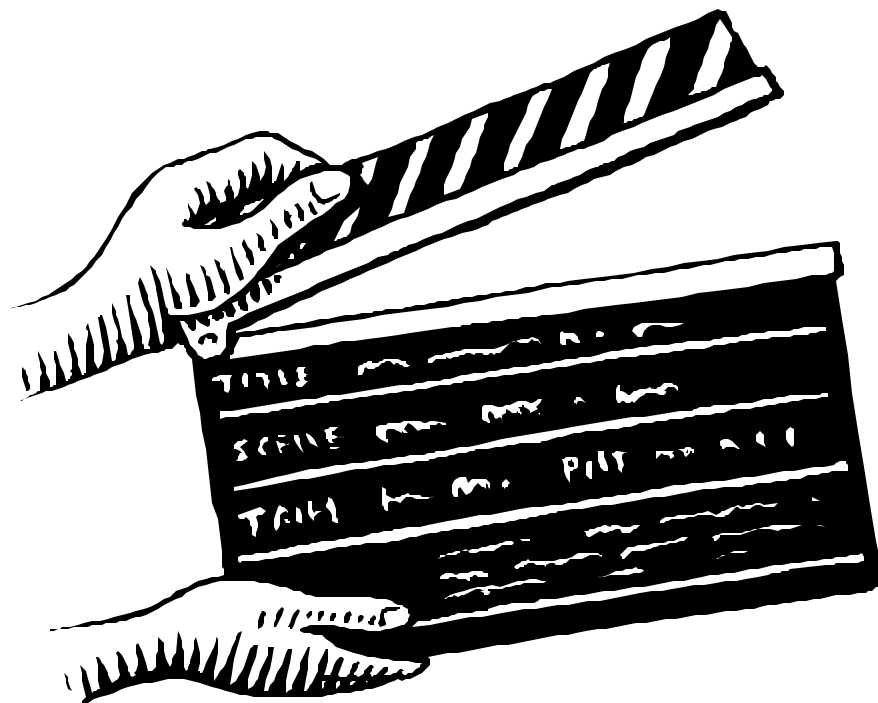


Kelsey Harper

A Rising Star

A bid for RA of the year for 2004



Presented by Western Washington University
No Frills 2004



Arriving on Set

Imagine applying for a job, and knowing that over 150 people have applied for the same position. You make it past the application process and get an interview. Through the crazy day of going through three interviews, you are nervous and excited all at the same time. Then you are selected to be an RA at Western Washington University for the 2003-2004 school year. You are excited to meet your new staff, and your first meeting brings you together with seven other people. You don't really get too much of a chance to get to know each other before you are rushed to a scavenger hunt to learn about the building. The next time you see your staff is at room sign up night. This is the first chance you might get to meet some residents as they sign up for your floor, but you also get to meet the residents that sign up to live on other floors. The night is crazy and you don't really get to bond with your staff or get to know each other before the school year ends and you have three months before you will see each other again. This was Kelsey Harper's first RA experience. Right away, she got to experience the chaos that can be the residence halls. She also barely had a chance to get to know her staff before heading into summer and preparing for the following year.

Meeting Your Cast

Like meeting a cast for the first time, Kelsey has made it a point to get to know all involved within her life in the residence halls. They all are a part of the "movie" that is the life of Kelsey as a Resident Advisor.

- Starting at last year's room sign-up night, Kelsey has worked to get to know not only her residents, but also the other residents in the building (300 total residents!)
- Kelsey goes door to door at least once a week with treats to get to know all of her residents and maintain continued conversations with them.
- Working as a summer RA, Kelsey began to build relationships with the central staff as well as other staff members that would be working during the academic year.
- Kelsey spends time with each staff member, working towards getting to know them better.



A Shot at Directing

Part of directing is helping and guiding your actors so that the show runs smoothly. Kelsey has done an amazing job by providing diverse programming for her residents, and the entire hall, to help guide them through their year at school. She excels in creating and presenting challenging educational programs, and provides many social programs or all. Some of the programs she has put on are:

- Body Image – helping residents break down stereotypes
- Sexual health – keeping residents informed and educated on important issues
- Capital Punishment and the Value of Life – challenging residents to explore their beliefs
- Brick Painting and Open Door Night
- Movie Night at least once a month (sometimes once a week)
- Goldfish with Kelsey – keeping in contact with her residents on a weekly basis
- Fun Door Decorations for each resident every month

Providing a Script

Throughout the year, Kelsey has made a script, written down, to engage her residents. This script has been in the form of bulletin boards. Kelsey has a way with providing great information that draws residents' attention and that might be hard to present to them in an active program. Kelsey designs and puts up both educational and fun bulletin boards at least once a month. She provides many interactive bulletin boards to engage her residents. Some of the topics that Kelsey has presented include:

- If the world was made up of one-hundred people
- Breast awareness – providing background history and importance of taking care of yourself
- Get to know your Roommate
- Hall Wide Martin Luther King, Jr. poster campaign
- Several Interactive Questions – pens provided so residents can express their feelings and beliefs



Helping Others Learn Their Lines

When working with a cast, it can be difficult if everyone does not learn their lines. Actors are very helpful to each other when it comes to learning their lines. Kelsey, like an actor, is extremely helpful. She is always willing to give advice, help address a situation, and communicate with others about what is going on.

- Kelsey checks in with everyone on staff on a regular basis.
- Kelsey provides everyone with information that might affect the community as a whole and gets the staff engaged in community wide issues.
- If she needs help, Kelsey is not afraid to ask others.
- Kelsey is involved with hall council and brings the RA perspective to the meetings.
- Kelsey gets to know the desk staff and helps them out when needed.
- If others have scheduling conflicts, Kelsey will step in and take extra shifts so that others on her staff can be involved in their activities.
- Kelsey is always willing to listen and give advice when others come to her to talk.

Character Changes

During the year, Kelsey has been faced with many challenging issues. It is part of the RA life to be able to quickly put you into that RA role and handle whatever situation may come. Kelsey has demonstrated her ability to change roles from friend to counselor to mentor to authority. She does so with the utmost integrity and always follows up with the residents to make sure that they are doing well. Some of the situations Kelsey has handled include:

- Eating Disorders
- Roommate Conflicts
- Changing feelings about college and whether or not residents want to be here
- People having pets that they are not supposed to have



Taking on an Extra Role

Kelsey's involvement and leadership goes far beyond her RA role. She has been involved with VOX, or Voices for Planned Parenthood, as an on campus activist for the Associated Students club. She provides education, campus- and community-wide, about one's own body and sexual health. Kelsey was even the coordinator for the Sexual Health Awareness committee. Some of the activities and programs that she has assisted in

include:

- Super Bowl and Sex Ed
- VOX ROX concert – an awareness raising music event
- Wearable Arts Show
- Planning a local march in Bellingham
- Distributing information on Western's campus as well as community college campuses
- Distributing condoms for Free Condom Fridays on campus

An Oscar Nominated Role

When actors and actresses outshine the rest, they receive the highest honor, the Oscar. Kelsey's contributions and commitments to her residents and the residence hall community as a whole are more than deserving of such an award. Kelsey provides exceptional service to all of the people in the community. Whether it be through directing programs, creating engaging bulletin boards, handling conflict, or whatever else may come, Kelsey gives 110%. Kelsey is a great role model to others. She is involved not only in the community, but in the campus community as well. All of Kelsey's activities do not keep her from demonstrating high academic success. Throughout everything, Kelsey always has the needs of others in mind, and does her best to provide her support. She truly is a Rising Star in the residence hall system here at Western Washington University, and she will continue to shine in the future.



An equal opportunity university

Office of University Residences

Bellingham, Washington 98225-9195
(360) 650-2950

January 27, 2004

To the RA of the Year Selection Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Kelsey Harper. Kelsey has been a rising star on my staff since the start of the academic year. In Kelsey's short time as a RA she has made a large impact on her community, staff, and self. I can say with confidence that she is deserving of this special recognition.

Kelsey has been a stand out RA during her time in our hall. She excels in programming through both quantity and quality. Kelsey never has a problem exceeding minimum expectations. She has developed many innovative programs to educate residents on topics including sexual health, body image, and the death penalty. Kelsey is always challenging her residents to embrace diversity and to be open minded to new ideas. However, beyond being educative she also provides many social opportunities for her floor, and she is always showing a movie. Kelsey has great programming skills and has recently begun to reaching out to her supporting cast to co-program with the staff in areas where they need help.

Not only is Kelsey an excellent programmer she is very committed to staff and student relationships. Kelsey walks her floor with treats weekly in an effort to have continued conversations with residents. Additionally, she makes a point to know staff on a personal level and extends a helping hand to them whenever she can. Kelsey has been able to make people who have been ostracized in the larger community feel at home on her floor. She has also worked hard to develop a relationship with the Hall Council by attending meetings and sharing information about the life of a RA when necessary.

Throughout her excellent work as a RA Kelsey has been able to be a part of a campus organization that educates men and women about their own bodies and their sexual health. She is very active in this group, as a RA, and as a successful student. With all that Kelsey does her GPA has not suffered. She is also a star student maintaining a 3.4 GPA, and she continues to get excited about her classes and the learning opportunities they provide. Currently, Kelsey is using the information she learns in her Gay and Lesbian Literature class to further educate her residents.

I believe that Kelsey is deserving of recognition beyond the Western Campus Community. She has been an asset to the Residence Life staff and the campus body. I am excited to see how Kelsey will continue to grow and develop in the remainder of the school year, and next year as she returns for a second year of working as a RA. I would love to talk with you about Kelsey should you have questions about her skills or abilities. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (360) 650-4116.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Schwerhofer".

Alice Schwerhofer
Resident Director
Mathes Hall
Western Washington University

Western Washington University's Bid for RA of the Year
No Frills 2004