

## Information about the Rose Butler Browne Leadership & Mentor Program for Women of Color at URI



### HISTORY

Approximately nine years ago, an undergraduate student noticed that there were a high number of first-year Latina women leaving the University of Rhode Island in their first year. As a part of her efforts to try to determine the cause of this "phenomenon", as well as a solution, she brought her concerns to the attention of the Director of the Women's Center. From several discussions with the Director of the Women's Center and other Latina students, De Mujer A Mujer (Woman to Woman) was formed to provide support for first year Latina women at the University.

After the first few meetings it was determined that part of the problem was that many of the women had difficulties adjusting to their new environment. It was then generalized that if Latina first year students were having problems adjusting to their new environment then African, African-American, Asian, Native American and other women of color might be having similar experiences. Therefore, the concept of mentoring first year Latina women was expanded to include all women of color.

This program seeks to address that expanded need. By expanding the program, two additional aspects of support, professional and academic, would be offered in addition to the social support that was already established by De Mujer A Mujer. The sponsors hope the program becomes an extension of the services already provided by Talent Development, the Women's Center, the Center for Student Leadership Development and the Multicultural Center and plans to establish links with high schools in the hope of providing a networking base for female high school seniors who plan to attend URI.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### A. Social Objectives

- To establish a sense of belonging for first year students as new members of the URI community.
- To help new students become more familiar with the various student organizations and activities on and off campus.
- To provide an open forum in which students can express their cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- To enhance communication between first year students and upperclass students.

#### B. Academic Objectives:

- To establish a learning community among the participants in the program.
- To help decrease the drop out rate among students of color.

- To create an open line of communication between other students, faculty and teaching staff.
- To enhance the academic learning experience for the students.

### **C. Professional Objectives:**

- To assist students in establishing a networking base for employment opportunities.
- To enhance resume writing and interviewing skills.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Mentors and Trainers will...**

- Provide new students with guidance and insight into campus life academically and socially
- Help facilitate discussions relevant to first year students
- Plan and facilitate a leadership development program
- Receive academic credit for the training and service

### **The Students will...**

- Obtain the knowledge and skills needed to have a successful college career with the help of their assigned mentor
- Hopefully become mentors when they become upper-class students

### **The Advisor will...**

- Help facilitate meetings and programs organized by the members of the group
- Act as a resource person for conferences / workshops and obtaining speakers.
- Assist in establishing a working relationship with other organizations on campus

## **OUR INSPIRATION: ROSE BUTLER BROWNE**

Rose Butler was born in Boston in 1897. She was one of the seven children of Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson Butler. At the age of ten Rose moved with her family to Newport, RI, where she attended and graduated from Rogers High School.

Rose attended the Rhode Island Normal School (Rhode Island College) where she received a Bachelor's degree in Education. Unable to find work as a teacher, Rose enrolled at the University of Rhode Island where she received a Master's Degree in Engineering in 1921, thereby becoming the first African American woman to graduate from URI. In 1937, she received her Doctorate in Education from Harvard University Graduate School of Education, once again becoming the first African-American woman to do so.

Dr. Browne taught for 40 years in Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina, including Virginia State University and North Carolina College, where she later became the head of the Department of Educational Psychology. She devoted her life to improving education for poor and minority children.

In 1969, she wrote her autobiography, *Love My Children*, which was reprinted in 1971 to be used as a training instrument for teachers in Southeast Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. A year before her death, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from URI.

### **This Program is Sponsored by:**

Women's Center & Center for Student Leadership Development  
With the support of Special Programs for Talent Development & the Multicultural Center

### **For More Information or to Enroll:**

Call Gail at 874-5464 or Ana at 874-2561