

NEWS

Record Number of RA Applicants

BY DAVINA BELLINGER

CSP has seen a striking number in this year's RA applicants, with 46 students submitting applications. However there can only be 17 RAs next year. RA applicants like sophomore criminal justice major Maiyan Tapia said, "I applied because I wanted to be someone that made a difference and just be able to create a home away from home for others." She hopes to get either Holst, Hyatt, and or Luther Hall. Tapia is also hoping to build long-lasting connections with other students and create an open environment where everyone feels welcomed.

Freshman ministry major Sam Ruth said, "I applied so I could be an active member in the community of CSP, and to have an impact on incoming freshmen. I think I'd be a good fit because I am likable and mature. I stay firm when it comes to the rules, but I'm not hard on people I'm responsible for." He was one of the selected candidates that were accepted as next year's RA for Wollaeger Hall. Ruth hopes to gain better communication skills while connecting with the next group of upcoming freshmen.

Residence Life staff member Tess Stage is the Hyatt Corridor and Intramural Co-Coordinator at CSP. Stage was a part of the interview process when selecting candidates for next year. She explained that her favorite part of interviewing is, "For many students, this could be their first job interview! So, I commend all students who even apply and go through this process of interviewing. Seeing students bring their best self forward and share their story that we might not know from other interactions with them is my favorite part." One thing that Stage is looking forward to for next year's RAs is, "New energy! Every year, new candidates bring in a level of energy and excitement that fuels a good team."

Heidi Goettl has been the Director of Residence Life for 11.5 years, and Jake Wakem has been an Assistant Director of Residence Life for 2.5 years. Wakem said, "We believe that our current Resident Assistants have made an unbelievable impact on our campus and the communities they serve. They serve as role models, inspirations, and tone-setters. They know how to balance the job while still being an effective student."

Residence Life had Residence Life Coordinators, who are graduate assistants, in the process this year. They directly supervise the RAs and know what is needed in each building. The coordinators led the group process and were present in the individual interviews, which depended on their schedules. The RA positions were announced to the applicants on February 24th. The candidates need to either accept or decline after spring break. Goettl said, "We strive to have all positions filled by housing selection day so next year's team can let friends know if they are looking for roommates or not and in which building."

I asked Goettl and Wakem to explain what being an RA means to them. Wakem said, "An RA is someone who is there for others while knowing how to balance their own needs with the needs of residents. RAs serve as a role model in their actions and their words while inspiring those around them to be better." Goettl added that, "An RA is more than programs, policy enforcement, and making students do one-on-ones. I see a student first who wants to leave a positive impact on the community. An RA cares for others and wants the best experience for their residents. They are balanced, flexible, and trainable."

Sexual Assault Survivors Push Bill to Eliminate Statute of Limitations for Sex Crimes

BY HALLE MARTIN

Nearly one year ago, Sarah Super helped Ramsey County reshape the way law enforcement interacts with victims of sexual assault, which included sensitivity training for officers. As a victim of sexual abuse, Super has made it her priority to advocate for other victims. Now, she is moving forward with her support and advocacy for sexual assault survivors, along with Asma Mohammed (a fellow victim and advocacy director for Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment) and Laura Stearns (one of the many victims of decades of sexual abuse and coverups within the Children's Theater Company).

The women are fighting back against sexual predators and giving survivors a chance to come forward by pushing a bill that would eliminate the statute of limitations for sex crimes in Minnesota. A statute of limitations is a set amount of time a victim has to press charges against their perpetrator. The statute of limitations can vary depending on the victim's age and the time which the assault took place. Additionally, the statute of limitations that was in place during the time of your assault would be applied to your case.

Currently, there is no statute of limitations for child sex crimes if you were under the age of twenty-four on or before May 23rd, 2013. Meaning, if you were assaulted as a child in 1988, your statute of limitations to take legal action against your offender has passed. If you were assaulted as an adult in Minnesota, your statute of limitations is only six years.

Given the immense trauma (often including fear, shame, and guilt), current statutes do not give sexual assault victims enough time to come forward, and these women are trying to change that. Asma Mohammed, who was assaulted when she was only twelve years old, told reporters that her statute of limitations expired before she even had the chance to process what had been done to her: "I can't report, this man went on to hurt other people. My testimony could never be used in a case against him. That's the reality of this bill. It could change lives. It could change who sees justice."

The women shared that if the bill does pass, it will not pass retroactively, meaning cases that occurred prior to the potential bill will not be covered under the new statute of limitations. However, as Super explained, it will give back a choice that was taken from survivors going forward.



MN women pushing to eliminate sexual assault limitations statute. CREDIT: Victoria Turcios