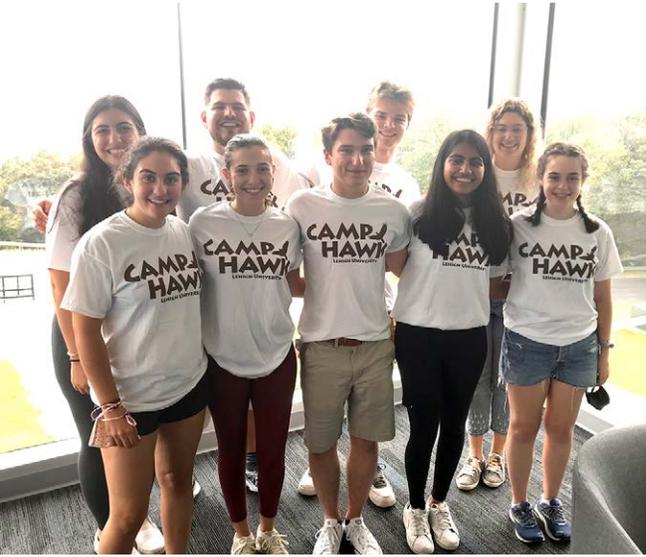




BROWN POLO UPDATE

Lehigh University
Orientation Leader &
Camp Hawk Counselor
Alumni Newsletter



DOUBLE
ISSUE

2020-2021

A NOTE FROM THE OFYE

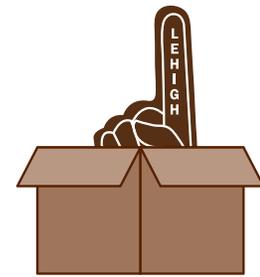
The last two years have brought about so much change in our world and in our communities. From the OFYE family to yours, we hope you have stayed happy, healthy and connected as much as possible. We hope that you have found strength, peace, and love when needed. We have certainly been grateful for all of you – former and current staff – and our ability to adapt, evolve, and have the tough conversations to make necessary and important changes.

In this edition of the Brown Polo Update, you will learn about some of the changes to OFYE and hear from people who have been with us through the journey. We've learned how to navigate a virtual orientation to a hybrid world and back to a fully vibrant campus life. Our programs and training have shifted and been continuously updated to keep up with the times. Amidst the changes, what has remained constant is the OFYE's dedication to the academic and social success of our first-year and transfer students.

We hope the memories of Lehigh and being an Orientation Leader or Camp Hawk Counselor come back to you as you read this newsletter!

Lehigh STRONG!

Stefanie DiDomenico Burke & Nicole Burke



The OFYE is Moving!

The OFYE will be moving to the first floor of Christmas Saucon on June 6, 2022 as preparations for the UC Renovation begin!

Follow our big move and see our new space this summer on our social media!

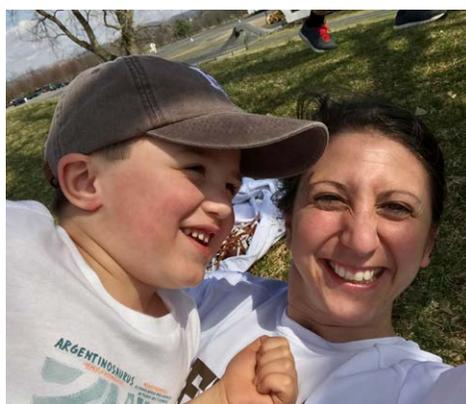
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Join the OFYE Staff Alumni Mailing list at go.lehigh.edu/OFYEalumni

MEET THE OFYE STAFF:



Stefanie DiDomenico Burke

Assistant Dean, Director of First-Year Experience

Stefanie can't believe the last 7 years in the OFYE have flown by! It's been a wild and exciting ride as the office adapted with new students, the pandemic, and university changes. Hailing from New York, but living in Virginia, Ohio, and South Carolina before moving to Pennsylvania -- Bethlehem has become home for 10 years, and a cozy home it has been. Stefanie loves taking advantage of the family-friendly festivals with her 5-year old John, walking the downtown shops, visiting the parks and trails, and exploring the Lehigh Valley. You'll be happy to know that John, an honorary OFYE staff member at this point, is already talking about attending Lehigh for college and loves to cheer on Lehigh at athletics games, campus events, and OFYE staff training. The OFYE is an amazing place because of all the people who have been a part of it over the years, and Stefanie is humbled and honored to continue to be on the team.



Nicole Burke

Associate Director, First-Year Experience

Nicole Burke started working as the Associate Director in the Office of First-Year Experience in June 2018. She earned her B.A. in English and Political Science at Hofstra University, and her Ed.M. in College Student Affairs at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Prior to coming to Lehigh, she worked in various roles in residence life at The University of Texas at Austin. Nicole loves working with the OFYE staff in helping them prepare to support new students and their families in their transition to Lehigh. In her free time, Nicole enjoys spending time with family, friends and her dog, Fitz.



Natania Lipp

Graduate Assistant, First-Year Experience

Natania Lipp is the Graduate Assistant for the Office of First-Year Experience. Natania really enjoys the opportunity to make meaningful connections with first-year students and to witness the lasting friendships they make with each other. Some of her favorite projects include planning and leading Discover Lehigh, Camp Hawk, and Camp Hawk Snowed In. Outside of the OFYE, Natania is a third-year student in Lehigh's Counseling Psychology PhD program studying the prevention of gender-based violence and is training to be a therapist at a college counseling center. To balance out her work Natania enjoys outdoor activities, good food, time with friends, books, and anything that makes her laugh. Next year, Natania is excited to continue on as the OFYE GA for her third year on staff!



Erin Ketz

Coordinator, First-Year Experience

Erin can not believe that it has been 8 years since she started in the OFYE! She loves so many things about working in the OFYE. One of the things she loves most is getting to work on projects like redesigning the Draft Book with both student and professional staff. Outside of the OFYE Erin loves spending time with her fiancé, Dan and finding new vegan spots. Their two cats passed away the last few years and she is currently trying very hard stay away from animal shelters until they find a new place. She is hoping to adopt dog and cat best friends! The OFYE is such a special place and Erin is so grateful to be a part of it!

2020 & 2021 ORIENTATION

Orientation looked a little different the last two years. In 2020, only first-year students were able to live on campus and some chose to study completely remotely. Orientation was mostly virtual with a few in-person social opportunities. Despite the challenges the Orientation Leaders did an amazing job helping new students navigate campus life and resources while adjusting themselves to the changes necessary to keep everyone safe. They were supportive and innovative - building community in an entirely new way. Our *flexibility* expectation was tested, but the OFYE team rose to the challenge.

In 2021, we were so excited to be back in person! While campus was still not entirely the same, we felt connected again! It was great to be able to interact in person and welcome students to campus with our spirit and traditions.

Below are a few highlights of the changes/additions to Orientation 2021!



There was a staggered move-in for first-year students in 2020 and 2021. In 2021 we were so excited to welcome new students in-person at Orientation Check-in which took place Thursday morning on Library Drive and Tamerler Courtyard.

Orientation Kick-Off was held on the UC Front Lawn! Colorful Orientation flags were added for each of the color families and the Orientation Leaders kicked things off with a flash mob.



The Rally returned to the UC Front Lawn



The Campus Safety Block Party with LUPD was a new addition

2021 OFYE HIGHLIGHTS

The OFYE fully returned to campus in June 2021 and we were so excited to be back! Although 2021 still brought some challenges it was also filled with many great memories. Here are a few of our favorites.



Class of 2021 Graduates! Congrats 2020 OCs!



Return to Campus with our 2021 Summer Staff



OL Summer Training



Discover Lehigh preLUision program



Welcome Class of 2025!



Camp Hawk



Stefanie and Nicole present at NODAC 21



Returner Training



LEHIGH UNIVERSITY
New Staff Recruitment

2021 ORIENTATION COORDINATORS

Back Row:
Julio Veracruz
Max Kemper
Noah Harrison
Kate Glasser
Devyn Riddle
Isabella Cammisa

Front Row:
Julia Menziuse



2022 ORIENTATION COORDINATORS

The **Orientation Coordinators** work throughout the entire year to ensure that first-year students have the best possible experience coming to Lehigh. We spend months training our incredible volunteer staff of 107 leaders so that they feel prepared leading their group of first-years, for either Camp Hawk or the Orientation program. By creating a culture where inclusivity, positivity, friendships and empowerment are at the forefront of every activity implemented in the program, we hope that these values can be passed on to the incoming Lehigh students. The Orientation Coordinators are ready to leave their mark by leaving a positive impact on the community and inspiring others to make the most out of their experience during their time at Lehigh.



Dannah VanPraagh, Morgan Heller, Alexis Soulias*, Yael Schmoisman, Gabe Finnell, Tanner Lehr, Chrissy DiBrigida

**Alexis Soulias is no longer on staff due to personal reasons.*

RETURNING ORIENTATION LEADERS

2021 Returning Orientation Leaders

*Indicates Transfer Orientation Leader

Tomas Angel
Audrey Benson
Emma Chiusano*
Chrissy DiBrigida
Lauren Dougherty
Emily Frase
Justin Groothuis
Morgan Heller

Maxine Jacey
Bridget Keele
Tanner Lehr
Mollie Maggiacomo
Alyssa Milrod
Lucy Moos
Amanda Morrison
Hannah Moss

Julia Posner
Cory Riegel*
Yael Schmoisman
Sher Scott
Carson Snyder
Emily Soell
Alexis Soulias
Dannah VanPraagh

2022 Returning Orientation Leaders

*Indicates Transfer Orientation Leader

Afiwa Afandalo*
Emily Bernstein
Martha Bosworth
Todd Cummings
Anna Donovan
Cate Droogan
Stephanie Eliseo
Sarah Elsayed

Emma Flinchbaugh
Ella Greenholt
Rhea Jadhav
Hasan Jashari
Jackie LaMastra
Thomas Morrell
Ella Morrissey
Sarah Nebbia

Matt Pariser
Elise Prosen
Liese Rios
Mia Rosengard
Lola Samiian
Matt Silverman
Sydney Williges
Lexa Winigrad



TRAINING THROUGH TIME!

Orientation Training is not complete without that wonderful theme! Take a journey with us to look at some of the past OL themes!!! Each theme that is chosen has a message that makes the Orientation program stronger!

2005: LUau (Hawaiian)
 2006: First-Year Round Up (Western)
 2007: Hollywood
 2008: Army: Boot Camp

2009: Survivor
 2010: Clue
 2011: Harry Potter
 2012: Lion King
 2013: The Hunger Games

2014: Up
 2015: Pirates of the Caribbean
 2016: Legos

2017
 Hollywood



2018
 Spy



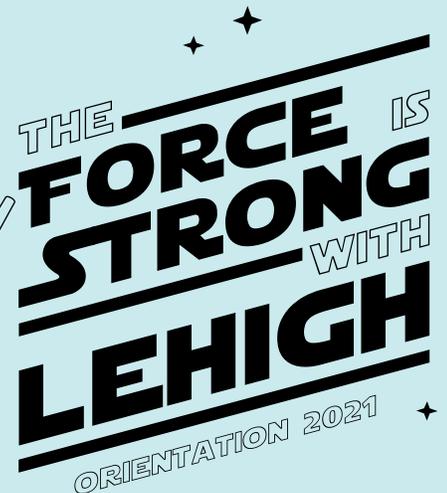
2019
 Olympics



2020
 Safari Expedition



2021: STAR WARS



OL SPOTLIGHT

Kyra Dimaranan '21

Thirty minutes before the OFYE group interview, first-year me made a decision: I wasn't going to go. I was so scared to be put in a room full of people I didn't know and ultimately out of my comfort zone that I was ready to give up without even trying, even though I wanted so badly to be an Orientation Leader. That version of myself would never believe the version I am now, who moved across the country by herself freshly graduated, without any friends or family, not scared but ready for the challenges that come with building an entirely new life from scratch. A large reason, if not the main reason, for the confidence that gave me the ability to pursue the life I live now is undoubtedly my time with the OFYE. The staff culture the OFYE is known for is something rare to find with such a large group of people: genuinely safe, authentic, and non-judgmental in regards to who you really are. It's an environment that encourages you to grow into yourself and to really get to know yourself, all while being surrounded by some of the most fun and accepting people on Lehigh's campus. The term color families hasn't stuck around just because of tradition- it's because you really can find a family within them.

The two years I was an Orientation Leader and the one year I was an Orientation Coordinator was spent constantly learning. I was learning how to meet a widely diverse group of people in one sitting, how to listen and respect their opinions and still stand up for my own, how to be flexible when things don't go as planned, how to create and positively change my community, and how to have confidence in myself like I had confidence in my peers. Even though none of those sound explicitly like "technical" skills, it isn't an exaggeration to say that those are all lessons and concepts I use everyday, not just in my general life but in my actual job (talk about professional growth and development)! It's crazy to me to think that four years ago I almost willingly walked away from the most influential part of my Lehigh experience, and if I had let myself stay scared I wouldn't have met some of my best friends, had some of my fondest memories, and probably wouldn't be where I am now. To the current orientation leaders: have fun and savor it! And lastly to my group of orientation coordinators and past staff: once a dream team always a dream team.

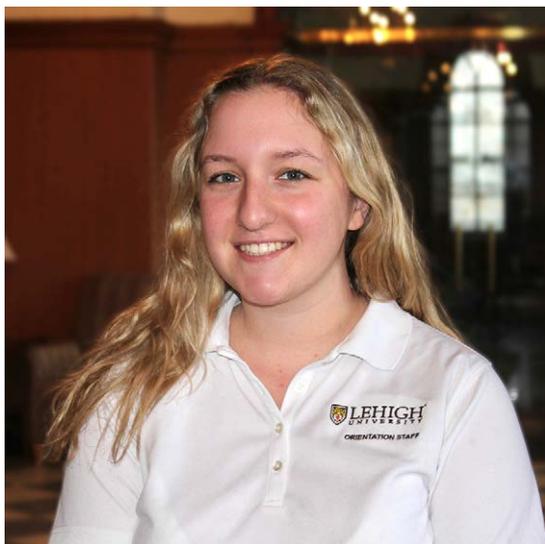
Sarah Nebbia '24

Before joining the OFYE, I was a nervous first-year student, looking to find my place on campus. Due to the pandemic, we had all of our training meetings over zoom, but I was already so excited about all of the amazing people that I met. However it was in summer training that my thoughts were solidified, I fell in love with the OFYE. While my friends told me I would be a perfect OL, I never thought I would be ready to welcome a group of first year students to Lehigh. It was with the support of my new friends in the OFYE, that I was able to be confident enough to welcome the first years and have the best experience. Through the OFYE, I have learned so much about myself and grown so much as a leader on campus. More importantly, I have met so many great people that I probably never got to meet or know. This spring my love has grown even more as a Returning Orientation Leader, as our family increases with all of the new Orientation Leaders and Camp Hawk Counselors.

My goal when leading my group during orientation was to welcome them into Lehigh and get them ready for their next four years here. I wanted to be a friend that they could always count on. When I met my group, I was able to learn about all their lives and about what they wanted to do with their time at Lehigh. I was not expecting such a wide range of people and I was able to learn so much from them. My group was able to bond over the challenging and exciting step into college. The one thing I was able to tell my group was something that the OFYE taught me: it is really easy in life to do things that you are comfortable with, but when you take a step out of your comfort zone, you can gain so much. As a current student, I am constantly just going through the motions of classes, homework, and exams. The OFYE has provided me with an escape into something amazing that I hope everyone finds at Lehigh.



PAST & PRESENT



CHC SPOTLIGHT

Caroline Smith '21

I first attended Camp Hawk as a first year. It was truly one of the highlights of my first year at Lehigh. I had a great time getting off campus and meeting so many new friends. I knew I wanted to give other first years the same experience I had attending Camp Hawk, so I applied to be Camp Hawk Counselor. Since then I was a Returning CHC and ultimately the Camp Hawk Coordinator in 2020. Camp Hawk looked very different my senior year due to the pandemic, but the core values and experiences were still the same. While we may not have been able to get off campus, we were still able to meet together virtually and participate in activities that allowed us to really bond as a group.

I am truly thankful for my experience with Camp Hawk. As a first year it gave me the opportunity to step back and meet people in a smaller setting. I found this so refreshing after an overwhelming first few weeks of class. As I grew within the program, I feel like I gained so much emotional intelligence and leadership skills. I found myself more comfortable and confident and started challenging myself to do more things that may have initially been outside my comfort zone.

I continue to apply the skills that I learned from this position in my professional career. I'm currently a Recruiting Coordinator at The Farmer's Dog. I work with our Talent Acquisition department to schedule candidate interviews. When I first started in my role, I found myself more confident when speaking to candidates and organizing their interview schedules as I found it comparable to what I used to do with the OFYE. Instead of describing campus resources and facilitating conversations, I was reviewing benefits of the company with candidates and helping to facilitate the hiring process among our recruiters. I truly loved my time with the OFYE so it's special to me that I was able to find a career that is a little similar to my past role.



PAST & PRESENT

Nick Schorn '24

Being a Camp Hawk Counselor was not an opportunity I immediately considered when I first came to Lehigh in August 2020 but it has been among the most memorable and enjoyable experiences that I had the privilege of being a part of while here on South Mountain so far. I was hesitant when I first considered joining the OFYE, but I was inspired by my OL who always encouraged our Orientation Group to explore all the opportunities Lehigh afforded to us, even if we could hardly explore the campus. So, I decided to see what the OFYE had to offer and after reading about being an OL versus being a Camp Hawk Counselor, I knew the small group environment of Camp Hawk was how I could make the most positive impact on First Year Students.

After applying and being selected, I found that the culture of the OFYE and the traditions of Camp Hawk were much more than I could have hoped for. The enthusiasm and dedication that everyone brought to the organization made me excited to show up to the trainings, even if they were on Zoom. Beyond that, once we were back on campus, getting to know my fellow CHC's was a great opportunity since we were all of different interests and majors and we quickly became great friends. And of course, during Camp Hawk, as the circumstances changed and we had to adapt, I still found so much enjoyment in getting to know all the First Years in my group and everyone who was part of Camp Hawk. All I can say is that I am extremely grateful to the OFYE for allowing me to have an impact on so many First Year's first year at Lehigh and to meet so many people who I could not have met otherwise.

** Nick was a 2021 Camp Hawk Counselor. The 2022 Camp Hawk Staff consists of all new staff members.*





CAMP HAWK

In 2020, Camp Hawk was all online with about 20 participants and 8 student leaders. Many students enjoyed their experience of building connections with others and participating in an array of online activities. However, the OFYE was excited to return to in-person Camp Hawk in 2021!

We kicked off 2021 the semester with a Camp Hawk Counselor retreat on campus where counselors finalized planning and prepared for the new students. We

We had 8 Camp Hawk Counselors, 1 Coordinator of Camp Hawk who successfully led an exciting and informational weekend for new students. This year, Camp Hawk was held on campus in Tamerler courtyard. Twenty-two participants, divided into four color families, joined for a weekend of competition, excitement, fun, and meaningful bonding.

September 10-11, 2021



Lena Weisman, 2021 Camp Hawk Coordinator

Lena has served the OFYE staff in many roles- she has been an orientation leader, a camp hawk counselor, and in 2021, she eagerly took on the position of Camp Hawk Coordinator! In this role, Lena worked closely with the OFYE Graduate Assistant to plan Camp Hawk and the Camp Hawk retreat, as well as to train the new OFYE staff alongside Orientation Coordinators. At Camp Hawk itself Lena played a large role in the coordination and leadership of Camp Hawk and the supervision of the Camp Hawk Counselors. Lena was so valued in this position and we were lucky to have her on our team!



CAMP HAWK: SNOWED IN

**February 9 -
March 9, 2022**

We were excited to host Camp Hawk: Snowed In for its third year to bring together students to build meaningful connections with their peers in the spring semester. The program was adapted into a 5-week series where student leaders facilitate fun challenges for students to get to know each other, lead thoughtful discussions, and explore resources on campus to make the most of their Lehigh experience. We had offices have their student leaders come in to lead activities and share insights to help students think about how they wanted to get involved on campus, including the Community Service Office, the Center for Career & Professional Development, and Health Advancement & Prevention Strategies. Students got to participate in fun challenges outside of the weekly meet-up to earn points and win cool SWAG and prizes. Challenges included doing things outside the meet-up with other participants, grabbing coffee with one of the student leaders, attending a featured event on campus, or scheduling an appointment with one of the featured offices.



The first-year students learned a lot from the program and gained both friendships and confidence stepping out of their comfort zone! Here's what they had to share about what they learned:

"I am good enough the way I am and I can achieve many things if I just go out and do something and talk to people. I have learned that I am capable of growth and can form meaningful connections with people who were previously complete strangers."

Kate Glasser & Sarah Nebbia were our student leader facilitators. They work on the office staff and have both been a part of the Orientation team. Sarah is currently a Returning Orientation Leader and has worked on our office staff this year, and Kate is a former Orientation Coordinator working on our office staff for the last 3 years.



LEHIGH UNIVERSITY PRELUSION 2021



PRELUSION

Our preLusion programs are always a favorite among first-year students. In 2020, we managed to continue this experience virtually for many students, with GlobaLehigh, Lehigh Women Engineers, Volunteer Experience, Start It Up, and Discover Lehigh running and about 50 students participating. The coordinators and student leaders did a wonderful job of providing a taste of their programs, building connections with students, and welcoming first-years to campus all online.

Our preLusion programming continued its popularity and success in 2021, with 5 programs to choose from. We added a new program called LehighMED, a 3-day look into the medical field from medical experts and world renowned healthcare networks. With 6 student leaders and 12 participants, this program started off successfully by providing students with hands-on medical training and impressive networking opportunities.

Other programs that ran included: Lehigh Women Engineers, Discover Lehigh (run by the OFYE!), GlobaLehigh, and Volunteer Experience. With 5 programs, we had 100 students participate in preLusion programs!

YEAR2@LU

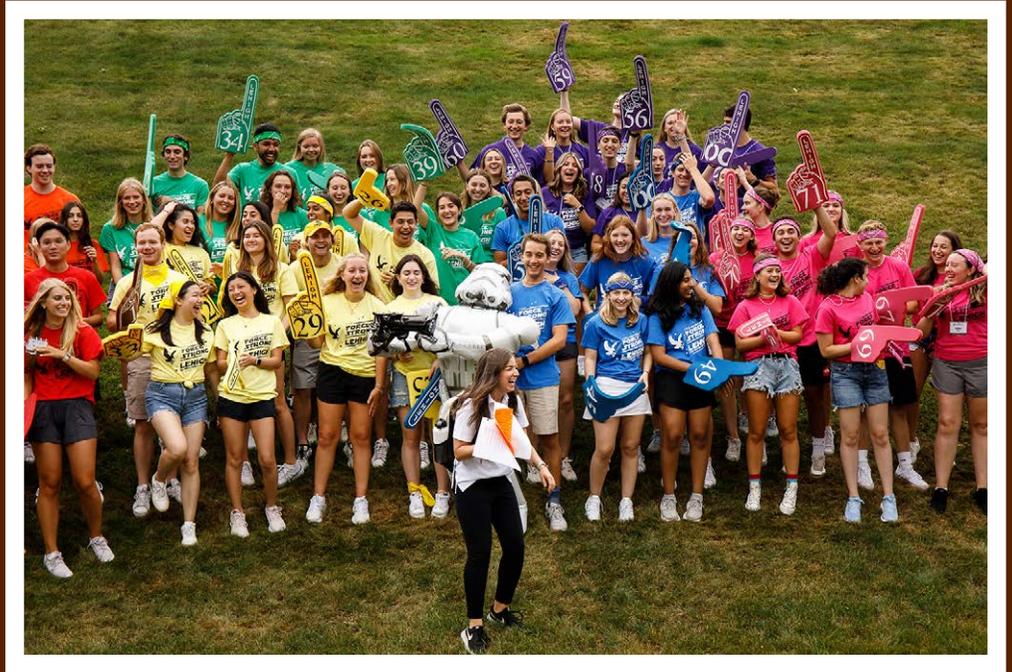
The Class of 2024 had an unprecedented introduction to Lehigh and the college experience. The OFYE was excited to expand its programming and support to ensure that as we navigated the pandemic and a more vibrant return to campus that sophomore students experienced Lehigh in the way we all know and love. Thus, the Year2@LU initiative was born!

Sophomores were welcomed back to campus with a Kick-Off Weekend, including an opening night at Goodman Stadium with a delicious comfort food dinner, inflatable relay races, huge games, athletic representatives and tons of giveaways. They also had a conference style session on Sunday with tours of campus to show some of the spots they may not have seen doing classes remotely. We also wanted them to experience some of the traditions that are a rite of passage including the Rally and University Convocation. They were encouraged to attend a "Sophomore Series" throughout the semester, which are workshops that specifically addressed sophomore needs (and of course, connected to the bLUeprint 5 Foundations in some way!). Sophomores also received regular newsletters with advice from upperclassmen, relevant resources, and program highlights for things they may want to attend.

We'll host the Halfway There Celebration at the end of the spring semester to reflect on what students learned throughout their year, advice they'd give to rising sophomores, and celebrate that they are halfway to graduation!



If you would like to be featured in the next OL spotlight, please email Nicole Burke at nmb518@lehigh.edu!



CONNECT WITH US!

Keep the Orientation and Camp Hawk magic with you year-round by following us on Instagram and Twitter, liking us on Facebook and joining our LinkedIn Group!

-  @LehighOFYE
-  facebook.com/OFYELU
-  @LehighOFYE
-  Lehigh OFYE Staff



We Need Your Pictures!

Do you have pictures from your time as an OL or CHC that you would like to share with us? We would love to fill our Instagram with #throwbackthursday and #flashbackfriday pictures! Send your pictures to Erin (erk314@lehigh.edu) along with the approximate date and any information you want included in the caption.

Many thanks goes to Kyra Dimaranan, Sarah Nebbia, Caroline Smith and Nick Schorn for their contributions!