

Office of Minority Student Affairs

► Throughout its history, the University of Rochester has been committed to helping under-represented minority students achieve their academic, personal, and career goals. The Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) underscores that commitment. Established nearly 50 years ago, it serves as a champion for more than 600 students each year—more than 10 percent of the College's undergraduate population.

OMSA provides counseling, disseminates information, initiates programs, and connects with other departments and divisions of the University to enhance the environment in which students live and learn. It also supports the University's efforts to build an inclusive community by raising awareness of issues related to race, ethnicity, culture, and class.

Programs That Make a Difference

Early Connection Opportunity (ECO): This four-week residential summer program is designed for recent high school graduates who plan

“OMSA cheers us on as students and helps us achieve our academic goals. They have taught me that the future can be whatever I choose to make of it.”

Elizana-Marie Joseph '17

Kearns Scholar,
ECO program assistant



“OMSA is such a great resource for academic support, financial aid guidance, study abroad information, and just about everything anyone needs to be successful here. The staff and counselors have always been there for me.”

Anansa Benbow '15

linguistics major, study abroad participant (Brazil, spring 2014)

to attend the University. The program prepares incoming undergraduate students for University classes through a variety of academically focused workshops. It informs them about helpful services across the University, and it introduces them to social life on campus. Participants learn about the attitudes, skills, and social connections they will need to thrive here.

The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program

(HEOP): Since it began in 1969, HEOP has been jointly sponsored by the University of Rochester and the New York State Education Department. The program provides eligible students with a strong support network that includes academic advising, personal counseling, and

substantial financial assistance. HEOP serves students of diverse backgrounds who, because of their economic and educational backgrounds, may not have otherwise considered attending the University. Nearly 90 percent of HEOP students graduate.

Emerging Leaders Program

(ELP): This academic program develops leadership skills and promotes excellence, individuality, and group cohesiveness among its OMSA-affiliated participants, most of whom are freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Through a series of interactive, innovative, and culturally based workshops and team building exercises, ELP participants explore important social, personal, and multicultural topics.

How You Can Help

Gifts to OMSA can help traditionally underserved students excel at the University and position them for success in their careers.

Extend the ECO Program

Please consider providing support to extend the ECO program into the summer between the freshman and sophomore years—a critical time of adjustment for our students. Even a small gift of \$5,000 can make the difference in one student's life by funding participation in a summer course. Such support will help ease that student's financial burden and help set a pace for academic success. Gifts can also support ECO Scholars, a new program for freshmen offered in the fall and spring that provides ongoing academic support, peer mentorship, and leadership training.

Close the Gaps

You can also provide funds to increase academic and social support—this can make all the difference in a student's life.

- **Cocurricular programs:** Gifts could establish and sustain

career-developing clubs and organizations, travel grants so students can attend and present at conferences, and summer research grants.

- **Study abroad:** Even with financial aid for study abroad, many students cannot take full advantage of it. For instance, some cannot afford the costs of passports. Many others cannot engage in activities such as enrichment-oriented field trips, thus limiting the potential impact of their international experiences.
- **Mentorship and tutoring:** Personal attention minimizes attrition. Gifts can fund stipends to help support programmatic efforts and initiatives to foster relationships with graduate students and tutoring in specific areas of need. They can also complement services provided through other University programs.
- **Program underwriting and endowment:** Naming opportunities exist for the Emerging Leaders Program and for the annual OMSA senior dinner, an event that brings together families and University staff and faculty on campus to recognize student achievement.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Address

Cosponsored by the Office of Minority Student Affairs and the Office of the President, this annual address kicks off the University's Black History Month celebration. Recent speakers include Benjamin Todd Jealous, the youngest president in the history of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Melissa Harris-Perry, noted scholar and host of her own MSNBC current affairs program; and Michael Eric Dyson, political analyst for MSNBC, acclaimed author, and professor of sociology at Georgetown University.

"Since my freshman year, OMSA has always been there with advice and support. It's provided the tools and resources to be successful here."

Noel Ramlall '15

health, behavior, and society major, Dr. Elizabeth P. Pungello
Student Support Fund recipient



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