Welcome to the First Edition of the Peer Mentoring @ UNSW Newsletter.

Peer Mentoring @ UNSW has been supporting the transition and retention of commencing students since 2002. Peer Mentoring programs aim to ease the transition of first year students into university life whilst at the same time developing the leadership skills of advanced year students, the Peer Mentors. Peer Mentors have a special role in helping new students settle into UNSW. Mentors use their experience and knowledge to guide and support new students through those first crucial weeks at university. The Mentees are given opportunities to meet and talk with other new students who join the program. They also benefit from hearing how others are managing their transition to university and will get the chance to consult with a more experienced student (the mentor). Some programs also offer a range of social events which provide first year students a chance to meet and mix with other first year students.

Peer Mentoring @ UNSW newsletter will give you information about Peer Mentoring, including news and announcements from the various peer mentoring programs across UNSW, interesting articles relating to peer mentoring, inspiring quotes, and fun trivia facts about Peer Mentoring and UNSW.

In this edition of the newsletter, we feature a story from a Mentor that graduated from UNSW, a Mentee’s experience of the program and a Mentor’s inspiring narrative. We are also welcoming the newest Peer Mentoring Coordinator from one of the twenty three peer mentor programs offered this year. We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Happy reading!

Where Are They Now? - From Peer Mentor to Actuarial Consultant!


As far as Peer Mentoring goes you can say I have done it all. I was a Mentee, a Mentor, and then an instructor to the Mentors in my final and last year.

Sure it was a bit awkward in the first few sessions when everyone was just getting acquainted with each other, but the ice soon broke and it was great having a weekly catch up with my new found friends.

I did Peer Mentoring for both ASOC and BSOC for two years and had a ball at it. It really challenged my interpersonal and leadership skills and I loved having my own group of “kids” to look after. It was a great opportunity for us mentors to make friends in other years and there was a lot of flexibility on how you can run your sessions. I remember seeing two groups having a water bomb fight once – I guess they can really build your teamwork skills! The Mentoring Skills have really developed myself as a team player and a team leader!

Friday, 1 November 2013

Peer Mentoring Trivia!!

Q. How many first year students participated in Peer Mentoring programs at UNSW in 2013?

A) 1093?
B) 2488?
C) 3230?

Answer: (C) Approx. 3230 – That is the largest number of first year students in Peer Mentoring programs across UNSW recorded to date!!

For more information about Peer Mentoring @ UNSW please go to www.peermentoring.unsw.edu.au
THE WHO’S WHO IN PEER MENTORING @ UNSW — Welcoming Stephen Chikazaza as the new Peer Mentoring Coordinator for the SDI Cultural Mentoring Program.

Stephen Chikazaza currently works for Student Life and Learning as a Student Development Officer for SDI and coordinates the Cultural Mentoring Program.

Stephen is a graduate of UNSW COFA where he completed a Master of Integrated Design degree. He has been involved in numerous community initiatives within the UNSW community including being a Cultural Mentor and a Senior Cultural Mentor through the SDI Mentor Program; COFA International Student Officer (Student Representative Council), Curator of the Dislocation exhibition at Kudos Gallery as well as providing his creative talents to contribute to a number of fundraising and public awareness campaigns on campus.

In March 2011 Stephen was awarded the NSW Premier’s International Student of the Year. Candidates for the Award, attend higher education, schools, language courses or vocational training across NSW, and are nominated by their education institutions as inspirational role models who make a difference in the local community and state at large.

We are excited to have Stephen on board as the new Cultural Mentoring coordinator at SDI!!

HEAR FROM A MENTEE — The benefits of having a mentor!

Having someone able to guide you at the start of Uni is incredibly helpful. My mentor has provided me with many great tips and insights, ranging from study tips, clubs, deals, class location to even good places to eat! Much of which can’t be found on any “Frequently Asked Questions webpages”, and this is what I like about the Material Science Peer Mentoring program - the human touch associated with it.

The mentors are students themselves which makes it easy for them to relate to our queries. The mentors are caring and have indeed helped me to get a good head start with my Uni life.

HEAR FROM A MENTOR — Rural, Regional and Interstate Peer Mentor Hayden Smith

My name is Hayden Smith, I’m a second year Computer Science major who moved to Sydney from a regional town of Ballina in 2012.

I wanted to become a mentor, as one of my biggest passions lies in my abilities to take my adversity and learning experiences of the past, and support others who may be facing similar or identical situations in order to help them manage these situations.

My experience as a mentor has been excellent. The first and most wonderful part about the position is the number of new and interesting people you get to meet. I’ve met a range of people throughout my involvement with the program, and they’re always wonderful to share stories or experiences with. Personally, I’ve gained a lot of communication and social skills from the program, as it’s required me to be a real role model when it comes to being someone that is looked to for advice, or support.

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QUOTE:
“We cannot hold a torch to light another’s path without brightening our own”. By Ben Sweetland