

UCSD to host Student Leader Exchange program with McGill University from Feb. 20-27

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UCSD TO HOST STUDENT LEADER EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH MCGILL UNIVERSITY FROM FEB. 20 - 27

Serving as a college campus resident assistant used to mean little more than making sure students didn't drink alcohol in their rooms or play their stereo too loud.

But today live-in peer counselors must cope with issues ranging from date rape and sexual harassment to AIDS.

Such topics will be among the issues resident assistants will address at a weeklong Muir College Student Leader Exchange to be held Feb. 20 - 27 at the University of California, San Diego.

About two dozen resident assistants from McGill University in Montreal are expected to participate in the exchange with resident assistants from Muir College.

One of the goals of the program is to teach students that there are many ways to approach a problem.

"It's another lesson in diversity," said Blue Robbins, assistant resident dean at Muir College who is helping oversee the program. "It's a way of saying 'Look, there are students in other countries that are doing the same things that you are doing, but handling it very differently,' " he said.

The students will participate in a variety of "rap sessions" throughout the week to discuss how they approach everything from enforcing quiet hours to fund raising. The Canadian students will be paired with resident or house assistants from Muir. In addition to sharing the Muir students' residence hall rooms, they will be given an opportunity to accompany them to classes.

But plenty of activities also have been planned to give the Canadian students a taste of what their American counterparts are up to outside the classroom, Robbins said. In addition to learning how to dance the "Salsa" and make sushi, the Canadian students will embark on a "Roberto's Run" for Mexican food, have a bonfire on the beach and hang out at a popular local diner.

"Like everything else we do, it's educational," Robbins said. "But what we are really trying to do is teach them and let them have fun at the same time. They are more receptive that way."

In March, the UCSD resident assistants will get an inside view of how Canadian resident assistants run their residence halls. A group of about 22 Muir house assistants plans to visit McGill for a week in a follow-up leadership conference, Robbins said.

Planned activities for the UCSD exchange include:

Saturday, Feb. 20

7 p.m. - "Welcome to the Hotel California" - opening night cultural diversity session. Students will participate in interactive exercises.

Location: Sequoia Room, Muir Commons

Sunday, Feb. 21

11 a.m. - Trip to the San Diego Zoo

Monday, Feb. 22

5:30 p.m. - Picnic dinner on the cliffs

Tuesday, Feb. 23

7:30 p.m. - Group exercises on issues resident assistants face

Location: Half Dome Room at Muir Apts.

Wednesday, Feb. 24

7:30 p.m. - Learn to "Salsa" dance Location: J-House, Main Lounge

Thursday, Feb. 25

8 p.m. - "Learn to make sushi" Location: F-House, Main Lounge

Friday, Feb. 26

7:30 p.m. Dinner at Corvette's

Saturday, Feb. 27 Depart San Diego

For more information, contact Blue Robbins at 452-7129 through Feb. 21 and 534-1455 beginning Feb. 22.

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