Upcoming Events

International Education Week Cultural Festival on Friday, November 16th from 7:00-10:00pm, UCrossing Lobby & Maloney Hall (UC-260) [REGISTER HERE]

Thanksgiving Food Drive on Monday, November 19th from 1:00-5:00pm, Inn & Conference Center, 50 Warren Street, Lowell, MA. Volunteer slots from 1-4 hours are available! [REGISTER HERE]

LinkedIn Career Corner, two options: Tuesday, November 27th from 1-1:45pm, UCrossing 242 and Friday, November 30th 10-11am, Southwick Hall 24 [REGISTER HERE]

A Capella Concert on Sunday, December 2nd from 7:30-9:30pm, Durgin Hall Concert Seating (Durgin 101) [REGISTER HERE]
Tips for Making the Most of Thanksgiving Break:

1. Take inventory of your upcoming assignments for each class, and see what’s due right after Thanksgiving.

2. Plan to set aside some time during Thanksgiving Break to complete a reasonable amount of work, so that you’re not scrambling to finish a paper or study for an exam when you get back to campus.

3. Remember, when you return there are only 2 and ½ weeks left until the last day of classes, so plan accordingly!!!

4. Be sure to get plenty of rest and quality time with family and friends to help you replenish and recharge.

5. A day or two before you return, wake up and go to bed at the same time you would on campus. This will help you have an easier adjustment when you start classes again on the 26th.

Follow UMass Lowell RHSA on ENGAGE! For a full list of the events we are offering this semester, follow this link.

Follow RHSA on Social Media! On Facebook @River Hawk Scholars Academy, on Instagram @umlrhsa, and on Twitter @umlrhsa

Questions or comments?

Email us at RHSA@uml.edu
Meet Socheatha Som, one of our RHSA Peer Leaders

Sophomore Business Administration Major Socheatha Som came to UMass Lowell to study International Business and Marketing and is now serving as the student representative on UMass Lowell’s First-Generation Student Task Force. Reflecting on why she chose to be a peer leader in the RHSA, Socheatha states, “I decided to be a peer leader because I wanted to help students have an easy transaction from high school to college. I wanted to be an extra support system for them and a friendly face on campus. I feel so lucky to be a part of RHSA; the academy is a great resource for first-generation students. I hope for the RHSA to be one of the reasons why future students want to come to UMass Lowell. I also am one of three students on the First-Gen Committee at UML. So far, I have been lucky enough to attend a meeting with everyone and discuss the logistics for National First-Generation Student Day.”

When asked why she chose to attend UMass Lowell, she states, “I wanted to stay close to home and they have a great business program. UML has such a friendly environment and staff which also made me want to come here.” Her advice to freshmen? “Don’t be afraid to talk to people, networking is everything!” Socheatha grew up in Lowell and enjoys outdoor activities, going to the gym, and learning about skincare in her free time.

My First Gen Student Experience by Tracy Michaels, RHSA College Writing Professor

When I was nine months old, my father abandoned my mother and me. She had completed one year of college, but her academic career abruptly ceased. Because my mother had no degree, she was forced to take jobs that worked her long hours, paid quite little and were never secure. I recall her going to work extremely ill for fear of becoming unemployed since she wasn’t provided sick days. As I grew up and my mom talked to me about academia, her chronic refrain was, “When you go to college...” Naïve as I was, I assumed, like high school this was something mandatory, but never once did I think it was out of my reach.

My college education was funded by partial scholarships, grants, a student loan, and money from my jobs. My mother, to this day, laments that she couldn’t financially help. One of my conundrums in college was solving how to complete my five-year double major in four years, since my scholarship expired after four. Luckily, I had a fantastic advisor and English professor, Dr. Michael J. Meyer, who sat me down the second semester of my first college year and literally planned out my entire schedule of classes (including summer school) to alleviate my fears and show me how I could meet my deadline. There was never a time I didn’t work while taking my 18-21 credits each semester. I sold clothes at a local mall, cleaned houses, and I was exuberant when I was able to acquire an on-campus job as a writing tutor and later when I became an RA. Meanwhile, my GPA was always at the forefront of my mind, since I was dependent on that scholarship, and my jobs and my mother’s experiences revealed the alternative for my future if I wasn’t successful in academia.

These are a few of the reasons I immediately volunteered to teach an RHSA section of College Writing II. I knew that my students would be driven and bring an array of real-world experience into the university. First gen students are fearless in the classroom, they are eager to share what they know, unafraid to question what they don’t, and they are extraordinary self-advocates for whatever extra help they may need. My RHSA students are eager to lift one another up, interact with each other, and share tips and tricks for surviving a semester. The seriousness with which they approach learning is beyond impressive. For first-gen students earning a college degree is not simply an expected right but an opportunity; a degree will allow RHSA students to follow their dream careers, change their lives, and it will provide them with options within their field of study. We know that due to the deferred dreams of those before us, we are able to reach for our own. That’s why being a small part in the RHSA program, as an English professor, is an absolute privilege for me.
What’s Happening in the RHSA?

On October 29th, over 60 students and their guests attended RHSA Hockey Night, featuring UMass Lowell vs. Northeastern. Students sat together in the RHSA section and three lucky winners went home with prizes such as gift cards and UML apparel.

On November 5th, RHSA teamed up with the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and the Office of Alumni Relations to host a student alumni social. The event allowed students to network with OMA alumni, ask them questions about their experiences at UMass Lowell, and hear about alumni experiences in graduate school and the workforce.

On November 8th, RHSA was proud to be a part of National First-Generation Student Day at UMass Lowell! The day featured several events including a lunch with Faculty from the College of Fine Arts Humanities and Social Sciences (FAHSS) and a dinner with Faculty from the Kennedy College of Sciences (KCS). The FAHSS event allowed students to network with faculty from departments such as Criminal Justice, Economics, English, History, Liberal Arts, Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, and World Languages, as well as FAHSS and University Leadership. Keynote speakers included FAHSS Dean Luis Falcón, Criminology Professor Yahayra Michel-Smith, and Political Science Professor Morgan Marietta. Each shared their experiences on being the first in their family to attend college and encouraged students to reach out to them with any questions they may have.

Later that evening, the KCS event allowed students to network with faculty from departments such as Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Math, and Physics. The event featured roundtable discussions with faculty that focused on students’ research and career interests in the sciences. Additionally, several professors disused their experiences navigating their way through college and being the first in their family to attend. Associate Dean Fred Martin and faculty in attendance encouraged students to become involved with the multitude of research opportunities KCS faculty are engaged in on and off campus. They encouraged students to reach out to them with any questions they might have.