The University of Arkansas was closed for over four days (combined) in December and one day in January due to winter weather. In early December snow and frigid temperatures were added to icing due to freezing rain, creating a lengthy period of hazardous road conditions that closed schools and businesses throughout northwest Arkansas.

Special thanks to all Housing employees deemed “essential staff.” While the rest of us were home trying to stay warm these staff members were braving the travel conditions and working on campus providing necessary services to our students.

Photo provided by Aaron England.
The University of Arkansas was one of 80 colleges and universities invited to take part in a White House summit aimed at increasing access to higher education for “at-risk” students — those lacking financial or other resources and “at risk” of not getting into college and of not succeeding if they do attend. The event took place Wednesday and Thursday, January 15 and 16, in Washington, D.C.

Chancellor G. David Gearhart represented the university at the summit. The U of A earned its invitation with a demonstrated record of working with low income and underrepresented students and by committing to develop at least three additional programs to improve the access and success rates for these students.

“It is a major commitment,” Gearhart admitted. “But the University of Arkansas was founded as an institution for the sons and daughters of the working class. We are a land-grant university. We are here to serve the state. So it’s a commitment we take very seriously.

“People who come from at-risk families are just as smart, just as talented as anyone else, and should have the same opportunities,” he continued. “A flagship, land-grant university should take this responsibility. It’s a big obligation but it’s one that is part of our heritage.”

Gearhart said the summit was excellent. When asked to rate it on a scale of one to 10, he didn’t hesitate.

“I’d give it a 10,” he said, and went on to explain that the event was very worthwhile on several levels.

“It wasn’t all just talk,” he said. “I think the people who took part in this summit really have a commitment and want to make these programs work. I think the summit will ultimately have a great impact on the nation.

“I felt very good that our university was one of the 80 invited to attend, and I thought that was very prestigious for the university, Gearhart added. “It profiled the University of Arkansas in a special way.”

The event began Wednesday evening, with a private, “off the record” discussion between the higher education leaders and members of the Department of Education and the National Economic Policy Council. Gearhart said it was an opportunity to share ideas and talk about the programs that worked.

The following morning the educators were joined by about 60 business, state government, foundation and non-profit leaders for a series of workshop meetings to continue a discussion of the issues and solutions. Late in the morning they heard from their official hosts: President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

“It was very interesting,” said Gearhart. “Mrs. Obama spoke first and was very inspiring, as was the president. They both came across as very committed to this goal. And I got the same feeling from everyone who attended this summit. We were all on the same page regarding increased access for at-risk students.”

The University of Arkansas currently has four programs specifically aimed at preparing these students for college. The ACT Academy brings high school students to campus for five days during the summer to help prepare them for the ACT exam and the college admissions process.
The Academic Enrichment Program provides low income and underrepresented students with academic support such as tutoring, workshops, early intervention advising, peer and faculty mentoring and other learning opportunities.

A two-week summer program called iBridge offers incoming freshmen an intensive orientation to college-level literacy, mathematics, science and technology courses; a similar program for engineering students, the Engineering Career Awareness Program, provides gap funding support and uses rigorous academic retention strategies for each year’s group of incoming freshmen.

Tutoring, advising, mentoring and orientation are available to all U of A students. However, these programs are targeted, and go further Gearhart said, because the students’ needs are different and more intense.

“Many at-risk students want to go to college but don’t really know how to go through the process of taking the ACT or filling out financial aid forms, or even applying to a school,” he explained. “In Arkansas some of these students have never been out of their county – some not even out of their town – and coming to the University of Arkansas is a big, big deal to them. We need to be open to helping these students, to make sure they have the same opportunities as everyone else.”

The chancellor praises Charles Robinson, vice chancellor for diversity and community, for creating the current programs. Robinson says the credit belongs to the faculty and staff of the seven units under his division, who these programs work, as well as others programs that actively reach out to students in elementary, middle school and high school, encouraging them to prepare for a college education. Robinson and his staff have also been instrumental in developing the new programs that Gearhart committed to during the White House summit.

These include an expanded Summer Bridge program on campus that would involve students taking for-credit courses as a transition to the college experience; a University Perspectives course targeted to the needs of at-risk students, with intensive advising, career coaching, enhanced tutoring support, as well as discussions of financial aid literacy and cultural sensitivity; and a new pilot program, Commitment to College Completion. This program is being funded with a $2.1 million gift from the Walton Family Foundation and will provide financial resources along with academic enrichment and peer and faculty mentoring.

“Ultimately, we want to think about developing a ‘cradle to the grave’ relationship with all our students,” Gearhart said.

“Our goal is to reach out to them early in their lives, help guide them to the resources they need to prepare for college, give them the support they need to do the hard work it takes to succeed in college and graduate; we also intend to offer career counseling to help them find jobs or move on to graduate school, then stay in contact with them, as alumni, throughout their lives.

“We want every Arkansan to have access to the American opportunity system, and that begins with access to higher education.”
Overall, we are learning to take information, turn it into knowledge, and use that knowledge as an integral part of how we set and carry out priorities.

The survey period this year will run from mid-February to mid-March. Similar to last year, as an incentive, we will be offering a chance at a $600 meal plan credit through a random drawing of survey respondents upon survey close.

Having the opportunity to attend the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference, I enjoyed the overall experience of this student-lead function. It amazed me what student leaders accomplished at the conference from January 16-18, 2014. The students in attendance had the opportunity to present programs and networking throughout the 3-day conference. I witnessed predominantly minority students engaged in programs that caught their attention and that stimulated their growth professionally as well as personally. Several programs gave students the chance to share their experiences, their stories, and their knowledge. I enjoyed connecting to the students of University of Arkansas and get their feedback about the conference was refreshing. Furthermore, I like the organizations and programs other institutions have in place to create diversity and inclusion.

The conference site to host the 26th annual Southwestern Black Student Leadership conference was Texas A&M University. The student leaders were wonderful and performed an exceptional job serving as the host of this conference. The turnout was great with over 500 students in attendance and about 50 institutions represented ranging from University of Florida to Miami University of Ohio.

Looking at the result of this conference, I believe we can continue to gain momentum for our diversity initiative for the division and for the University as a whole. Additionally, enhance what we do in the residence halls and existing programs and conferences, such as Diversity Leadership Institute.

The advisor sessions were based on building upon your leadership style, connecting to students needs, and focusing on personal and professional growth. I had the opportunity to ask about their role at the respective institutions and exchange information with higher education professionals. These programs reminded me why I enjoy the higher education profession and why student development is important for every type of student. The advisor track was beneficial but to witness the students participation and voice was empowering throughout the conference.

From the esteemed and highly recognized guest speakers at the banquets to interacting with students and professionals in the higher education field, the conference hosted by Texas A&M University was truly presented nicely and designed to connect students to career opportunities and other institutions. This was my first time attending this conference and I must say the time spent here was beneficial to help encourage diversity and inclusion at the University of Arkansas especially in within student organizations and in the residence halls. Speaking on the culture of African-Americans to stereotyping, the students were engaged and discussed how they handle situations in their own realm.
University Housing continues to make significant strides in reducing energy consumption for a gross savings of $413,644 this past year. This savings was the result of numerous conservation measures (ECMs) including upgrades to domestic water systems and fixtures, lighting systems, improvements to building automation systems and other upgrades to steam traps and variable frequency drives on pumping systems made under contract with Energy Systems Group, Inc. These savings mark two consecutive years in which University Housing has exceeded contract guaranteed savings. In FY2012, savings exceeded the guaranteed amount by 10%. FY2013 savings far exceed the guaranteed amount by 44%. These savings represent a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 1,689 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent. Combined with last year’s reduction of 1,320 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent, University Housing has made a total reduction of 3,009 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent. This total can be better expressed in visual terms as the equivalent of planting 2,466 acres of pine forest, removing 627 passenger vehicles from the road, or creating enough energy to power 150 single-family homes for a year! These results are a fantastic achievement and a direct reflection of University Housing’s strong commitment to reduce our energy consumption. We continue to make further strides in system upgrades, optimization of building schedules and air handling unit programming, and energy awareness by our residents to encourage even more savings over the next year.

New Student Family Programs and University Housing - Pomfret Hall collaborated on hosting an event entitled Bingo Night, which was a part of the Welcome Back Week.

The event was held in Pomfret Hall Great Room on Monday, January 13, 2014 to kickoff the first day of classes. About 200 students attended this event, the students were getting back to the University and had the opportunity to win prizes to start the Spring semester. Everyone was eyeing down the prizes and their chance to win the grand prize, which was a Playstation 4. The students were extremely entertained playing Bingo and reconnected with friends from the Winter Break. The students played different types of Bingo to change the pace of the game and make it more exciting but suspenseful.

The Pomfret Hall Senate and Resident Assistants teamed up on setting up the program and assisting New Student Family Programs run the event. The student leaders did a magnificent job facilitating this program as well as having the opportunity to play and win prizes at Bingo Night. This collaboration with New Student and Family Programs worked out perfectly and looking forward to creating new traditions and similar program opportunities in the future with this department. This program was a success and a great way to jump-start the year of 2014.
Holcombe Hall has had a busy winter thus far! During the snow days in early December, a lot of our international students got to experience snow for the first time. In order to keep them entertained, our hall senate threw a cookie decorating party, and later made snow ice cream. Also in December, two of our students presented on Serbia for the Geography Series! It was right in line with finals, and it was a good opportunity for residents to take a break and snack on some traditional foods.

During the month of January, we have been welcoming our brand new students and helping to integrate them with our old students. Our RA’s collaborated together to through an ice cream social, this event filled the basement with people! It was an opportunity for all of residents to connect with one another. In keeping with the same idea, we threw a Welcome Back game night during the following week. Students had the chance to see one another again and to reinforce the relationships that they had started earlier. They munched on chips and queso while putting together puzzles, playing jenga, and in general just hanging out with one another.
Congratulations! Thanks to your efforts, the donations from most of the areas at the University of Arkansas increased significantly since last year’s campaign. You definitely made a difference! I especially want to thank Cindy Shackelford from the Global Campus and Mike Waddell in Athletics for their efforts in obtaining such high participation rates in their units. Great job! We will be incorporating some of the strategies they used in next year’s campaign.

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<th>Unit</th>
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<th>2014 Donations</th>
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I recently received the final numbers for the 2014 United Way campaign:
Employees: $109,424.80
Retirees:  $5,775.00
Students:  $8,626.00
Total:    $123,825.80

Employee Participation Rate: 9%

Although we may not have reached our goals of $150,000 and 15% participation, we set very high goals and your efforts to achieve those goals is providing almost $124,000 to support the United Way in advancing the common good of hard working families. This was also the first year we actively engaged the students and have created a foundation on which to build for future campaigns. We have reason to be proud.

Again, many thanks for your help in this important effort to support our community.

Debbie McLoud, M.Ed., SPHR
University of Arkansas Human Resources
Summer Conferences is currently recruiting enthusiastic, customer-service minded individuals to join the 2014 Summer Conferences team. A link to the application can be found on the University Housing website, and February 21, 2014 is the application due date. All materials are required to be turned in on that date to receive full consideration.

The minimum qualifications for the position include:

- Current UA Student with at least 24 hours completed by May 2014
- Must be in good academic and judicial standing with the University
- Must have a GPA of at least 2.5
- Must be patient, courteous, professional and have a strong customer service orientation
- Able to work independently and on a team in a fast-paced, demanding environment
- Comprehensive knowledge of campus and community services
- Readily adaptable to change, resourceful and able to solve problems quickly and creatively
- Able to live and contribute to a community of student staff

If you have further questions about the position, please feel free to contact Jason Hogan (jphogan@uark.edu or 575-5232) or Heather Schneller (hschnel@uark.edu or 575-6151).
On Friday, December 13, the weather cleared enough for the last tours to take place in the Housing Administration Building.

Above: Danny Lisle preparing to enjoy the tour
Right top: Inside the Douglas Street entrance looking at the front desk and Florence Johnson’s office upstairs
Right middle: Jeff Vinger leading a tour
Right bottom: Administrative Services folks in their new area
Below: Florence Johnson leading a tour

The first moves to the new building are scheduled to begin on Thursday, February 13.
On behalf of University Housing-Residence Education and the Office of New Student and Family Programs, we would like to extend you an invitation to present an educational session at the Diversity Leadership Institute (DLI) scheduled for Saturday, April 12, 2014, in the Arkansas Student Union.

The purpose of Diversity Leadership Institute is to educate Resident Assistants, R.O.C.K. Camp Mentors, FNL Coordinators, Parent Ambassadors, HOG WILD Welcome Weeks Crew and other student leaders in the areas of diversity, leadership, and social justice as well as to gain a better understanding about the differences in the students who they will serve. DLI will give student leaders the opportunity to participate in educational sessions and roundtable discussions, a Tunnel of Oppression, and Keynote Sessions.

The following learning outcomes have been established for Diversity Leadership Institute. At the conclusion of DLI, participants will demonstrate:

- a willingness to self-examine and define their own values, world view, assumptions and biases.
- knowledge about culturally appropriate resources and how to make referrals.
- an awareness of their own behavior and its impact on others.
- an awareness of interdependent relationships involving power and privilege.

This call for programs is an opportunity for students, faculty & staff, and community leaders to present an experience that will encourage growth and development on issues of diversity and multicultural awareness. The institute will offer participants over 30 educational sessions where they can pick from a series of 50-minute programs to attend. The content and focus of these educational sessions should have the learning outcomes of DLI in mind. In addition, sessions will also develop leadership skills relating to diversity and cross cultural connections, empowering institute participants to become more empathetic and respectful to the diversity of others. Sample topics include: Age, Ability, Socioeconomic Status, Language Barriers, Cultural Identity issues, GLBT issues, Cultural Cues, White Privilege, Religion, International Student Issues and more. General Student Leadership presentations are also welcome. Please remember that presentations are for a wide variety of student leaders, not just one specific sub group (RAs, Rock Camp mentors, Greeks, etc.) and presentations should include a wide variety of examples.

Please share this e-mail with any staff members who may not be on this listserv. If you are interested in presenting, please submit your program at the following URL: http://bit.ly/LCepPO (This is a bit.ly link I have created to make the URL shorter). All program proposals must be received by Friday, March 14, 2014. You will be notified of your program’s acceptance by Friday, March 21, 2014. For more information, please contact Michael Beaver at 479-718-7869 or mabeaver@uark.edu. Thank you and we look forward to having you join us for the 2014 Diversity Leadership Institute.
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Full Circle Pantry donated a few holiday fixins’ to some deserving staff!
Standing (left to right): Sonya Lambert, Becky Comer, Suzanne Jordan, Leanne Smith
Kneeling (left to right): Trasa Lewis and Heather Lakey

Upper Left: John Sugg, Steve Roach and Danny Lilze standing by the 80” TVs that were installed at Slim Chickens and the upstairs dining area.

Above: John Sugg, Raymond Watts, Robert Powers and John Cornelius hard at work removing ice from sidewalks at Pomfret.

Left: Jeff Muckleroy removing ice from the stairs at Gregson.

Article & Photo Contributed by Judy Kendrick
FAREWELL & GOOD LUCK!

Retirement Day Arrived!

Moon Minor retired on December 20th after 10 years of service to University Housing. Moon was a dedicated and dependable employee and an inspiration to many of us. Moon’s focus on helping others, especially the students, was one of her many great traits. The manner in which she handled her daily responsibilities amazed us - she kept going and going! Moon plans to spend time with her family!

On January 14 Housing said goodbye as Shirley Claypool retired after twelve years with the department. She served as Administrative Assistant to three Executive Directors and three Interim Executive Directors during her time with Housing.

Shirley provided a list of around twenty “things” she did for Housing; inadequate to describe her impact with the department it will suffice to note that every day she took pride in being consistent and exhibiting teamwork to meet the goals of the Housing Department.

Ruth Ann Davis began working for Housing (then Residence Life and Dining Services) in 1990 and retired on Friday, January 31. While with Housing Ruth Ann served in a number of capacities, starting as the hall receptionist at Pomfret. In addition, she’s supervised hall receptionists (now secretaries), did hall assignments and worked as payroll coordinator before returning to the newly formed Office of Administrative Services as Coordinator for Assignments. With Assignments Ruth Ann moved to an Assistant Director, then Associate Director/Interim Director position before settling in as Associate Director for Assignments. She’s looking forward to spending time with her family and cheering on numerous teams from Texas!

Contributed by Shirley Claypool and Carolyn Sohn
Curtis Cody has been hired as our Skilled Trades Painter. Curtis has worked for Housing as temp twice over the past couple years. We are glad to have him permanently on the team. He brings over 30 years painting and drywall experience to our team. Please welcome Curtis if you see him around.

Stacia Smith is serving as the Coordinator for Residence in Yocum Hall for the spring semester. Stacia may have a familiar face as she has worked as a Resident Assistant during her undergraduate here at the U of A and she was a Razortemp working at some of our hall desks while she was in graduate school. She was President of Pomfret Hall Senate and also served as the National Communications Coordinator for RIC during her undergraduate career. She received a BA in Communication from the University of Arkansas and an MS in Leadership and Higher Education from John Brown University. Please welcome Stacia to Yocum Hall and the University Housing team!

Stepping in for Shirley Claypool as Administrative Assistant III, working with Executive Director Florence Johnson, is Sarah Whitmill.

In her words: My name is Sarah Whitmill, and I am from West Fork, Arkansas. I live with my husband and two boys. I have a passion for sports, and it is a family tradition in our home to cheer on the Hogs. I am very excited to be a part of the Housing Department at the University of Arkansas, and I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

On December 2, Laura Cady joined the Housing staff as part of the friendly front desk team.

According to Laura: having just moved here from San Francisco, California I am impressed by the natural beauty of Arkansas. I’m extremely happy to be part of the housing department. Working under Alisha is a dream come true. Be sure to stop by the front desk of the new housing building and say hello!
The Spring semester is in full swing! One of the first large scale programs in Hotz Honors Hall was the “Tile-A-Hog” tessellated Razorback art project. The project began, and was completed, on Saturday, January, 25th in the lobby and was open to any student who wanted to participate. Tessellations are symmetric designs of objects that can fit together in a variety of ways, and can therefore produce a variety of different shapes and creations. The tessellation project was a collaborative effort between Hotz Honors Hall’s Graduate Assistant, Katie Wilson, who is responsible for facilitating meaningful programs for Honors eligible residents and local math teacher Willard Keirn. Mr. Keirn spent the day with students discussing the concept of tessellations and assisting them in the creating of the Razorback themed mural.  Mr. Keirn used his skills and expertise in both math and art to create several designs featuring Razorback-shaped tessellations. Students were allowed to vote on their top choice the week before the project.  Before the start of the project Mr. Keirn shared his thoughts on the project:

“As a math teacher and an aspiring artist, I’ve always been fascinated by artists who applied mathematical components to their art. I am particularly fond of M.C. Escher’s use of tessellations. Not only has his work inspired me to teach art in my curriculum, his work has also motivated me to use my skills as an artist to create new patterns and designs never before seen. Of late, my most recent design as a U of A Razorback crafter is a tessellated Razorback, and I’m excited to share it with the honors students at Hotz Hall.”

Using a projector, the outline of Arkansas was meticulously shaped using painters tape. After creating the Arkansas border, the students began the hard work of lightly tracing the tessellated Razorbacks. Last, design was completed by painting each hog by the ever steady hands of the students and Mr. Keirn.  A mural design like this usually takes around 40 hours to complete, however, with the aid of students this one took a mere fraction of the time to complete. Beginning at 10:00 am and the mural was completed around 7:30 PM in the evening with a break for lunch. The Honors college provided the boxed lunches for students who contributed their time, dedication, and talents to the project. The long-standing collaboration between University Housing and the Honors College has afforded the residents living in Honors designated residential communities the ability to create a living environment that is uniquely theirs.
RecycleMania is a friendly competition and benchmarking tool for college and university recycling programs to promote waste reduction activities to their campus communities. Over an 8-week period each spring, colleges across the United States and Canada report the amount of recycling and trash collected each week and are in turn ranked in various categories based on who recycles the most on a per capita basis, as well as which schools have the best recycling rate as a percentage of total waste and which schools generate the least amount of combined trash and recycling. With each week’s updated ranking, participating schools follow their performance against other colleges and use the results to rally their campus to reduce and recycle more.

National recognition is provided to the winning school in each category on the RecycleMania website and in a national press release. Winning schools receive an award made out of recyclable materials, and win the right to host that category’s special traveling trophy for the coming year.

Overall Goals for RecycleMania

1. Motivate students and staff to increase recycling efforts and reduce waste generation.
2. Generate attention and support for campus recycling programs.
3. Encourage colleges to measure and benchmark recycling activity in their effort to improve their programs over time.
4. Have a fair and friendly competition.

This year’s competition begins on February 2 and closes on March 28.

Images from the Great Gatsby Dance, Futrall/Holcombe, Thursday, January 30

Photos contributed by Josh C. Koerner
Special thanks to Nicole Allen
University Housing has continued efforts to create an atmosphere of a home away from home for our students and encouraged them to stay on campus beyond their freshman year. Along with Administrative Services’ #Neverleaving campaign, Residential Facilities has conducted Operation: Shock and Awe during the Winter Break with numerous lifecycle upgrades across many of the residence halls.

During this operation, Humphreys Hall has a complete upgrade of furniture and paint in both upstairs and downstairs great rooms, the first floor elevator lobby, kitchen and all of the study rooms on the student floors.

In Yocum Hall, we also upgraded the look and feel with new furniture and paint for both upstairs and downstairs great rooms, the first floor elevator lobby, and the study rooms on each floor.

Gregson Hall has new furniture installed on each floor creating student study alcoves on the ends of each hallway along with new furniture and flooring at the front desk and entry area.

The NWQ A&B have new and additional furniture on all floors replacing broken furniture pieces and creating additional study alcoves at the elevator lobbies.

Gibson Hall has a complete remodel of the upstairs community/kitchen rooms including new furniture. The entryway also has new furniture.

Pomfret Hall has new furniture at entryways with the creation of study areas along the corridor leading to Pomfret “D” wing.

Holcombe Hall has a new change of color throughout the great room, music room and study rooms with new carpet and valances.

Futrall Hall has new carpet and furniture in the entry great room.

Reid Hall has remodeled and refurnished study rooms on all floors.

These many upgrades are just a taste of things to come in our continuing efforts to make our halls exceptional housing facilities that welcome, enhance, and support the living and learning experience and promote a positive image for our students living with us at the University of Arkansas.

Contributed by David Belviy
Images from the January Luncheon, Friday, January 17. Entertainment bravely provided by the IT Office.

Gregson Icicle Photo Contributed by Aaron England
Genieve “Miss Jenny” Jean Horton, age 80, of Lowell, passed away on January 5, 2014 at Circle of Life Hospice House in Springdale. She was born August 23, 1933, in Biloxi, Mississippi, the daughter of James and Ada Chamtge Thibodeaux. She was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and Mimi to everyone and will be greatly missed. She loved to cook and always made everyone feel welcome and like a part of the family. She retired from the University of Arkansas where she had been a housekeeper at Gibson Hall. She loved taking care of “her” girls at the Hall, and they loved her in return.

My husband and I would like to express our deep appreciation to you for your love and support during this difficult time as we experienced the loss of our child. So many in Housing have shown us support through their kindness, sympathy and comforting words in our bereavement. Our special thanks to Kathy Thielen, Barbara John, Judy Kendrick, Marvena Rust, Stacey Freeman, Linda Jackson, Stephanie Good, Diana Bell, Sofia Flores, Amber McMillan, Charlotte Huffman, and Steve and Pam Smith for their visits and hugs.

In Loving Appreciation,

Mira and Trayan Milanov