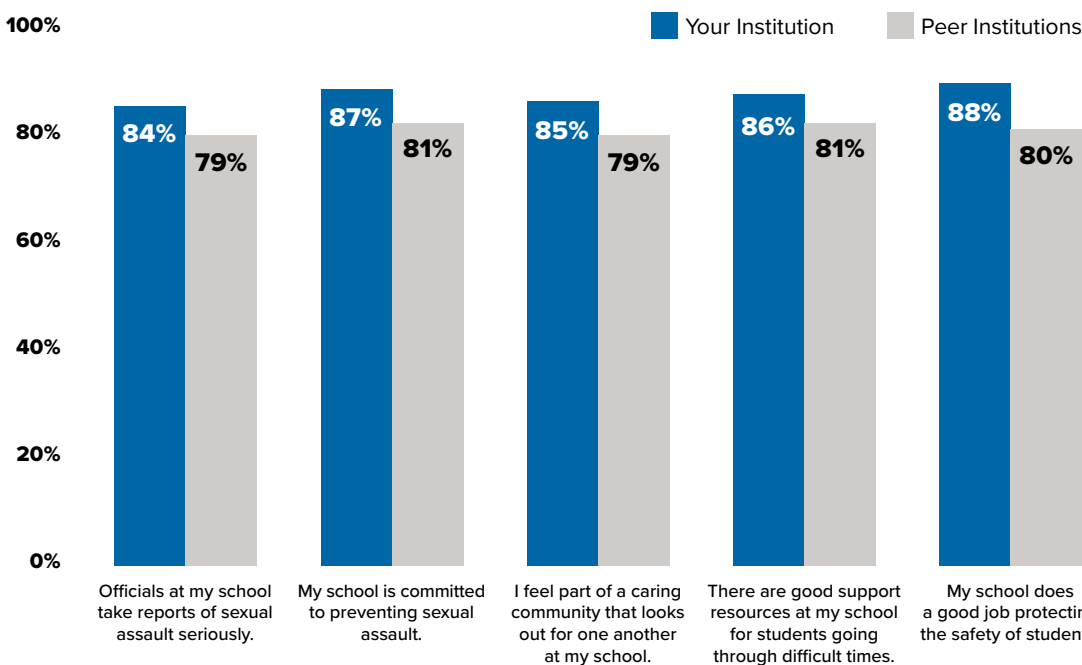
Alcohol EDU Training and Climate Survey Outcomes

The Alcohol, Education, and Climate Survey is administered annually to assess students’ perceptions of our campus culture, including attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol use and overall well-being. The survey also measures students’ confidence and willingness to intervene in situations that may place themselves or others at risk. The results provide valuable insights that guide the development of evidence-based prevention strategies, educational initiatives, and programs that promote healthy decision-making, foster a culture of care, and strengthen student well-being across campus.

Student Responses, Before and After the Course



Perceptions of Campus Climate



INTENTIONAL SHIFT TO A BROADER AND DEEPER GATOR SUPPORT TEAM MODEL AND LEANER MORE STRUCTURED BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION TEAM (BIT)

Transitioning from the larger CARE model to a smaller, more efficient structure focused on proactively identifying and supporting students with high-level behavioral concerns.

BIT's Core Functions:

- **Identification and Connection:** Identify students with emotional or mental health needs and coordinate prompt connections to counseling and wellness programs for immediate attention and support.
- **Mitigation of High-Risk Situations:** Work quickly and efficiently to mitigate high-risk or threatening situations.
- **Crisis Response:** Rapidly convene during crisis-level concerns to review information, assess risk, and make collective determinations that guide immediate, decisive action.
- **Operational Clarity:** Establish clear referral pathways, protocols, and follow-up procedures for seamless and efficient student support.



STUDENT LIFE... IT'S AN EXPERIENCE

