

Rose Butler Browne Leadership & Mentor Program for Women of Color @ URI



HISTORY

In the 1995-1996 academic year, an undergraduate student noticed that there were a high number of first-year Latina women leaving the University of Rhode Island in their first year. As a part of her efforts to try to determine the cause of this "phenomenon", as well as a solution, she brought her concerns to the attention of the Director of the Women's Center. From several discussions with the Director of the Women's Center and other Latina students, De Mujer A Mujer (Woman to Woman) was formed to provide support for first year Latina women at the University.

After the first few meetings it was determined that part of the problem was that many of the women had difficulties adjusting to their new environment. It was then generalized that if Latina first year students were having problems adjusting to their new environment then African, African-American, Asian, Native American and other women of color might be having similar experiences. Therefore, the concept of mentoring first year Latina women was expanded to include all women of color.

This program seeks to address that expanded need. By expanding the program, two additional aspects of support, professional and academic, would be offered in addition to the social support that was already established by De Mujer A Mujer. The sponsors hope the program becomes an extension of the services already provided by Talent Development, the Women's Center, The Center for Student Leadership Development and the Multicultural Center and plans to establish links within the community in the hope of providing a networking base. The mentor program was initiated in September 2001. The Rose Butler Browne mentoring program, the Women of Color Conference, and the curriculum development and delivery of the academic class has been the primary responsibility of the Center for Student Leadership Development since 2006.