

5/20/13

I personally believe that one of the best ways to make a difference is to start a fire. Not a destructive fire, but a blazing flame of passion; an internal flame powerful enough to drive one person to achieve their goals, while inspiring others to do the same. It is a flame that I see in myself, and it was ignited by my parents. As a young boy growing up, I watched my mother and father strive to reach everything that they needed. They fought to reach their goals, and when things seemed to take a turn for the worse, they only fought harder. Their failures and shortcomings only strengthened them as they were filled with an energy of empowerment - an energy that I was able to feed off of, for most of my adolescence.

Regrettably, that marvelous energy was suddenly interrupted in my third year of study at Clarkson University, when my mother's life was claimed by walking pneumonia. It was then that things began to fall apart. I had trouble communicating with people and there was a slump in my academic growth, which manifested itself in the form of poor grades. I had thoughts of leaving school and giving up on my academic career. I wanted to quit, but there was one problem; I was missing something. Of all the things that my parents taught me, the one example that was never set, was how to quit. My mind would not allow me to turn my back on my academic career. Giving up was clearly not an option, so I did what was left; I persevered. I sought counseling, I asked for help with my coursework, and I began to rebuild.

A year later, I had the wonderful opportunity to visit RIT for the summer of 2012 to work under the expertise of Dr. Agamemnon Crassidis in the Mechanical Engineering Dept. During that summer at RIT, my academic growth took a unique turn. In the past I worked as an undergraduate researcher at both Clarkson University and Penn State, but it was at RIT that I was able to get the best feel for what it's like to be a graduate student. The work that I did was more than just busy-work; I was helping to work toward a tangible goal - and it was fun. At the end of the summer, I saw the work that I had done being used in a research proposal for the US Dept. of Defense - to me, this was a sign of validation. It was a sign so great, that could only be surpassed by the acceptance letter I received from RIT this year.

In the fall of 2008, I started an educational journey at Clarkson University. A great deal has changed in my life since then, but what remains unchanged is my love for learning and my fiery desire to succeed in all that I do. My journey at Clarkson has ended, but my journey as a graduate student at RIT has just begun. This fall, I do not plan merely start attending RIT. Rather, I will continue building upon what I started at RIT in the summer of 2012, as I develop into an academic scholar worthy of a Mechanical Engineering MS degree.

Thank you,



Jeremy Marshall

Objective: To obtain the Community Advocate position offered by the RIT Center for Residence Life.

Education:

Clarkson University, Potsdam NY

May 2013

- The Clarkson School: Early college program allowing high school seniors to replace their senior year with a freshman year at Clarkson University (Fall 2008).
- Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering, Minor in Mathematics.
- Cumulative GPA: 2.5/4.0

Relevant Experience:

House Advisor for the Clarkson School, Clarkson University,

Fall 2010-Spr 2011

- Live-in, paraprofessional, student staff; Worked under Kevin Lobdell
- Supervised high-school-aged students living in a university residence hall.
- Fostered a warm, safe and welcoming community while assisting with adjustment issues.
- Served as a liaison between the dormitory residents and the housing coordinators.

Emerging Leaders Program, Clarkson University

Spring 2010

- Selected by faculty and staff to participate in this leadership program.
- Developed communication skills by working with fellow program members on weekly tasks.
- Enhanced presentation skills/public speaking abilities through constant group communication and presentations.

Clarkson School Admissions Dept. Clarkson University

Summer 2009

- Full Time Admissions staff assistant; worked under Annette Greene
- Conducted tours throughout the summer to prospective students and family
- Entered data and maintained student files
- Communicated with prospective students/ parents on behalf of the Clarkson School.

National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE):

Fall 2008-Present

- Served on the Executive Board as Secretary (Fall '09-Spr '10)
- Planned and Executed the weekly meetings for the Professional Society
- Tutored (Fall '09): Group tutoring Sessions for Calculus (session sizes of 10-46 Students)

Engineering Experience:

Rochester Institute of Technology, L-SAMP Funded Research

Summer 2012

- 10 Week faculty-guided research; with Dr. Agamemnon Crassidis
- Project Title: A Self-Powered Biosensor System Measuring Heart/ Respiratory Rates
- Presented research at RIT Undergraduate Research Symposium and At University of Buffalo Conference
 - Visit www.youtube.com/JeremyWMarshall for HD footage of oral presentation.

Pennsylvania State University, SROP Scholars Program

Summer 2011

- 10 Week faculty-guided research in an engineering laboratory
- Project Title: Hierarchically Structured Materials for Energy Storage.
- Presented research findings at a Penn State symposium as well as an Ohio State Conference.
 - Visit www.youtube.com/JeremyWMarshall for HD footage of oral presentation.

Clarkson University, L-SAMP Scholars Program

Summer 2010

- 10 Week faculty-guided research in an engineering laboratory; with Dr. Ajit Achuthan
- Project Title: Characterization of the Mechanical Properties of Surface Nanocrystallized Materials.
 - **Published** in: *Experimental and Applied Mechanics*, Volume 6 (2011- Springer).
 - www.springerlink.com/content/j7422vh422268275/
- Presented research findings at local and national (University of Buffalo) conferences.
 - Visit www.youtube.com/JeremyWMarshall for HD footage of oral presentation.

Technical Skills: MATLAB/ Simulink; Adobe: Premiere Pro, After Effects; Microsoft: Word, Powerpoint, Excel

How will your personal qualities influence and contribute to the RIT community?

One year ago, I spent a summer at RIT as an undergraduate researcher in the Mechanical Engineering Department. During my stay, I encountered a community of individuals filled with a warm, welcoming energy reminiscent of my own. Like anywhere else each person had their own personality furnished with their own unique traits and quirks but one underlying common characteristic was the desire to be open, kind, and generous. Because of the positive nature of the RIT community, I was able to comfortably work with others while establishing relationships with nearly everyone that I had the pleasure of meeting.

What I'll bring to RIT community as a graduate student is more of the positive, kind, and generous energy that it already has. It's the very same positive, kind, and generous energy that guided me in my interactions with the people I met while I was on campus last summer. I don't think would be very honest of me say that I know exactly how this energy that I see within myself will affect the RIT community in the long term. However, I do know that the positivity, kindness, and generosity within me can only produce good.

How have your prior experiences prepared you for this assistantship opportunity?

I think my time as a House Advisor (HA) for the Clarkson School has done the most to prepare me for this position as a community advocate. The Clarkson School is an early-entrance college program for high-school students at Clarkson University. Sixty students from all over the country come to the Clarkson School as fully matriculated students, living on campus in a dormitory set aside solely for students in the Clarkson School program. In the dormitory are 3 live-in paraprofessional student staff members – the House Advisors - that serve to aid in the development of each student. The House Advisor position is similar to the concept of a Resident Advisor, with more emphasis on monitoring and assisting the students as they are typically 16-18 years of age. During my training to become an HA, I worked with the two other HAs to develop a residential mission statement for the Clarkson School. Below is that mission statement along with an explanation of how I have used it during my term as a House Advisor for the Clarkson School.

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“In the Clarkson School, we aim to facilitate and establish a comfortable, respectful, and safe environment that supports educational and professional goals; where individuals can openly express themselves.”

“...facilitate and establish a comfortable, respectful, and safe environment...”

Showing my amicable personality was the best way for me to show the students that they could be comfortable around the HAs and that they were respected by the HAs. In addition to showing that we as HAs cared, we encouraged the students to be considerate of one another, often through conflict resolution. One of the most common issues were noise complaints due to loud music. One simple solution was to have the accused student play his music at the level that yielded the complaints, while having him visit neighboring rooms to see how his music affected others. Then, by working with all students involved, an appropriate music volume was established that helped avoid future noise complaints.

Showing the students how we responded during emergency situations was the best way for us as HAs to help the students feel safe. Unfortunately, we'd encounter circumstances where students needed immediate attention whether it'd be due to excessive alcohol use, a minor altercation, or a pre-existing medical condition. Together we dealt with these situations by isolating the student(s) involved, contacting the appropriate emergency response groups (campus safety, counseling center, etc.), and monitoring/aiding the student(s) involved until the appropriate response group(s) arrived. Lastly a report of the incident was made, and a meeting with our direct superior was often scheduled for the next day, to discuss the incident.

“...supports educational and professional goals...”

I think it is safe to say that every student in the Clarkson School shared the common goal of performing well academically. I helped to support this common goal by making the students aware of the numerous educational support services that are available on *and* off campus. I shared information about the on-campus tutoring services that they could use to improve their academic performance. I also posted dates and times for the Calculus, Chemistry, and Physics review sessions that different on-campus tutoring groups had to offer. I also showed students that websites like www.khanacademy.org and www.academicearth.org are great places to hear what they had learned in class, from a different perspective. As an HA, I made sure to do everything I could to show them that their common academic goal can be accomplished.

“...where individuals can openly express themselves...”

It was not uncommon for the Clarkson School students to share, with me, the details of their day. One student would talk about how uneventful their day was, while another would reveal how scary their first exam was. We would talk about computers, television, movies, bad habits... anything. After a few weeks of spending time with the students, many of these conversations would begin before I had the opportunity to ask a question to facilitate a discussion. Aside from the quiet students, I did not need ask how they felt, or what is on their mind. I would walk into a room, and instantly, a conversation would begin. This is because I showed them that they are in a place where they can share whatever they like with whomever is around, whether it be an HA or a fellow student. I maintained an open mind, a positive air, and I showed that I had an interest in their well-being. I made it clear that I was not simply a student with a job; I was a student with a job, who genuinely cared.

Additionally, the other two HAs and I planned activities that encouraged the students to share more of who they are, whether it'd be through group discussion during a Halloween pumpkin-carving party or through physical expression during a hike up Mt. Azure - one of the mountains near Clarkson University, located in the Adirondack Park. To find the right events, the HAs would gauge interest by asking the students about potential activities. Then we would communicate what we learned about the students' interests to the Clarkson School Residence Life office. This way we could ensure that the students' interests would be heard and considered.

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I truly cared about both this mission statement, and my job. Being an HA not only brought me joy, but it appeared to bring joy to the students that I interacted with on a daily basis. The way I see it, this was a winning situation for all. Hopefully, in the fall I can use my winning attitude, along with my various HA experiences as a Community Advocate.

References

Academic References

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