Non-Traditional Rutgers Students: Providing Resources for Self-Care and Success

**By Madeline Hehir** 

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The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice* leadership *through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at http://iwl.rutgers.edu.

## **My Project**

-Created a resource directory for non-traditional Rutgers students

-Features various resources oriented towards:

-Creating a college community

- -Self-care and wellness
- -Providing academic support

-Brings together resources from Rutgers, Douglass Residential College, the Institute for Women's Leadership (IWL), as well as state and county services

-Online version available as well

-Goal: to create a sustainable resource to empower non-traditional students

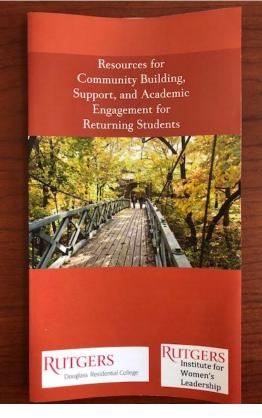
## My Advisor

#### Special thanks to my advisor Dean Rebecca Reynolds

## Partnerships

- The Mary I. Bunting Program for Non-Traditional Women Students
- Douglass Residential College
- The Institute for Women's Leadership

### **Finished Product**





Opportunities at Douglass

aining Douglass: Douglass Residential College provides weren at Rudges with a chance to form a smaller community with opportunities for scholarships, internships/ stemisps, and specialized programs. indi: douglass rudgers.edu/enrollment Sudiag Stydents are part of the Mary L. Bunting Program ehch serves as a community for returning women students and pavokes advising, scholarship opportunities, the

ophia Gub, and events. Contact Dean Rebecca Reynolds for lass shedule advising at rreynold@echo.rutgers.edu kwiting Lounge all students enrolled in the Bunting migram.receive access to the Bunting Lounge located on the third floor of the Douglass Student Center. The Lounge event as a relaxing place to study, eat, and connect with the Bunting students, it also has a comfortable and inset Eactable moon.

Nº BOLD Center- located on the first floor of College Hall nobugias campus offers year-round mentoring. Indeship and professional/career development, resume of cover lietter workshops, and special programming. In https://douglass.rutgers.edu/bold

he Douglass Project- an award-winning program for omen in STEAT They host events, workshops, provide yoet, and run Project SUPER for research opportunities. Host/douglass.rutgers.edu/women-stem/douglass-project is Sophia House- housing option for non-traditional age men students at Douglass who choose to live on mps.al interested contact rreynold@echo rutgers.edu

#### **Community Building at Rutgers**

#### Cultural Centers-

The Paul Robeson Cultural Center The Center for Latino Arts and Culture The Asian American Cultural Center The Center for Social Justice Education & LCBT Communities

Visit: http://culturalcollaborative.rutgers.edu/ getINVOLVED- provides students with information about organizations and clubs, upcoming events, and links to various students affairs websites. Visit: http://getimolved.rutgers.edu/

Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Servicessupports veterans on their transition to college and fosters a supportive learning environment. Visit: https://veterans.rutgers.edu/ .Rutgers.ROTC-http://www.armyotc.rutgers.edu/

Rugers Students with Children supports student parents, helps them gain visibility, and hosts kid-friendly events. Their webpage on RU First's website provides links for on and off campus resources for student parents, childcare options, lactation room locations, and more. Email: rustudentparents@gmail.com RU-1st: a network and community of students who

Visit: https://rul.rutgers.edu/ University College\_provides.academic advising

onvestig conege provides academic advising, newsletters, and helpful recommendations and support for adult and non-traditional students. Visit: http://uccrutgers.edu/

#### **Finished Product**



#### Helpful Rutgers Resources

Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance. and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) To schedule an appointment: 848-932-7884 Website: http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/ Career Services: http://careers.rutgers.edu/ Office of Disability Services: https://ods.rutgers.edu/ Dean of Students: http:// deanofstudents.rutgers.edu/ Department of Transportation Services: http:// parktran.rutgers.edu/ Rutgers Federal Work Study: https:// financialaid.rutgers.edu/student-work/students/ apply-for-federal-work-study/ Health Outreach, Promotion, and Education (HOPE): http://rhshope.rutgers.edu/ Learning Centers: https://dc.rutgers.edu/ Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS): http://odasis.rutgers.edu/ Residence Life: http://ruoncampus.rutgers.edu/ Student Conduct: http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/ Student Health: http://health.rutgers.edu/ Student Legal Services: http://rusis.rutgers.edu/ Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA): http://vpva.rutgers.edu/ Writing Centers: http://wp.rutgers.edu/ writingcenters/writingcenters

#### Institute for Women's Leadership Opportunities

WHKCS (Women Investing in and Guiding Students) Mentoring Program matches undergraduate women with professional women from corporations including: Wells Fargo, Johnson & Johnson, PSEC, and more. Students strengthen their resumes, cover letters, networking, and professional development. Applications are open to freshmen: sophomores, and juniors in the Spring semester. Community Leadership, Action, and Service Program students with experience in community organizing internships. Applications are open to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in the Spring semester. Visit: http://www.tgers.edu/programs.html

#### County and State Services

Manavi- offers culturally cognizant counseling, support groups, and services for domestic violence and sexual assault to South Asian women. They also run the Ashiana assault the Asian women and their children affected by domestic violence. Hotline: 1-732-435-1414 Website http://www.manavi.org/home.html Middlesex County Department of Community Servicesprovides services to families, older individuals, people with disabilities, and veterans through various offices. http://www.middlesexcountynj.gov/Government/ Departments/CS/Pages/default.aspx Women Aware: offers free and confidential services to all individuals affected by domestic violence including emergency assistance, help with housing, counseling educational services, and more. 74 Hour Hotline: 732-249-4504 Website: https://www.womenaware.net/ NJ Children and Family Services: http://www.state.nius/ ni/community/family/ NJ Division of Disability Services: http://www.nj.gov/ humanservices/dds/home/ NJ Family Care: http://www.njfamilycare.org/defaultaspx NJ Transit Access Link: http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm\_servict.srv? hdnPageAction=AccessLinkTo NJ Suicide Prevention Hopeline: 1-855-654-6735



### Foundations

-The inspiration and foundation for my project was my internship experience at the Bunting Program for Non-Traditional Women Students

-Non-traditional students are growing in numbers including student parents and veterans (Miller Brown 67)

-Large and diverse community of students returning to school at different ages, life stages, and with various roles and responsibilities (Merrill)

-Therefore, I wanted my resource directory to be useful to all the different demographics of non-traditional students

### **Research Reflections**

-Non-traditional students are an extremely motivated group (Fairchild 11)

-Additionally, a study on veterans in higher education found them to be highly motivated after returning home from active duty (Rumann and Hamrick 442).

-This inspired me to connect returning students to academic support, as well as academic opportunities for growth such as the Douglass Project and Project SUPER and IWL programs

-My resource highlights useful phone numbers and websites, to help make navigating Rutgers easier

### **Theory to Practice**

-Due to their varying schedules and responsibilities, it can be difficult for non-traditional students to get involved on campus (Schuetze and Slowey 316)

- I highlighted multiple ways to forge communities at Rutgers including information on cultural centers, clubs/organizations, veteran-oriented groups, & joining Douglass

-Joining Douglass allows for returning women students to be a part of the Bunting Program and have access to their own lounge, so they can meet with other students

-Additionally, many returning students, women in particular, face the stress of balancing multiple roles (Brown and Adansi 28), (Dill and Henley 26)

-I included outlets to help them distress and resources for support/intervention

### **Women's Leadership**

-My resource is geared towards returning women students, and lists various pathways for them to feel more empowered and a closer sense of community

-I was guided by the idea of intersectional feminism, as students have multiple, interlocking identities

-Rutgers, Douglass, and the state and county all provide beneficial resources and information on their programs, but they all do so separately from each other

-My resource helps bring them all together, to make that information more accessible to students

#### **Lessons Learned**

-Through my research, I got to learn more about returning students both domestically and globally

-I learned to be honest about my worries and struggles, and the value of asking for help

-The process of creating this resource helped teach me the importance of flexibility and being open to change

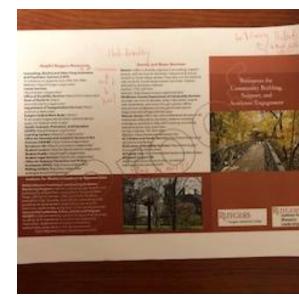
-Gained insight into the world of layout and design

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### Impact

-My resource directory impacts the non-traditional student community

-It is sustainable

-Available both in print and online

-Can be updated and re-printed

-New information can always be added

-Highlights IWL programs, allowing for more non-traditional students to join IWL programs and potentially create their own social action project

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