Finally, we will share thoughts from RAs about how they observe connections happening for and among their residents

is to focus on various themes that may relate to the resident's development, CU experience and their overall journey as a Buff. Generally, residents experience

milestones that may occur at specif c times throughout the year, these are called cornerstone periods.

Cornerstone conversations allow RAs to

For many students enterneaningfully with eachnetchematocstudents' resident advisor

They act as mentors, event planners, problem solvers, relationship builders and so much more. To model and prioritize the importance of connection, RAs engage one on one with each student living on their foor/in the wing of their hall six times during the academic year in conversations called Buff Chats.

The purpose of Buff Chats is to help and the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestated and in the residence hall hats have had on students in periods of the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestate the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestate the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestate the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestate the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness, occurred in the fall semestate the cornerstone for period 3, self-cresidents feel valued and connected and wellness.

(RA). RAs play a very important role in

the lives of students living on campus.

the world around them. A robust residential curriculum is presented for students to navigate their experiences intentionally through the lens of connection: to self, to the community around them, to academics and to larger social justice opportunities.

A big part of the residential experience is

Cornerstone conversations allow RAs to engage with residents during a pivotal time on their CU journey as many students are transitioning to living alone for the frst time away from family, and finding a new sense of independence and personal responsibility. Additionally, each Buff Chat period has learning outcomes that guide the conversation between RA and resident. RAs must engage in a cornerstone conversation with each resident during specified periods. For example, the cornerstone topic for period 2, transition, and the cornerstone for period 3, self-care and wellness, occurred in the fall semester.

during the course of an academic year.

FIGURE 8		

academic year, there was a priority put on keeping conversations virtual; in the 2021-22 academic year, there was a return to connection in person but with some adaptation for the changing nature of COVID-19 requirements and students' needs.

As the nature of connection has changed so has the conversation itself. Each Buff Chat has a specific prompt related to what students may be experiencing during that time of the academic year. We looked at the data from conversations during Period 2 (transition, occurring in October) and Period 3 (self-care and wellness, occurring in November and December) to note any similarities or differences between these conversations when comparing the fall semesters of 2019, 2020 and 2021.

For Period 2, the overall goal was to motivate residents to intentionally refect on their transition to CU. All residents were asked to refect on the single question: how is college different from where you previously lived? Not surprisingly, students in 2020 indicated being challenged by the isolation they experienced and gaining conf dence to fnd new ways to connect with others while students in 2019 and 2021 talked more about the sense of independence gained in the college transition that gave them the opportunity to fnd their own connections and engagement opportunities that formed a deeper sense of belonging. Across all three years, students articulated a general idea of the resources available to them as they transition into their new living and school environments to help them navigate the differences experienced in college life.

Pre-arrival programs at the University of Colorado Boulder are the frst opportunities for frst-year and transfer students to get involved on campus. Stemming from the mission to enhance student retention and success, pre-arrival programs focus on helping students build early relationships with their peers, university departments and staff and 'fast track' their involvement at CU. Pre-arrival programs have historically included Stampede Leadership Camp, EcoReps: Sustainability Leadership Program, Outdoor Pursuits: CU Bound - Camping and Adventure, Outdoor Pursuits: CU in the Rockies, First-Year Service Experience and Mind and Body Buffs. Students in the pre-arrival programs receive advanced move-in, earlier access to campus resources and closer relationships with faculty and campus leades I₽(u)4.2 pauy Coming out of a year of social distancing and reports of students feeling high levels of isolation, Stampede Leadership Camp committed to helping students build connections within our largest prearrival program of 102 participants. Stampede Leadership Camp featured eight small group breakout sessions with a cohort of 13-21 students led by their peer mentor, three breakout sessions focused on students living in the same residential neighborhoods and four socials that brought together all pre-arrival programs. After the p-0.02 Tw3Dr6n-US