Supporting First-Gen Students in Overcoming Career Readiness Barriers

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Overview

- Factors that promote career readiness
- Addressing barriers
 - Resource awareness
 - Experience
 - Financial resources
- Sharing best practices

Factors that promote career readiness

"First gen students have fewer professional contacts and social capital than their continuing generation counterparts."

(Montoya 2022)

- Access to career-readiness resources
- Networking
- Mentoring
- Experiential learning
- Financial resources

What can we do?

Resource Awareness

Experience

Financial Resources

Addressing Barriers: Resource Awareness

- Expose students to resources early in their college experience
- Bring the support to them rather than wait for them to seek it
- Embed career-related activities into courses
- Target courses and programs that are likely to have a high first-gen enrollment rate
 - Developmental courses
 - BRAVE Brothers Achieving Excellence program
 - o EOF
- Equitable access to opportunities
- Thinking creatively about programming and resources

Addressing Lack of Resource Awareness

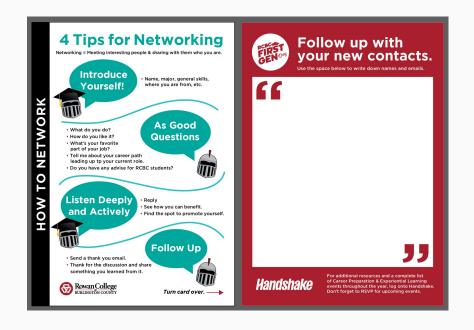
- Embedding CP/EL into courses and programs
 - Psych 101
 - Criminal justice embedded EL
 - EXP course

Addressing Barriers: Experience

- Helping students "get in the door"
 - Networking
 - Mock interviews
- Offer a training and resources that outline professional expectations (timeliness, accountability, email etiquette)
- Volunteering is a great way to get some initial experience and build a resume

Addressing Lack of Experience

- First Gen Week @ RCBC
- Cross-campus collaboration between
 Career, EMSS, and EOF
- Included various events including the First-Gen Mixer & Mocktails
- Opportunities for students to network with other first gen faculty and staff
- Networking cards



Addressing Barriers: Financial Resources

- Work with employers to establish high-quality paid internships and experiential learning opportunities
- On-campus student employment
- Promote existing on-campus resources such as a food pantry, emergency fund, Foundation scholarships, Office of Student Support

Addressing Lack of Financial Resources

- Paid, course-based opportunity such as SLR
- Federal Work-Study for eligible students
- Collaboration with Office of Career Preparation and Experiential Learning,
 Financial Aid, and course instructor

Best Practices

We would love to hear from our colleagues and students!

Other ideas?

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Please feel free to reach out with questions or to connect!

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