REGISTER FOR RHSA EVENTS

◊ Networking 101 with Kevin Willett, Monday, February 11th from 6:30-7:30pm in University Crossing 260A REGISTER HERE

◊ Centers for Learning Workshop: Values Auction, February 18th from 5:30-6:30pm in University Crossing 158 (B –Side) 1st Floor REGISTER HERE

◊ FAHSS Dinner Reception for the RHSA, Thursday February 28th from 5:30-7:30pm in the Allen House on South Campus REGISTER HERE
Freshmen Biology and Chemistry Double Major, Mariam Roda has been named RHSA Student of the Month! Biology professor Dr. Naomi Wernick nominated Mariam because of her dedication and persistence in her coursework. When asked why she chose UMass Lowell, Mariam cities, “The ease of networking, affordability, location, and the opportunities to get involved.” On campus, she has found the River Hawk Scholars Academy to be a great organization for networking and forming friendships with her fellow students. When asked what’s her favorite part about UMass Lowell, Mariam states, “The people. There’s a great vibe on campus. Everyone here is friendly, even in their micro-communications. There’s a strong sense of commonality on campus. We’re all here to support one another. And we’re all suffering through the bridge to north campus together.” She also cites her involvement in rowing, clubs, and research as factors that have been invaluable aspects of her experience at UMass Lowell. In her free time Mariam is an avid rower and enjoys working out, map quizzes (identifying countries, capitals, and flags), and sewing. Originally from Watertown, Massachusetts, Mariam is also a United States Presidential expert, having studied numerous administrations.

Reflecting on what it means to be a first-generation college student, Mariam states, “To me being a first-gen student means being more independent than my peers. While it can be isolating for family conversations, the experience has brought me closer to myself. Looking back on my first semester and experience preparing for college, I’m proud to say that I completed the college application myself, that I earned scholarships myself, and that I’m getting a great education.” Her advice to fellow students? “Talk to your advisors, go to them, and become friends; their job is to help, they’re with you for the full ride. They’ve seen what works and what doesn’t, they can guide you through making the most of your time here.” Reflecting on what being involved with the RHSA has meant to her, she credits Faculty Director Matt Hurwitz as someone whose efforts are making a difference for students, “Matt does everything he does to help other people. It’s really refreshing to see someone who’s passionate about helping others and is relentlessly dedicated to the cause.”

In the future, Mariam is planning on attending dental school. After she becomes a dentist, she hopes to focus her practice on restorative and cosmetic dentistry, with a particular focus on serving low-income people and underserved populations. In her mission to enhance the accessibility of dentistry, she’s a strong believer that regardless of socioeconomic status, “everyone deserves to have a beautiful smile.”
“Having a good support system, especially coming in as a freshman who doesn’t know how everything works is important.” - Kelly Wauri

“I’m a member of the step team at UMass Lowell (UML) Step-pin’ in Unity (SIU). I’m also a part of the Executive Board. My position is the treasurer of the team. My responsibilities are to make sure we keep our finances in line. SIU is given many opportunities to perform and compete. These include performances at UML basketballs game, club fashion shows, and many more. Also, we compete against other step teams at different schools. We even have the opportunity to host our own step competition during spring semester. Being on a team, especially SIU, is a fun and exciting way to make friends and it’s a pleasure to be a part of it." - Marie Bernier, RHSA Sophomore

Please reach out to Marie at Marie_Bernier@student.uml.edu if you’re interested in joining!

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MEET RHSA PEER LEADER KELLY WAURI

Sophomore Kelly Wauri majors in Civil Engineering and cites the location and the Engineering program as his favorite parts about UMass Lowell.

When asked why he decided to be an RHSA Peer Leader, Kelly replied, “I wanted to share the successes that I have achieved with this program with other students. I also wanted to get more leadership training and skills. It was just good to be able to share one of the many resources that UML offers to more students who might be stuck in college and need guidance. Having a good support system, especially coming in as a freshman who doesn’t know how everything works is important.”

Reflecting on his decision to attend UMass Lowell, Kelly states, “Choosing UMass Lowell wasn’t really something I had thought about for long. I kind of always just wanted to come here because I had seen how amazing it looked, and the fact that it is a university made it very attractive for me. It was honestly just one of those things I really wanted! When I got accepted here, I was really excited about it and instantly shared the news with all my friends, family, and teachers. UMass Lowell is also ranked as a top program for Civil Engineering Majors which I’m currently enrolled in, so that gives me high hopes for after graduation.” Kelly grew up in Lowell and was excited to have a university with a great engineering program nearby.

His advice to RHSA Freshmen? “READ, READ, READ!!! I have lost so many points and have missed out on learning a lot of things because I skimmed through a few readings.”

In his free time, Kelly is passionate about cooking and trying new recipes. In the future, Kelly plans on pursuing a career as a Civil Engineer.
An Engineering Alumnus with a 30-year career in technology and technology sales, John recently found out that under the RHSA program he qualifies as a first-generation college student. As the RHSA’s Alumni Mentor, he has been involved with helping the Academy mentor students and position itself for long-term success.

John was born in Lowell and grew up nearby in the Nabnasset Neighborhood in Westford, Massachusetts. Growing up he says “From doctor’s appointments to shopping, my life and my parents’ lives was always anchored in Lowell.” After high school, John enrolled in the Bachelors of Science in Engineering program. For John, attending UMass Lowell came down to: “Affordability, an excellent engineering program, and proximity to home.” He also adds, “My brother went to school at UMass Lowell and I knew he could give me pointers on the basics.”

If John could go back to his freshmen year, he’d advise himself to find greater balance in his college experience. Reflecting on this, John states, “I was myopically focused on being successful but what I wish I realized was that there is more to the college experience than just academics. There are so many opportunities to get involved. I can’t emphasize this enough. The one resource in the world you can’t replace is time.”

When asked about his favorite aspect of the Engineering Program at UMass Lowell, John cites, “The non-book, non-theory learning you attain. Learning about teamwork, collaboration, and the understanding of people’s work and behavior styles – these are invaluable things to learn for your career. When I went to high school, it was very rare that there were team projects. At UML, you were working on teams and were required to do joint work. I quickly realized that you were made better by the collaboration with teams. Things that some students knew better than me helped me gain a better understanding of the concepts being taught in class and were very beneficial to the outputs of the team. You can learn a lot from the diversity of opinion. That has been true from the day I came to UMass Lowell to every point throughout my 30-year career.” When he was attending UMass Lowell, John says that his family often didn’t understand what college was and viewed it as an extension of high school. This made him determined...
My Experience to becoming a First Generation Student, Cont. from Page 2

John’s advice for students interested in developing their leadership skills? “Stay focused on your goal of graduating – that is the ultimate goal for you. Also, take a class or read a book on People’s Behavior Styles (the 4 main ones are: Analytical, Driver, Amiable and Expressive). This will help you across all fields of work as you learn what motivates people and how they interact with others.” He also recommends that students pick up a copy of *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie, a classic book used by leaders in every field.

John was motivated to volunteer his time with the River Hawk Scholars Academy after he heard about the opportunities the Academy offered first-gen college students. Reflecting on this, John states, “Because I owe so much to this great university, I need to give back in any way I can. This school took a chance on me by accepting me as a provisional student until I proved myself. I will never forget that gesture by the University.”

Currently, John is a Group Manager of Business Development at Accenture. During his career, he has also worked for companies such as Dun & Bradstreet and Microsoft. In his free time, John enjoys cooking and skiing with his 3 daughters. He is a firm believer that a good veal parmigiana is the meal that determines a great Italian restaurant. Fun fact: His wife was his one and only blind date!

**Did You Know? 11% of RHSA Students are from Lawrence**

**WHAT’S HAPPENING IN THE RHSA?**

The River Hawk Scholars Academy is excited to announce that the [Francis College of Engineering](#) and the [Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences](#) will be joining our program this summer! The Francis College offers six major programs of study including: Chemical Engineering, Chemical Engineering: Nuclear Engineering Option, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Plastics Engineering. The Zuckerberg College offers programs of study in Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Nutritional Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Public Health, Exercise Science, and Nursing.

On Thursday, January 31st, the RHSA hosted its annual Spring Kickoff Event. The event welcomed students back to campus for the spring semester. It also gave students the opportunity to meet with their Peer Leaders to provide feedback about what is going well and what could be improved upon in the RHSA. Students were encouraged to apply for our Spring Leadership Scholarship that allows them to attend training sessions happening later this month. Students: Keep an eye out for the applications to become RHSA Peer Leaders.

**Congratulations to our 2019 RHSA Leadership Scholars!**

Congratulations to the 35 students who were selected to receive our Spring Leadership Scholarships! We are impressed by what you have accomplished so far – even if the road hasn’t always been easy – and we think this opportunity will help you take that next step in your journey here at UMass Lowell. The first training is **Wednesday, February 13th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Campus Rec 111.** It’s called “True Colors: Discovering Your Leadership Style” and will set the stage for everything else we’re doing for our leadership training. We’re excited to get this program started that night!