As higher education enrollments soar and lecture sizes expand, learning communities help tear down the walls of anonymity and lay a new foundation on which to build small, supportive, like-minded student communities.

At UConn, occupying the second floor of Batterson Hall within the Northwest Quadrangle, the Nursing Learning Community aims to provide academic, experiential, and social support to freshman nursing students transitioning to the University community. Over the past 5 years, a surge of interest in the learning community has seen the number of residents climb to over 60 students today.

As a freshman and sophomore, Jenny Yung found the Nursing Learning Community (LC) to be extremely helpful for her transition from high school to college. Now a junior, Yung has returned to the community as a resident advisor (RA), looking to provide her residents with the same support and guidance that made her first two years at UConn so positive.

“All of my friendships were made in the LC. Since everyone’s schedules are so similar, many of us ate together and studied together, which was super helpful in terms of creating friendships and bonds,” Jenny reflects.

Senior nursing student and RA Aaron Csehak agrees adding, “Students should strongly consider the LC because it can help them academically and inspire some of the most tightly-knit friendships.” With over three years’ experience in the School of Nursing, Aaron offers his residents advice regarding classes, professors, and other ways to become involved through student organizations.

Jointly, Jenny and Aaron organize ways to foster academic achievement through tutoring and mentoring as well as opportunities for residents to express themselves, whether it be physically through field day participation or emotionally through coffeehouse discussions. In addition to offering office hours for one-on-one support and guidance, Jenny and Aaron designate certain time slots when they are both available, especially during course selection before registration for the next semester and before exams. That way, when residents need answers fast, they can meet with either Jenny or Aaron;

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Nursing Learning Community - Fostering Achievement  continued...

Jenny can offer advice to students in the Honors Program while Aaron can advise students enrolling in upper level classes. Both Jenny and Aaron have found this experience deeply rewarding.

“I really enjoy seeing the first-year students blossom. Using the knowledge and training we receive, I love seeing the progression from shy freshmen to leaders,” Jenny reflects.

“It reminds me of where I was as a first year student and as a sophomore. It’s truly humbling.”