

## **NBC Village 'experiment' proves to be an experience**

by Vanessa Virbitsky - Monday, March 03, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/570/nbc-village-experiment-proves-to-be-an-experience/>

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh administrators hoping to enhance the first-year experience for students who live on campus spent three years studying the lives of freshmen around the country. At the conclusion of the study, a pilot program called “NBC Village” was launched in fall 2007.

Students who chose to live in Nelson, Breese or Clemans Hall became part of a first-year residential living environment that provides special programs and initiatives to further promote campus and community involvement and academic achievement. Among the offerings available to NBC Village students are an increased staff-to-student ratio, shared classes, increased faculty interaction, study groups, and partnerships with offices and departments that provide additional support to first-year students.

“Studies show this is the most important year for college students,” said Michelle Gross, director of Nelson Hall. “Universities always look for ways to get their first-year students more involved on campus.”

NBC Village residents Ashley Demopoulos and Lindy Stein think life as a freshman couldn’t be better than in “the Village.”

“I love the fact that it is all freshmen that live in the NBC village,” said Demopoulos, a Breese Hall resident. “It made it easier to meet people at the beginning of the school year and there really hasn’t been anything that I don’t like about living in Breese.”

Although Demopoulos was unaware of the fact that she would be in a freshmen-only environment, she believes living in NBC was the best choice for her.

“I have friends in a few bigger dorms,” Demopoulos said. “And I think that my experience was way different because I had the chance of living in a small dorm and had an easier time adjusting to college life.”

Realizing that life in a small dorm isn’t for everyone Demopoulos respects the fact that living in the NBC Village is not mandatory for freshmen.

Stein, who resides in Nelson Hall, agrees with Demopoulos on the accommodating nature of NBC Village.

“I like living with other freshman,” Stein said. “It was really nice, especially the first couple weeks of school, to meet new people. Everyone was in the same situation and besides the people we might have known from high school, we all had to make new friends.”

Taking advantage of the Village’s emphasis on resident programs, Stein, who is on Hall Council, has

visited the Buckstaff Planetarium and made cards for local retirement homes with other Nelson Hall residents.

“There were a lot of programs at the beginning of the year designed to get freshman accustomed to the campus and what it had to offer,” Stein said. “This was a great way to meet people and adjust to college.”

Stein enjoys life in the NBC Village so much that she is not looking forward to moving to a different residence hall next year.

“What I like least about living in an all-freshman dorm is the fact that next year, we are all going to be split up,” Stein said. “It is not a hall that we can live in for all four years of college.”

According to Gross, Residence Life is considering an all-sophomore experience as well.

“This really was a pilot year for the concept,” Gross said. “Everyone involved is looking forward to going over the results and seeing what we can improve upon for next year.”

*Jaime Hunt contributed to this report.*