RHODY ALUMNI MENTORING (RAM)
A GUIDE FOR ALUMNI MENTORS
The Rhody Alumni Mentoring program gives alumni the opportunity to form meaningful, rewarding relationships that prepare current students to be better employees and future leaders. As a mentor, you will share your unique experience, knowledge, and skills with a URI student who has similar interests and is preparing to enter the professional world.

You will act as a resource and guide with the intent to develop the student's personal and professional growth on topics such as:

- **Academic Guidance**: course selection, study skills, and post-undergraduate planning  
- **Career Advice**: networking, job shadowing, resume critiques, interviewing tips, and career insight  
- **Personal Development**: interpersonal skills, professional etiquette, and balancing school-life obligations

**Rhody Alumni Mentoring (RAM) Program**

The RAM program is an alumni-student mentor program that is organized through a LinkedIn subgroup of the University of Rhode Island Alumni Association LinkedIn page. The relationship will begin while the student is enrolled in the online internship and career focused course, ITR300. At the conclusion of the course the mentor and student may choose to continue a mentoring relationship outside of the structure of the program.

**What is a RAM Mentor?**

As a RAM mentor you are a guide to a current URI student. Your role is to serve as a resource who guides the student by sharing information about your URI education and professional experience, building trust, and modeling positive behaviors. Your relationship with the student will help pave the way for success at URI and beyond. A RAM mentor derives satisfaction from helping URI students fulfill their potential. An effective mentor understands that his or her role is to be dependable, engaged, and authentic.

**A Mentor Plays Several Roles, Including:**

- **Motivator**: Expresses belief and confidence in the mentee’s abilities, and encourages the mentee to try new things  
- **Resource**: Teaches and advises the mentee on how to make professional contacts, and introduces the mentee to new people, places, or ideas  
- **Supporter**: Encourages open and honest dialogue, listens and responds to the needs of the mentee  
- **Coach**: Helps the mentee develop and work to achieve realistic and meaningful goals
THE RAM PROCESS

Matching

Once accepted into the program, students view available mentors through the LinkedIn subgroup. The student then selects and reaches out to the mentor that best matches their career and personal needs. **URI Alumni Association and the Center for Career and Experiential Education do not match students with alumni.** Once a request is made:

- The mentor receives a LinkedIn message with the request from the student, and can choose to accept or decline the student mentee
- The mentor informs the student that they are willing to be his/her mentor
- If declining, please provide the student with a reason for declining the request
- If declined, the student can search the LinkedIn subgroup discussion board for another mentor and make a request

**Students can only request one mentor at a time.** Therefore, it is very important for alumni to respond to the request within one to two business days. If there is no response to the request, however, the student can search for another mentor.

Mentoring

Mentoring is about building a mutually satisfying relationship. Some important aspects of a mentoring relationship are:

- Setting goals and expectations for the relationship using the **Mentor Agreement**, located in Appendix A of this guide
- Listening to one another and asking relevant and thoughtful questions pertinent to your individual needs
- Maintaining an openness to learning from your mentee
- Staying in contact based on the set expectations

Benefits of Mentoring

A mentoring relationship is a valuable experience for both the mentee and the mentor. We feel that mentoring will be a positive and enriching experience for you as the mentor. More importantly we hope that you will:

- Benefit from a sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- Develop meaningful connections with current URI students
- Engage in a volunteer opportunity that is highly valued by employers
- Reconnect with the URI of today
- Expand your professional network
- Refine your coaching and mentoring skills
THE RAM MENTOR EXPERIENCE:

The Mentoring Relationship
For mentoring to be successful there must be a reciprocal, comfortable relationship between mentor and mentee. Both parties must work at the relationship to make it successful by being open-minded, respectful, and keeping to the expectations they have set for the relationship. Ideally, the mentoring relationship will be a mutually beneficial one as the mentor learns from the mentee and the mentee from the mentor.

Mentor Responsibilities
- Have at least three meaningful interactions with your mentee during the course of the program
- Commit to the mentoring relationship until the end of the semester
  - Review and agree to abide by the Mentor Agreement, located in Appendix A, and The University of Rhode Island's Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy, located at http://web.uri.edu/hr/policies_procs/

Expectations of a RAM Mentor
The program is extremely flexible. Meaningful interactions may occur through virtual outlets such as, Skype, FaceTime, email, or through in-person meetings. We want the relationship of the mentor and mentee to be defined by you and your mentee; however, we do have some specific expectations, including:
- Set goals and expectations for the relationship
- Identify the best means of communication
- Have at least three meaningful interactions throughout the term
- Have at least one face-to-face interaction, either in person or via video chat
- Respond to all communications in a timely manner
- Maintain and model professional behavior
- Communicate any problems with the mentoring relationship to Corrie Haley, Career and Internship Advisor, chailey@uri.edu, (401) 874-5177.

What is Not Expected of RAM Mentors?
- Offering jobs or internships to your mentee
- Initiating all interactions with your mentee
- Providing academic coursework assistance to your mentee
Building the Relationship

Get to Know your Mentee
Getting to know your mentee’s professional, and personal goals and interests will allow you to give advice and guidance that is personal to his/her career path. Ask thoughtful questions about your mentee's professional interests, hobbies and passions.

Share your Story
- Tell your mentee about yourself and share your professional experiences
- Think about your past career mistakes and how your mentee can learn from them
- Share the lessons learned during your time at URI and how your experiences and involvement with the University have shaped your career

Set Goals and Expectations
Setting goals with your mentee in the early stages of the relationship will provide direction for your time together. If your mentee doesn’t know his/her goals, allow this to be a mentoring moment and assist your mentee with developing goals for the mentor relationship.

Decide with your mentee what his/her expectations are for your relationship. Also discuss what your expectations are as the mentor. Be open and clear about what you expect from your mentee and ask him/her to do the same. Utilize the Goal Setting Worksheets, located in Appendix C of this guide, to assist you in developing goals with your mentee.

Mentor Goals and Objectives
The most commonly stated goal for a mentor/mentee relationship is the professional development and establishment of a successful graduate. Mentor goals and objectives should reflect and support the goals established by the mentee. A partial list of mentor goals and objectives may include:

- Provide professional guidance to mentee
- Be a leadership role model for mentee
- Share research, relevant knowledge, and experience
- Identify and resolve potential obstacles the mentee may face in his/her career development
- Assist mentee to develop professional networks
- Demonstrate/model how your mentee might develop greater initiative, increased independence, and self-reliance
WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT TO LEARN?

Career Advice
- How to prepare for a career while still in college
- Importance of building a portfolio with internships
- Career options for a specific major
- Other majors or minors to consider for a specific career
- What makes a good first job
- General/specific career information

Job Search Skills
- Resources for job searching
- Job shadowing opportunities
- Interviewing skills
- Resume building
- Professional etiquette

Networking and Professional Development Tips
- Networking skills
- Business ethics
- Benefits/career path/location/advancement opportunities
- Professional associations or organizations that can enhance skill development or professional opportunities
- How to identify and overcome professional challenges
SUGGESTED MENTORING ACTIVITIES

During each semester we ask that you have three meaningful interactions with your mentee. While you may have frequent communication via email for example, we ask that with each meaningful interaction you work towards achieving a goal with your mentee. Listed below are suggested mentoring activities that may assist with planning your interactions with your mentee.

**Career Discussions**

- Schedule a shadow visit, if appropriate
- Discuss what your mentee should be doing now to be marketable and employable after graduation
- Send your mentee relevant career articles and encourage him/her to read relevant magazines and journals
- Give feedback on your mentee’s professional attitude, presence and conduct
- Discuss projects and developments in your company and industry
- Share professional challenges you face, and ask your mentee how he/she would approach the issues and find solutions

**Job Search**

- Critique your mentee’s resume and/or cover letter
- Set up a mock interview
- Offer advice on where to find jobs/internships

**Networking Pursuits**

- Introduce your mentee to colleagues and other contacts
- Set up an informational interview with your mentee
- Offer the names of associates to your mentee for the purpose of setting up informational interviews
- Bring your mentee to a professional association meeting, event, or staff meeting
- Tell your mentee about how you built your own professional network
Thank you for taking the time to be a member of the Rhody Alumni Mentor program. This program would not be possible without your dedication to the University, commitment to connect with URI students, and willingness to share your valuable professional experiences. Please use this guide as a resource as you navigate through your relationship with your mentee. We welcome any suggestions for improving our materials and resources for the program.

RAM Mentor Networking Night

The Alumni Association will host a RAM Mentor networking night at the conclusion of the semester. It is an occasion to meet and network with other mentors and mentees and to celebrate the close of the mentor program semester. Please keep an eye out for an invitation to this event.

**Our first mentoring night is scheduled for: Thursday, December 10, 2015 at the Alumni Center**

Career Services

Many conversations that mentors and mentees have involve career development topics. URI Alumni have access to alumni career advisors who offer free resources such as one-on-one career coaching, online resources, and more. These services may be used to complement your own career development knowledge. For more information on alumni career services contact Lisa Kuosmanen [lkuosmanen@uri.edu](mailto:lkuosmanen@uri.edu) or Karen Rubano [krubano@uri.edu](mailto:krubano@uri.edu) or visit [alumni.uri.edu/careerservices](http://alumni.uri.edu/careerservices).

In preparing this guide we have used material from other institutions. We particularly acknowledge using material from the Stanford Alumni Mentor Program 2011 and the Xavier University Mentor Program Handbook.
MENTORING AGREEMENT:
To get the most out of your mentoring experience, we strongly recommend that you talk about the expectations and goals both the mentee and mentor have for the mentoring relationship.

Agree on Expectations: How will the relationship work?
1. Meeting together: What works best? (remember, you want to have at least three meaningful meetings or conversations)
   Let’s pick the best ways for us to meet:
   - In Person
   - Skype/Facetime/Google Hangout
   - Phone
   - Email
   - Other: ________________________________

2. In general, how often would we like to meet/interact?
   - once per week
   - every other week
   - once a month
   - Other: ________________________________

3. If an email/voice mail is received, we will get back to our partner within:
   - 24 hours
   - 1-2 days
   - 3 days
   - Other: ________________________________

4. Identify dates that you and your mentor are not available (i.e. vacation, exams, business trips, etc.).
   ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________
   ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

5. If we can’t make an expected meeting/interaction, how will we get in touch?
APPENDIX B

Tips for Successful Goal Setting

- **Make sure it is something you really want.** To make it happen, you need dedication and commitment. Think about your goals and confirm whether you are willing to sacrifice the time and effort to achieve them. Also, weigh the achievement of your goal to the sacrifices that you will have to make to achieve it. If it's worth it, great! If not, reconsider your goal.

- **Break up your goal into smaller sub-goals.** If you have a large goal, it is a good idea to break it up and make little goals that are more manageable to achieve. Breaking up your goals not only makes your goal list less intimidating, it gives you more motivation to succeed.

- **Think S.M.A.R.T.** When setting goals, a good system to go by is SMART. Writing a blurb for each letter and recording it with your goal could help you focus on your goal in the future.
  
  - **Specific:** It is great to have a clear, concise title to your goal, but you should also describe it in more detail. For example, "become employed after college" could be described with "build my resume so that I am marketable and employable after college".
  
  - **Measurable:** Try to write a goal that you can measure numerically and establish a criteria for how to achieve your goal. A goal can be much more motivating if you can track and record your progress, and see how you are doing.

  - **Action-Oriented:** Be proactive in taking action that will result in reaching your goal.

  - **Realistic:** Can your goal really be done? Think not only about the goal, but about your personal circumstances.

  - **Trackable:** How much time will you have to put in on a regular basis to achieve this goal? How long from now do you plan to achieve this goal?

- **Reward Yourself.** Give yourself credit for what you are accomplishing.

- **Write it down!** Probably one of the most important and most ignored steps to effective goal setting is to write it down! If you don't write your goal down, you will not remember it. Writing down your goals and reviewing them daily will give your mind subconscious cues that what your writing is important, and will help you succeed.
Goal Setting Worksheet

Have the mentee indicate his/her level of interest in the following activities. Rate the interest level as a 1, 2 or 3; with 1 being the lowest and 3 being the highest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gain insight into the mentor’s academic experience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to professional contacts and colleagues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a professional meeting or event</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a staff meeting with mentor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow mentor at workplace</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique of mentee’s resume or cover letter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop interviewing skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with decision process to attend graduate school or obtain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional certifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance on how to best seek a job or internship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive information on relevant career journals and magazines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive feedback on professional presence and conduct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Goal Tracking Worksheet

#### Mentor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe your goal</th>
<th>What <strong>actions</strong> can you and your mentee take to achieve these goals?</th>
<th>Set a deadline: When will you accomplish your goal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Mentee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe your goal</th>
<th>What <strong>actions</strong> can you and your mentor take to achieve these goals?</th>
<th>Set a deadline: When will you accomplish your goal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Informational Interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3.</td>
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