Developing Meaningful Relationships

Written by: Jamie Zeller, Assistant Director of Fitness & Recreation

As we begin to settle into a new academic year and get used to new living arrangements, new instructors, and new routines, it is also an important time to begin developing relationships that have the potential to shape you emotionally, socially, spiritually, and academically.

As a student leader, it’s essential that you understand how important having deep, meaningful relationships is to your overall success and happiness. Meaningful relationships require trust, collaboration or shared ownership, a genuine respect for others and a willingness to hold one another accountable. You see, the development of leadership extends beyond the individual, since the “individual is not a separate entity from the environment”. Ultimately leadership is a ‘relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change’ (Relational Leadership Theory).

Allow this time of leadership to be a time of change in your life, and in turn, a time for you to be a change agent in those lives around you – your peers in which you lead and serve. I challenge you to model what real trust, shared ownership, respect and collaboration looks like to those around you and be ever seeking out opportunities nurture current and to develop new meaningful relationships!

Student Leader Reflection – Developing Meaningful Relationships

Written by: Clay McCullough, 2011-12 Orientation Council & Greek Life

“As a student leader I have learned that you can’t do everything on your own. Most things require collaboration on a number of levels with so many different people. Through my experiences on Orientation Council and in Greek Life, I’ve learned that meaningful relationships are one of the most vital aspects to success. When two or more people are working together towards a common purpose or goal, it’s amazing how much can be accomplished! If you invest time into getting to know those you are working with and around, you will quickly realize that success in your organizations will come much easier.

But I’m not stopping there! Not only do meaningful relationships help lead to success, they also lead to a sense of self-discovery. Trust me, spending a year with nine other people debating t-shirt designs, event locations and training techniques – I was changed for the better. I’ve learned so much about myself as a leaders through conversations with those people I grew to value and trust.

So, be intentional in your relationships. Get to know people you work and lead with within your organizations. Not only will it help your organizations to grow and flourish, but it will help you to become a stronger leader and person!