November 4-8 is First Gen Student Week at UMass Lowell!
All week, RHSA and UML will be celebrating first generation students and their stories. Students, check your emails for the links to register for these exclusive college-based events!

RHSA: Last Month in Review

- RHSA Mentoring Program Launch Events: In October, both of RHSA’s mentoring programs (Salesforce Mentoring Program and Faculty/Staff Mentoring Program) held their launch events! Over 80 students, faculty, staff, and Salesforce employees came together to meet each other and launch mentoring relationships.

- Lowell Historic Walking Tour: On Saturday, October 19th, 17 students joined Distinguished University Professor Dr. Robert Forrant for a historic walking tour of Lowell. Dr. Forrant is a historian who focuses on Lowell and Lawrence, labor history, and immigration history.

- RHSA Hockey Night: On Friday, October 25th, RHSA students and their guests joined faculty and staff at the annual RHSA Hockey Night! Attendees had fun cheering on our UMass Lowell River Hawks against Hockey East rivals Boston University.
RHSA STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

RHSA Students’ of the Month Profiles are now available online! Read about our previous students of the month, and the full profiles of November’s Students of the Month here.

Tyson Minor, Business Administration

Congratulations to Tyson Minor, who is a November 2019 RHSA Student of the Month! Tyson is a Business Administration major with a concentration in Finance from Washington, D.C. and is a DC-CAP Scholar. He wants to be successful by following what he likes to do and be able to provide for his family and himself.

Tyson’s favorite parts about UML are the opportunities available. He likes that students here can pave their own way and get settled in the way that’s best for them. Students are encouraged to be their own people and are encouraged to be leaders, as well. He also likes that UML encourages students to learn about the things they are interested in, and encourage students to do so much more than just get a degree. Tyson also says that he’s “met just the right amount of people to make it seem like [he’s] on the right path, people like Professor [Ralph] Jordan.” He says that his faculty and people he’s met on campus are nurturing and caring, and a lot of people need that.

What has being involved with the RHSA meant to Tyson? He says it has been a valuable resource that exposes students to different experiences that they might not normally participate in, but are helpful in helping them branch out. He especially appreciates the opportunities to get out of his comfort zone and attend events that RHSA puts on.

Fahad Anwar, Computer Engineering

Congratulations to November 2019 RHSA Student of the Month Fahad Anwar! Fahad is a commuter student from Boston, MA majoring in Computer Engineering. In his spare time, he enjoys running and spending time with his friends. Fahad decided to come to UMass Lowell because he loved the community the university was able to provide and how friendly everyone was when he visited the campus.

Fahad wants to find a career that he is passionate about, and one where it doesn’t feel like a chore to have to go to work. He is a first generation college student, and says that that puts the onus of responsibility on him to a much higher degree than that of his continuing-generation peers. Not only is he going through a new experience himself, his parents are also going through the experience for the first time. He has had to be highly independent throughout the college process, from applying to financial aid.

Fahad is happy to be here. He also says, “I’m happy to be part of RHSA and I’m happy for what the RHSA program does and what it has contributed to the UML freshmen. I’m excited to continue my journey both with RHSA and UMass Lowell.”

We would also like to recognize Vanessa Bazile for being a November RHSA Student of the Month! Vanessa is an English major in the College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
Doug Cooper, Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services Coordinator: Retention Initiatives

In November, day-to-day life can seem more accelerated and urgent. I blame the shorter days, but it can be an additional source of stress for your students.

Coursework can seem like an all-consuming force in November, but it can save future stress to plan out courses and get registered for the next semester as early as possible. Please encourage your students to set an appointment with their advisor, and to familiarize themselves with their Advisement Report in SiS. If your students have received flags on Starfish (an academic support program), that is an important thing to discuss with advisors, too. I manage Starfish program and the flags that faculty send out to students, I welcome you to contact me if you have questions about that - douglas_cooper@uml.edu.

One of the bigger challenges for students, can be the “parallel thinking” that it takes to handle the learning and studying responsibilities of current courses, along with managing administrative details, such as choosing Spring courses. Preparing for Spring registration often includes dealing with Holds on one’s account that will prevent registration. Building these management skills can be a lot to ask of students who are already in Finals preparation mode, but we are all here to help them with that.

Speaking of Finals, the preparations for those should begin during November! It is critically important for students to know if their final is cumulative or not, and review for Finals should start now, in addition to learning new material. Please help us to remind your students to take advantage of the different resources around campus – tutoring, professor’s office hours, counseling Center, etc. We advisors would be happy to help your student create a study plan for Finals!

With the Winter holidays coming, there can be a lot of disruptions to the our routines, including travel and family gatherings, unforeseen illnesses, etc. These disruptions underscore the value of practicing self-care, which is good for anyone, especially your students. Adequate sleep, nutrition, and not trying to do too much in one day are all important. For example, it can be tempting to plan to study Chemistry for four hours straight, but we can assure you that won’t work very well. Instead, we suggest that after studying for an hour, then take a break for 15-20 minutes or so. Whether that break includes doing meditation, or taking a walk, or getting a snack, it will make the next hour of study far more productive and confidence-building, as compared to trying to “power through” and study for two straight hours or more.

We ask for your help in encouraging your students to take the initiative to ask us questions and for help. No matter what your student is majoring in, one of the most valuable skills they can learn is to be brave about asking for help from the advisors and other resources around the University.

Thanks and have a pleasant pre-holiday season,

Doug Cooper

Douglas_Cooper@uml.edu
Highlighted Events this Month:

Each month, we’ll highlight some events that are happening and give links for you to register for them (event titles are hyperlinks: click to register)! Some of these events may have an limit on the number of attendees, so don’t delay signing up for the event! If the event has special attendance requirements (is only for students in a certain college or major, for example), that will be noted in the event description. Remember, you need to attend three RHSA events per semester to maintain your RHSA membership and benefits!

Important: you must register to attend events. If you sign up for an event and find out you cannot attend, please be sure to cancel your registration for the event by emailing RHSA@uml.edu! This is extremely important, as events with an attendee limit have a waitlist. Canceling your registration allows another student to attend in your place!

RHSA First Gen Week events: First Gen week is November 4-8! Some featured events include the FAHSS Brunch, Kennedy College of Sciences Dinner and Research Flash Talks, and Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences Reception. Check your email for links to register for all First Gen Week events!

UMass Lowell FAFSA Day Workshop: Wed., November 6th 4:30-7:30PM @ O’Leary Library 104
Here’s the deal—you know you need to get the FAFSA done, so why not do it in less time, with a professional? The FAFSA workshop is a great opportunity for you to receive assistance and guidance on how to complete your 2020-2021 FAFSA. Wondering what it means to be selected for verification? Come to O’Leary Library on South Campus and we’ll answer any questions you may have!

RHSA Scholarship Workshop: Wednesday, November 13th 6:30-7:30PM
Learn how to find scholarships that you are eligible for and apply for them with winning strategies. This workshop will be led by Dr. Rae Mansfield, Faculty Fellow for Major Scholarships and Fellowships.

November Reminders:

- Come to an RHSA study session or tutoring and be entered into a raffle to win one of several River Hawk Shop gift cards each month or a grand prize gift basket at the end of the semester! Each time you go to tutoring or a study session counts as one entry. Attend often and increase your chances of winning!

- Thanksgiving recess is this month! If you have a great distance to travel and are going to be missing classes, have you made arrangements with your professors yet?

- Registration for RHSA students began October 28th. Have you registered and/or cleared your holds yet? The Solution Center can answer any questions you have about holds.

RHSA Students on the Historic Lowell walking tour that took place in October.
Jessica Garcia is an Assistant Teaching Professor and the undergraduate organic lab coordinator in the Chemistry Department. She received her B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Southern California and Ph.D. in Chemistry and Biochemistry from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She is a synthetic organic chemist with experience in methodology development, natural product total synthesis and the design of medicinally-relevant small molecules. After completing her postdoctoral research at Northeastern University, Dr. Garcia joined the faculty at UMass Lowell to focus on teaching. Currently, she is interested in designing teaching experiments with real-world applications as well as incorporating green chemistry and sustainability principles into the organic lab courses.

**What motivated you to go to college?**

For as long as I can remember, my parents used to always tell me, “get an education so you can get a good job.” When I was older, I realized what they really meant was, “get an education so you can get a good paycheck.” People will tell you that money isn’t everything, but it makes things a lot easier. So, I wanted to go to college to have a stable financial future, to move out of my small hometown and to become a medical doctor (or so I thought).

**What motivated to dedicate your time to help the RHSA?**

When I got to USC, I didn’t know what to do with myself. I struggled academically my freshman year and had a hard time making friends. I didn’t know where to go for help or who to ask for it. So, when I heard about RHSA, I immediately though, “I wish I had something like that when I was an undergrad!” I want to make myself available to RHSA to support first-gen students here at UML.

**What was the best thing about your college experience?**

My work study job at the California Science Center. That job is where I learned that I loved teaching and that I was good at it. It was the catalyst that led me to my current career. I was also interacting with fellow coworkers and museum visitors, so it helped me become less shy.

**Looking back on your college experience, what would you tell your freshmen self?**

Don’t be afraid to go to office hours and ask questions. We professors are paid to teach you and that includes answering your questions. Show up, ask questions, get to know us and let us get to know you. It’s an easy way to start a relationship that can possibly evolve into mentorship.

**What are your hobbies? Is there a fun fact about yourself you’d like to share?**

I love Animal Crossing New Leaf [a Nintendo game]. I’ve been working on my town for over three years now and everything is nearly perfect (email me if you want my dream address). I wish I had an assistant like Isabelle in real life!

**Contact Jessica at Jessica_Garcia@uml.edu.**