



Office of Student Life

Impact Report

2024-25

Engage. Learn. Thrive.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE



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Message from the Senior Vice President



It is a truly exciting time to be at The Ohio State University. We are in the process of launching President Carter's Education for Citizenship 2035 Strategic Plan, the Buckeyes are national champions in football and students continue to excel in so many unique ways across all our campuses. I am awed by how our students embrace what it means to be a Buckeye and to make it their own.

In keeping with the trend of progress, Student Life made some significant changes over the past academic year, and I have never been more confident that we are moving forward as a stronger organization, one that is more laser-focused than ever on delivering an iconic student experience at Ohio State. These enhancements are designed to enrich the student journey and to reinforce the academic foundation that supports student success in and beyond the classroom.

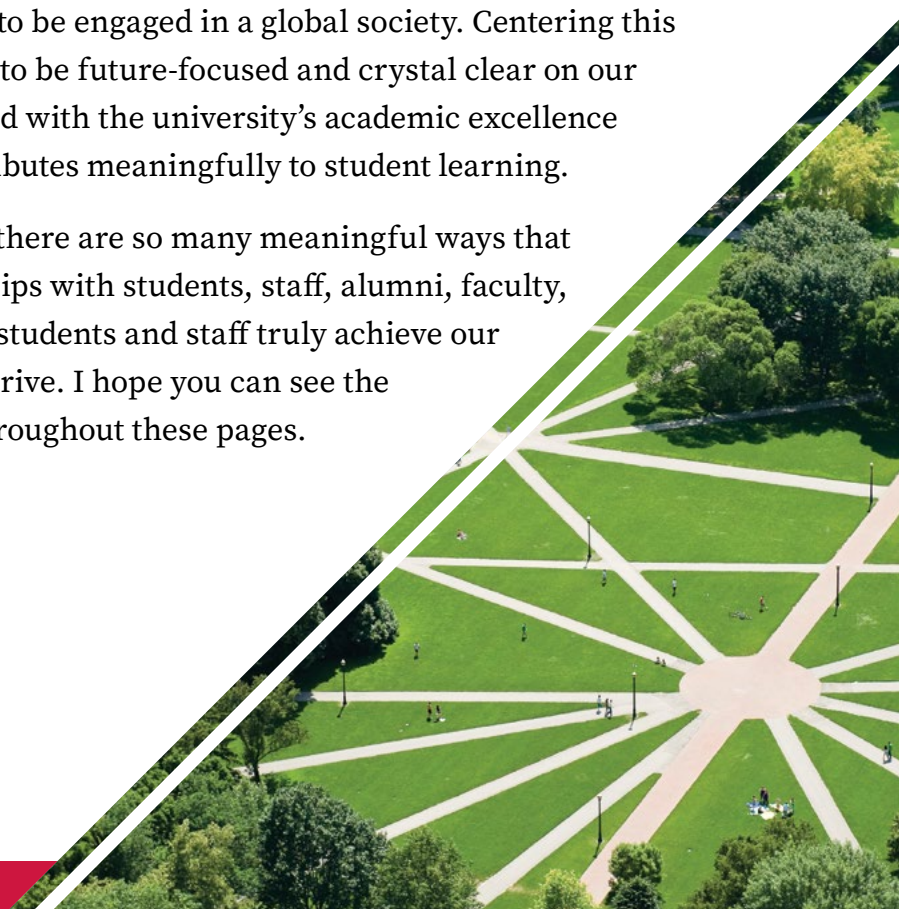
As always, Student Life's work is grounded in our mission to foster student development, learning and well-being; empower students to achieve their academic, personal and professional goals; and prepare students to be engaged in a global society. Centering this mission at the core of our work allows us to be future-focused and crystal clear on our goals. Our efforts are intentionally aligned with the university's academic excellence plan, ensuring that every initiative contributes meaningfully to student learning.

Reflecting on the 2024-25 academic year, there are so many meaningful ways that Student Life created true, deep partnerships with students, staff, alumni, faculty, campus partners and friends to help our students and staff truly achieve our Student Life tagline: engage, learn and thrive. I hope you can see the inspiring ways this was brought to life throughout these pages.

In firm friendship,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa S. Shivers". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Melissa S. Shivers, PhD
Senior Vice President for Student Life





Foundations of Our Work

Vision

To be the premier student affairs division in the country; student- and staff-centered with cross-cutting experiential learning and a dedication to facilitating an environment that is supportive and welcoming

Mission

The Office of Student Life fosters students' development, learning, well-being and sense of belonging; empowers students to achieve their academic, personal and professional goals; and prepares students to be engaged in a global society.

Our Culture Commitments

- Appreciation
- Connection
- Support
- Care

Student Learning Goals

- Embrace self-discovery
- Cultivate community
- Foster health and well-being
- Think critically



Appreciation



Connection



Support



Care



Our Strategic Goals

Work in Student Life is oriented around four strategic goals:

Engage

Create opportunities for engagement and community that foster a welcoming environment for all students, staff and the campus community.

Thrive

Promote a holistic culture of health and well-being to empower students and staff to thrive.

Learn

Invest in student and staff opportunities to deepen their learning, growth and development.

Operational Excellence

Advance initiatives to ensure Student Life continues to leverage our structure to be a strong and successful organization.

Together, these goals guide our daily work and strategic vision for Student Life's 30+ departments, a six million square foot footprint and 5,800+ full-time, part-time and student employees.

Engage

Creating meaningful opportunities for building lifelong communities



140 Ohio State community members

participated in **Buckeye Service Projects** at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California and the College Football National Championship game in Atlanta, Georgia

370+ student organizations

participated in the **Spring Involvement Fair** to foster mid-year involvement opportunities



79% of first-year students

who live in residence halls report having more instances of **close friendships** in their first month than students who do not live in residence halls (57%), supporting long-term retention and academic engagement

4,000+ family members

joined their students for the **Buckeye Family Tailgate** before the Ohio State versus Marshall football game

Program Feature

Fostering Civil Discourse at Ohio State

At The Ohio State University, the **Listen. Learn. Discuss. initiative** is cultivating a culture of respectful dialogue and civil discourse across campuses. Launched in August 2024 through a collaborative effort among students, staff and faculty, this initiative harnesses the power of shared Buckeye experiences to navigate challenging conversations with empathy and understanding. Developed in part using feedback Student Life gathered from students, Listen. Learn. Discuss. continues to grow through strong cross-functional initiatives with campus partners. These efforts not only strengthen community bonds but also enhance students' critical thinking and communication skills.

Student Life's dedication to civil discourse extends beyond programming. The **Campus Activism and Event Engagement Team**, composed of trained university staff, plays a vital role in supporting student expression during demonstrations, rallies and other campus events. As the first point of contact, the team ensures participants understand their rights and responsibilities, promotes safety and addresses policy concerns in real time. Their presence fosters trust, encourages open dialogue and reinforces the university's commitment to learning through respectful engagement.

Through education and strong support for student freedom of expression, the Office of Student Life is committed to contributing to a campus environment that advances intellectual freedom and promotes civic engagement. These initiatives are deeply intertwined with the academic curriculum as they encourage students to engage with complex issues and thoughtfully contribute to the Ohio State community.



Student Highlights



Brylee Dixon

Featured engagement

Counseling and Consultation Service,
Scarlet and Gray Advantage

Program

Landscape Architecture

Rank

Third year

Campus

Columbus

Hometown

Xenia, Ohio

"My transition to Ohio State was very overwhelming at first between being away from home and simultaneously revising my career plans. My high school education didn't give me much of an opportunity to explore, so I had to figure it out at Ohio State. I connected with Counseling and Consultation Service, which provided amazing support and guidance to help me work through all the pressures and overwhelming things I was dealing with. They understood what I needed as a student and made my first time in counseling easy. As a member of the Scarlet and Gray Advantage Learning Community, my peer leader was incredible and helped me navigate campus and normalized a

lot of the things I was going through. I was able to find a major that I'm passionate about, and I love every second of it.

I became a Scarlet and Gray Advantage Senior Peer Leader so I can help other students navigate their first year. **I always recommend looking for the resources available at Ohio State - I don't know where I would be without them.** I learn something new every time I talk to students and have learned valuable skills like how to support students in finding their own solutions to problems."

Student Life Award Winners

Each year, Student Life hosts a Leadership Awards ceremony to celebrate members of the Ohio State community who have demonstrated exceptional skills in leadership and community engagement. In 2025, more than 60 individuals and 15 student organizations were recognized for their remarkable contributions to Ohio State, a few of which are highlighted below.



Kimberly Davis

Outstanding Student Employee Award

Senior Accounting major and Resident Advisor (RA) from Delaware, Ohio.

- Led self-care workshops and Columbus public transit navigation sessions for residence hall residents.
- Provided academic and professional support as a Residential Advisor for the Business Honors Living Learning Community.
- Organized visits to local businesses to connect students with the Columbus community.
- Created the Taylor Tower Little Library to promote book sharing and connection.
- Mentored new RAs and developed professional training for future student leaders.



Kimmara Yarbrough

Dean's Leadership Award

Senior Nursing major from Akron, Ohio.

- President of the Greek Programming Board, promoting leadership across Sorority and Fraternity Life (SFL) councils.
- Facilitated the Buckeye Greek Leadership Institute to empower new SFL leaders.
- Actively supported and attended events across councils to build community.
- Passionate mentor who inspired many students to pursue leadership roles.



Joshua Davis

Outstanding First-Year Student Award

International Studies major from Pleasant City, Ohio.

- Military Community Advocate with the Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship.
- President of the Student Veterans Association.
- Participant in the Student Veterans of America Leadership Fellowship in Washington, D.C.
- Advocated for military-connected students and created initiatives to support their success in higher education.



Anitvir Singh Taunke

Outstanding Senior Award

Biomedical Science major from West Chester, Ohio.

- Truman Scholarship winner
- Researcher in the Samaranch Lab
- Member of Buckeye Leadership Fellows.
- Co-founder of ServUS Volunteering Corp, a sustainability startup promoting student service.
- Founder of Red Saree student organization, raising awareness about heart disease in South Asian communities.
- Post-graduation plans include a health policy internship in Washington, D.C., followed by medical school to become a neurosurgeon and neuroscientist.

Learn

Investing in transferable skill development to support academic and career success



350,000 meals

were packed and distributed to food insecure families through the **BeKind food packing project** on the 9/11 Day of Service. More than **1,100 volunteers** from Ohio State, Capital University, Denison University and Ohio Dominican University participated in the Student Life-sponsored event

6,700+ students

participated in the **Student Employment Experience (SEE)** program in the 24-25 academic year, a **48% increase** over two years. SEE supports students in making meaningful connections between their academics, future careers and on-campus job experiences



737 students

attended **Let's Talk drop-in consultations** hosted by Counseling and Consultation Service to get informal support for life or academic challenges

91% of employers

rated Ohio State graduates as well or exceptionally well **prepared for employment** per the 2024 Employer Insights Survey

Program Feature

Introducing Buckeye Commons

Student Life has proudly unveiled Buckeye Commons, a bold new space designed to foster student connection, community and success. Located on the first floor of the Ohio Union, Buckeye Commons is the result of a student-driven vision brought to life through collaboration, innovation and a deep commitment to the Ohio State experience.

In spring 2025, Senior Vice President of Student Life Dr. Melissa Shivers empowered a group of student leaders to lead listening sessions and gather insights from their peers about what they need most on their Ohio State journey. Their feedback shaped the foundation of the Buckeye Commons, which is built around three core themes:

- **Connection and Community:** Students expressed a strong desire for an open, welcoming and multi-purpose space where they can connect with peers, faculty, staff, alumni and student organizations. Buckeye Commons will offer both a renovated physical space and dynamic programming to support these connections.
- **Accessible Support and Resources:** Students emphasized the importance of accessible support that meets the needs of all students. Buckeye Commons is designed to be a space where all students feel seen, supported and empowered.
- **Mentorship and Networking:** Students want a place where they can find mentorship, networking and a genuine sense of care. Buckeye Commons will serve as a central hub for students to build meaningful relationships and feel a sense of home within the Ohio State community.

Learn





Buckeye Commons will unite key programs and services under one roof, including career coaching, the Student Employment Experience and partnerships with campus offices such as the Student Wellness Center, First Year Experience, Counseling and Consultation Service, Military and Veteran Services, the Alumni Association and others. The space will also host events and workshops focused on networking, mentorship and civil discourse, reinforcing Ohio State's commitment to holistic student development and academic success.

By centering student voices and creating a space that reflects their aspirations, Buckeye Commons represents a transformative step forward in how Ohio State supports student success: academically, personally and professionally.

Student Highlights



Sage Chesser

Featured engagement

Resident Advisor, McConnell

Residence Hall

Program

English with a writing, rhetoric and literacy specialization

Rank

Third year

Campus

Newark

Hometown

Newark, Ohio

"My work as a Resident Advisor (RA) has helped me grow so much. One helpful part of the job was learning more about event planning, which I'm considering as a potential career. I learned about budgeting and logistical planning, but also how to create events that were centered around teambuilding and education. For example, I hosted a gardening activity for my residents where we removed invasive plants out of an on-campus garden space and then replaced them with plants native to Ohio. It was a fun experience that brought everyone closer together and made us feel like a part of something bigger.

My biggest takeaway has honestly been building my self-confidence. Being an RA can be a tough job, but I've learned how to manage challenging situations and set boundaries. I think my residents look up to me, and **I can now picture myself in leadership positions with the maturity and responsibility to excel in my field.** I am more empowered to do cool things in my career - I proved what I'm capable of to myself."



Austin Dues

Featured engagement

Second-year Transformational Experience Program (STEP)

Program

City and Regional Planning

Rank

Graduate (Autumn '24)

Campus

Columbus

Hometown

Kettering, Ohio

"I was very involved as a student at Ohio State, from being in the U.S. Air Force ROTC, to participating in STEP, to being a Resident Advisor for two years. **The biggest thing I took away from these experiences was learning how to work and communicate with different people.** I was able to have challenging conversations and learn how to fail early on in college. When I moved to a completely different state for Air Force Pilot Training and knew no one, those skills helped me be comfortable talking to new people and build a support system.

For my STEP Signature Project, I got wilderness first aid training through the National Outdoor Leadership School in Fishkill, New York. I had some basic first aid training from growing up in the woods, but getting hands-on experience and becoming fully certified was an amazing experience. STEP gave me the time and means to fulfill one of my passions."

Learn



Thrive

Fostering health and well-being in every Buckeye's journey



550+ Ohio State community members

participated in the **Out of Darkness Campus Walk**, an annual event hosted by the Suicide Prevention Program that engages students in suicide prevention and awareness

81,578 Ohio State family members

including **2,441 from regional campus families**, subscribed to the **Buckeye Family Connection**, a communication platform that keeps families in the loop about their students' experiences and campus opportunities



819 students

visited **Career Closet** pop-ups for professional attire for job interviews, internships and networking events; this service is now housed in the Reid Family Career Closet as part of the Monda Student Resource Center

18,103 unique space bookings

were made in the **Ohio Union** this year by external clients, university departments and student organizations

Program Feature

Monda Student Resource Center

At Ohio State, we recognize that students cannot thrive academically if their essential needs go unmet. According to the 2025 Student Life Survey, nearly **1 in 3 students experience food insecurity and 1 in 25 face housing insecurity**. These challenges can significantly hinder a student's ability to succeed in the classroom and fully engage in campus life.

To address these critical needs, Student Life launched a multi-year initiative that culminated in the opening of the Monda Student Resource Center (MSRC) on April 25, 2025. Located in the Younkin Success Center, the MSRC is a centralized, student-focused hub that provides holistic support in a welcoming, accessible environment. It eliminates barriers by bringing together essential services under one roof, ensuring students can access the help they need—when they need it.

Key services offered at the MSRC include:

- **Buckeye Food Alliance:** A client-choice pantry offering fresh produce, meat, dairy, pantry staples and personal care items to support students facing food insecurity.
- **Reid Family Career Closet:** A resource providing free professional attire for interviews, internships and networking events, helping students present their best selves.
- **A centralized referral hub:** Connecting students to campus and community resources, including emergency financial assistance, employment opportunities and holistic well-being services.





MSRC's strategic location also provides students with convenient access to complementary services such as Counseling and Consultation Service, reinforcing a wraparound approach to student support.

This transformative center was made possible through the generosity of our Buckeye community. A foundational gift from Keith Monda ('68, '71 MA) and Veronica Brady brought the vision to life. Reid Family Career Closet was established through a gift from Allyson ('88) and James ('89) Reid, and support from Buckeye parents Donna Zapis Thomas and Renee Zapis Seybert enabled the relocation and expansion of Buckeye Food Alliance.

The Office of Student's Life Monda Student Resource Center is more than a facility—it's a testament to Ohio State's commitment to student well-being and success. By addressing essential needs with dignity and care, we are empowering students to focus on what matters most: their education and their future.

Student Highlights



Mickey Lin

Featured engagement

Suicide Prevention Program

Graduate Teaching Associate

Program

Counselor Education

Rank

Third year PhD Candidate

Campus

Columbus

Hometown

Hong Kong, China

"I have the privilege to be a Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA) in the Student Life Suicide Prevention Program, specifically the RUOK Buckeyes? initiative. I work to promote suicide prevention as a shared responsibility for all university stakeholders by partnering with academic units to embed suicide prevention within their programs, from sending out a screening survey to connecting at-risk students with resources. The GTA position was critical for my decision to attend Ohio State, not only in keeping my clinical skills sharp while pursuing

my degree, but also to support funding of my graduate education as a first-generation student.

Being surrounded by passionate professionals is contagious – it has made me push myself harder and ask deeper questions about the research I'm doing in my academic program. My colleagues show me what being a responsible leader looks like through strategic relationship building and being aware of your context. **I'm reminded every day that despite its challenges, the work we do is literally lifesaving."**



Katie Dodd

Featured engagement

Student Employment Experience Student
Assistant and Major Lawrence Miller
Military Community Advocate for
Buckeye Careers

Program

Marketing

Rank

Second-year

Campus

Columbus

Hometown

Laurelville, Ohio

"My experience with Buckeye Careers has been transformative and incredibly supportive. As a Major Lawrence Miller Military Community Advocate, I worked on various projects that allowed me to connect with fellow military-involved students. For example, I was able to give a tour of the annual Career Fair to the military and veteran community before the activity started, when it was quieter and students could get comfortable connecting with employers. The Buckeye Careers team makes me feel appreciated in this role. I learned how

to create a healthy work-life balance, which was crucial after transitioning from military service.

I also bring a unique perspective to the Student Employment Experience (SEE) role as someone who's already been in the workforce. When I worked in previous entry-level positions, there was no opportunity to reflect on professional development. **SEE is so important for students to start setting goals and learning what they're good at.** It's been amazing to work somewhere where I can apply my experience and help other students get a head start on their careers."

Thrive



Operational Excellence

Driving sustainable and efficient operations and programs



1.13M+
guest visits

to Ohio State **recreational
sports facilities**

**120 food
delivery rovers**

use autonomous driving technology to
make over **1,200 deliveries** per day.



1,555 years of service

were celebrated among the **135 staff**
recognized in the 2025 Student Life
Years of Service Recognition Event

3,198 Ohio State students

donated to the university

Program Feature

Student Life Alumni Advisory Board

The Office of Student Life launched the Student Life Alumni Advisory Board during the 2024-2025 academic year. The Student Life Alumni Advisory Board plays a crucial role in shaping the future of student experiences at Ohio State. Advisory board members meet twice a year to provide insights and feedback on Student Life initiatives and programs, help foster a supportive and enriching environment for current and future students and engage with fellow alumni and university leaders to drive positive change. **The board members' contributions help ensure that Student Life programming continues to align with the evolving academic and well-being needs of students.**

Each member of the 16-member Board was invited to serve based on their unique experiences and perspectives as an Ohio State alumnus. In its first year, the Board learned about the current state of the university, the profile and interests of current Ohio State students, engaged with students through lunches and panel sessions and toured key facilities throughout Student Life. In the spring, the Board engaged in action planning around their goal of making an impact on the student experience and upholding the traditions and values of Ohio State. Their efforts help strengthen the Ohio State campus environment by ensuring that students are supported not only in their personal growth but also in their pursuit of scholarly achievement and meaningful careers.

Operational
Excellence



OHIO STATE

FOOTBALL

The Les Wexner Football Complex



Highlights

Alumni



Taylor Schwein Kachala,
'21, '23, '24

Current Role

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse
Practitioner, Nationwide Children's
Hospital Behavioral Health Pavilion

Featured engagements

Student Life Alumni Advisory Board,
BuckeyeThon, Graduate Student Trustee

Hometown

Mansfield, Ohio

"As a student, I was involved with the Office of Student Life in several ways. I was heavily involved in BuckeyeThon as an undergraduate student. BuckeyeThon solidified my passion for working in pediatrics and helped me realize the impact mental health has on a child's physical well-being. It had a significant influence on choosing my ultimate career path. I think philanthropy in general is a very important aspect of Ohio State, and I loved learning how you can engage with philanthropy regardless of your age, financial resources or experiences. As a graduate student, I was involved with the Board of Trustees, serving as the Graduate Student Trustee during my last two years at Ohio State. It was an incredibly unique experience and allowed me to dedicate much of my time to the place I care about so deeply: The Ohio State University. It was fascinating to see our university in the "big picture" and consider how all the moving parts work together to be the best

place for our students, staff, alumni, faculty and community members.

I was also involved with research for six of my seven years at Ohio State. My research focused on promoting mental well-being and resilience, which directly aligns with the work I do now, and prepared me to give the best possible patient care to the kids I work with every day. After my earlier experiences, joining the Student Life Alumni Advisory Board made sense after I graduated. I love everything about Ohio State, but Student Life is truly where I spent most of my time and feel like I owe the most to. Student Life interacts with every Buckeye on every campus in many unique ways and really enhances the student experience. **My college experience would not have been what it was without Student Life, and I hope to help other Buckeyes have similar moments and appreciation for the Office of Student Life."**

Student Life Anniversaries

Student Life Disability Services – 50 years

Originally established as the Office of the Physically Impaired in 1974, Student Life Disability Services (SLDS) now works with over 8,500 students each year to design accessible environments and provide accommodations in support of student success. SLDS hosted a Faculty Open House and formal program to mark this significant anniversary. In honor of this milestone, more than 75 donors gave nearly \$10,000 to support current students through SLDS' first annual fundraising campaign. In addition, a generous gift from Hallee and David Adelman ('94) provides educational programming to expand disability accessibility for faculty, graduate students and staff.

BuckID – 30 years

BuckID is the official identification card for Ohio State, allowing campus community members to access places and funds in a centrally managed system. The unit celebrated the anniversary by welcoming all prior BuckID directors and capturing an oral history of the program.

Mount Leadership Society Scholars – 25 years

Named after Ruth Weimer Mount (the first Dean of Students at Ohio State), the Mount Leadership Society Scholars was Ohio State's first scholars program. With the motto of "Together for Good," Mount Leadership Society Scholars is centered on students who are committed to leadership and service, and how they can positively affect their community. The program admits 100 students each year and has over 2,600 alumni. Mount Leadership Society Scholars celebrated its 25th anniversary in October 2024 with more than 200 alums and guests, including three generations of the Mount family. In addition, the Mount Alumni Board spearheaded an anniversary fundraising campaign – more than 120 Mounties and friends of the program donated over \$25,000 for the program this year.







Carmen Ohio

Ohio State's Alma Mater

*Oh come let's sing Ohio's praise
And songs to Alma Mater raise
While our hearts rebounding thrill
With joy which death alone can still
Summer's heat or winter's cold
The seasons pass the years will roll
Time and change will surely (truly) show
How firm thy friendship ... O-HI- O!*

*These jolly days of priceless worth
By far the gladdest days on earth
Soon will pass and we not know
How dearly we love Ohio
We should strive to keep thy name
Of fair repute and spotless fame
So in college halls we'll grow
And love thee better ... O-HI-O!*

*Though age may dim our mem'ry's store
We'll think of happy days of yore
True to friend and frank to foe
As sturdy sons of Ohio
If on seas of care we roll
Neath blackened sky or barren shoal
Thoughts of thee bid darkness go
Dear Alma Mater ... O-HI-O!*



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