Learning for Life (L4L) at Rhode Island College

Food for Thought Pantry Graduate Assistant
(Full-Time) Lead Navigator

Learning for Life (L4L) is a research-based, nationally-recognized, student-to-student network of initiatives, designed to seed innovation and collaboration across campus to support underrepresented students to complete college. Through a network of peer Navigators and staff support, L4L weaves a connection between the students we serve, called L4L Scholars, and resources that the college and community can provide them through the development of collaborative relationships. Our results are very promising, as six years of data indicate that L4L Scholars persist at higher rates than the overall RIC population despite facing the most significant obstacles to graduation.

Navigators serve as a key component of the support provided to students through Learning for Life. Lead Navigators are graduate students who, in addition to providing support for a group of L4L Scholars, are matched with a network of up to five Navigators and 100-150 L4L participants to serve as a role model and guide. As part of this work, L4L collaborates with multiple offices on campus to host Lead Navigators for their time with L4L. The intention is to reach out to students and build stronger relationships with these offices. All L4L Navigators are expected to maintain a professional representation of the L4L mission to all off campus and on campus offices, as well as and most especially with, students served. Lead Navigators will share their knowledge and experience along with taking a leadership role in supporting Scholars and Navigators.

**Contribution to Professional Development**

The Navigator experience provides students an opportunity to:

- Work in collaboration with peers, staff and faculty as well as community partners
- Develop a global understanding as they interact with students from diverse life experiences including socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, race, gender and sexual identities, ability, etc.
- Practice written and oral communications through documentation, L4L network materials development, and presentations across campus and in the community

The Navigator experience provides leadership development opportunities as students serve as peer mentors and advocates for students we serve in L4L. They have opportunities to practice skills and competencies inherent in the field of social work and related disciplines, such as establishing professional boundaries, privacy and confidentiality, and ethical principles. As part of the Navigator training, all students complete the Navigator Certificate Program, earning 30 CEUs through RIC Office of Professional Studies and Continuing Education. Navigators will also receive bi weekly training during L4L All Staff Meetings.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

The following activities are expected of all student Navigators who are a part of L4L:

- Outreach to students for participation in L4L
- Provide interested students with an orientation to L4L, explaining policies and services to be provided, and expectations for student participation
- Communicate consistently with Scholars, utilizing a variety of methods (email, phone call, in-person, classroom presentations etc.)
• Plan with students to utilize strengths to address barriers to educational achievement; develop a plan with each student and review progress towards objectives
• Make referrals to appropriate services on and off campus; work with on-campus support offices to provide services to students as appropriate
• Advocate for Scholars and teach self-advocacy skills
• Complete all required data and record-keeping and ensure that it is kept up to date for all students they serve, including progress notes, contact sheets, intake questionnaire, etc.
• Communicate with L4L staff and clinical supervisor as issues arise
• Attend and participate in regular supervision and attend monthly staff meetings
• Participate in all training offered by the L4L team on various issues facing Scholars
• Attend a campus tour of the different entities on campus that provide resources and support to RIC students

Additionally, the following activities are expected of the Food for Thought Pantry Lead Navigator:
• Help the Educational Support Coordinator (ESC) for the College Success Network manage the food pantry
• Make connections with on and off campus resources and organizations to help sustain the pantry
• Facilitate outreach activities as well planning awareness events.
• Manage the Food for Thought social media pages
• Manage the distribution of items to on campus satellite food pantries.
• Help oversee the food pantry work study students
• Assist Navigators in the development of intervention plans with their students struggling with food insecurity
• Problem-solving with Navigators as challenges arise
• Support ESC with Food for Thought reports and data management
• Compete a literature review on best practices for campus food insecurity
• Maintain the resource binder – an ongoing asset/resource map for student success

**Qualifications**
• Accepted graduate degree candidate enrolled in plan of study
• Ability to work both independently and as part of a team, to accept some direction but also be a self-starter
• Background in human services and/or education (preferred but not required)
• Efficient time management skills
• Desire to work with and support college students, as well as collaborate with campus and community organizational partners
• Strong verbal and written skills
• Proficiency in basic computer applications
• Strong respect and desire to support diverse and inclusive communities

**How to Apply**
Please send the graduate assistantship application, cover letter and resume to L4L Associate Director, Daniel Reyes at Dreyes1@ric.edu.