Seventeen RHSA Students participated in our Kayaking Trip on Saturday, September 21st.

**RHSA: Last Month in Review**

- **Project LEARN Volunteering:** On September 12th, several RHSA students participated in a volunteer opportunity with Project LEARN’s BookNook initiative, which is a local educational organization. Another of these opportunities is available this month! See the Students’ Corner to learn more and register.

- **Manning School of Business Dinner:** On September 18th, students in the Manning School of Business had a dinner with the Dean of the college, as well as several business professors and administrators. This was an excellent opportunity for students to network with their department.

- **Kayaking Trip:** On September 21st, seventeen RHSA students participated in a kayaking trip led by UML Campus Recreation. Students were able to kayak down the Merrimack River while meeting other RHSA students!

- **Kennedy College of Sciences Faculty-Student Social:** On September 26th, RHSA students from the Kennedy College of Sciences met professors from their departments and college, providing an exclusive networking opportunity for these students.

In this issue:

2 … RHSA Students of the Month
3 … Advice from an Advisor
4 … Students’ Corner
5 … Ivy Ho, First-Gen Spotlight
In each issue, several students of the month will be featured. These are students who embody the RHSA’s mission and goals and who stand out to their professors, peers, and RHSA staff. If you believe you or a friend should be our next student of the month, nominate them by emailing RHSA@uml.edu with your/their name and why you believe that you/they should earn the spot!

**Grace Truong**

Grace Truong is a Nursing major with a minor in Public Health from North Andover, MA. She enjoys photography, writing poetry, and playing with her dog. Her favorite thing about UML is the supportive campus: in high school, it didn’t feel like everyone supported each other, but here, **everyone wants each other to succeed**. She also likes that the university feels like a community, rather than just a place to learn.

In the future, Grace would like to graduate and buy her parents a house, and to become a nurse either in the military or a midwife. To her, being involved in RHSA means that she has a community that supports her, but one which she can also support. **Grace doesn’t feel alone because of RHSA;** while everything around her is very new, her peer leader and the RHSA team support her personally.

Being a first-generation college student means a lot to Grace. Her and her family value education strongly. She has opportunities her parents didn’t get, but they were able to provide her with by immigrating to the United States from Vietnam. Grace wants to create a better life for her and her family via her own education.

**Edgardo Paz Juarez**

Edgardo is a Civil Engineering major from Washington, D.C. He enjoys playing both music and soccer. He wants to pursue construction management and have a job that he enjoys doing. Being involved in the RHSA has meant a sense of community to him: **“It’s nice to meet other students with the same path (and maybe background) as you, it’s nice to share and see people who are really trying.”** The RHSA community provides him with a place to feel supported. Being around others with similar experiences motivates him to be a better person and student. He also says that the RHSA contains many people who help each other accomplish goals.

Edgardo’s favorite thing about UML is the wide range and number of opportunities for students. There are a number of doors that are open to students at the university, and Edgardo says he wants to take advantage of those open doors. Further, he says that he likes how much the people here care about the students and what they are going to do after they graduate. He is a first-generation college student who also participates in a program that allows a group of students from Washington, D.C. to attend UMass Lowell. This programmatic partnership, including the ability to attend a university far from home with a group of people he already knew, pushed him to attend UMass Lowell.

Being a first generation student is an honor to Edgardo. He is the first one in his family to ever go to college, which is something that motivates him to become a better student. He wants to make his family’s emigration from Mexico worth it, and he thanks God for the opportunities he’s being given. This opportunity may let him be the one to bring the family a sense of stability. Overall, he is happy to be here.

**We would also like to recognize Anthony Phayso** as being an RHSA student of the month! Anthony is a student in the College of Engineering.
ADVICE FROM AN ADVISOR

Kelley Lawson, Coordinator of College Based Advising: Francis College of Engineering; Mentor to RHSA Peer Leaders

As we approach our second month of classes a different kind of stress may be brewing with your student. The first week of class jitters are subsiding and a new norm is being established. This is when the transition period becomes a reality. We have asked students to acclimate to this new world of higher education; new jargon, time management, adjusting to living on campus or commuting, navigating the River Hawk Roadster shuttle, meeting each professor’s instructions, and getting involved with the River Hawk community. This can be a tall order in an unfamiliar world.

Through my own trials and tribulations of being a first generation college student, I am grateful that I can now look back and share my story, tips, and tricks with students and connect on a more personal level where exploration and wonder is all part of the process of becoming who you want to be.

My advice for your student:

- Be your OWN ADVOCATE! No one knows you better than you!
- It is expected to ask for help!
- The syllabus for each class is your guide to success. Study it! Make sure you understand what is expected of you.
- Find your person on campus. It may be a faculty or staff member. Perhaps it is the friendly face behind the front desk. Your College Based Advisor is a great place to start!
- Keep open lines of communication with your supporters here at UML and afar.

My advice to family and supporters:

- Ask questions! The more you ask the more interest you are showing to your student.
- Make sure your actions and words relay the same message. Students may have obligations at home and are now trying to manage both worlds. Work together to find a balance.
- Your student has already made a great decision to join the RHSA community. Encourage participation!
- Remind your student that you are proud of them.

We encourage students to ask for help and with your support it will build confidence. We, as your student support team, want to send the same message. We support your college journey and recognize you are starting to build your future. It is also normal for your student to question some of their choices and explore other options. Encourage your student to gather information and take in all the resources UML has to offer. This is all part of the discovery process of finding their purpose and passion.

“Anything is possible when you have the right people there to support you.” - Misty Copeland - Ballet Dancer

Contact Kelley at Kelley_Lawson@uml.edu
STUDENTS’ CORNER

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)! 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 not showing up without telling us can cost us money, time, and make us (and you) look bad. Canceling your registration also allows another student to attend in your place!

**Project LEARN Volunteer Opportunity at Eastern Bank:** Tuesday October 15th 10AM-12PM

**Project LEARN**’s goal is to transform Lowell into the standard for excellence in urban education. They develop and support innovative programs and services to inspire today’s students and equip them with skills, knowledge, and the mindset they need for college, career and life. Students will help Project LEARN with their **BookNook initiative**.

**Lowell Historic Walking Tour:** Saturday, October 19th 9:45AM-12PM, meeting point at CRC Lobby

Want to know more about the history of your university? Want to find out what was located and who once lived in the very spaces where you now live, work, study, and attend concerts, basketball, and hockey games? Join UML distinguished history professor Dr. Bob Forrant for a walk and talk leaving from the CRC.

**RHSA Study Sessions:** every Wednesday 3-9PM in UCrossing Club Hub and O’Leary Library

Each week, RHSA Peer Leaders will be in UCrossing and O’Leary Library running study sessions! Come study, have a snack, and spend time with your RHSA Peer Leaders. No pre-registration is required for these events, so you can just drop in!

October Reminders:

- You should be meeting with your College-Based Advisor this month! Your registration date is at the end of this month, so be sure to see them to get your advising hold removed and to take advantage of your early registration benefits!

- Your registration date is **Monday, October 28th**. Be sure to check your SiS account or NOW Dashboard to see what time you are able to register at.

- UMass Lowell is closed on October 14th, and October 15th will be a Monday schedule. This means you will attend your classes as if it were a Monday on Tuesday the 15th. Make sure to mark your calendars accordingly!
Ivy Ho is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and the Co-Coordinator of the Applied Psychology and Prevention Science Doctoral program. Her background is in clinical health psychology, and she studies and teaches on health disparities among marginalized women, the relationship between interpersonal stress (both traumatic and non-traumatic) and health, and cultural competence in healthcare delivery. She has been at UMass Lowell since September 2006, and currently mentors graduate and undergraduate students in her programs. Outside of the psychology department, she is the Co-Founder of the Center for Asian-American studies at UMass Lowell.

What Ivy would tell her freshman self:

“Don’t sell yourself short.” Honestly, I did the bare minimum needed to get the grades and research experiences needed to get into grad school. I knew that I was smart and could have gotten way more out of being in college, but I was immature and, therefore, afraid to push myself to try new things and to potentially fail.

“Professors are not scary.” We are just regular people. On top of that, we love talking to students about the stuff you are learning. It is actually fun for us. So, feel free to reach out. Just remember to be polite and use email properly (https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay).

Ivy’s Fun Fact:

I am a Harry Potter aficionado. I’ve noticed that with each new cohort of college students, fewer and fewer students are fans of Harry Potter. You are missing out. Trust me, read the books. They are awesome. (The movies, not so much.)

Ivy’s Advice for students who are:

Starting their professional careers:

You are intelligent and educated. Start looking for ways to use your talents to contribute to society. You don’t exactly have to solve world hunger to make the world better. We all contribute in our own small ways. Vote. Mentor younger people. Participate in political movements.

Trying to find a mentor on campus:

There are more many kinds of mentors. Obviously, you can seek out mentors to guide you towards your professional and educational goals, but you are also welcome to seek out mentors to help you navigate college as a person from a marginalized group. People of color, gender minorities, students with disabilities, low-income students, first-gen college students, etc., may benefit from having a mentor to talk to about their experiences of discrimination on campus and in the workplace, or the problems they face getting through school.

“You are intelligent and educated. Start looking for ways to use your talents to contribute to society. You don’t exactly have to solve world hunger to make the world better.”