

## **Kristin Pollard's Learning Contract**

**Goal:** To identify and utilize my Strengths in an organizational/interpersonal setting.

**Activity:** URI SHADOW DAY February 22nd

I lead a middle school student around the URI campus for the College Crusade of Rhode Island Shadow Day on February 22nd. This organization strives to to reduce school dropout rates while increasing educational and career success for youth from low-income urban communities. By showing the student around the URI community, I was sparking an interest for further education in the student's life. I found gratification in inspiring a middle school student to excel in the classroom and think beyond high school education.

My crusader's name was Raymond. He said that he liked the profession of Physical Therapy and that he may want to become a physical therapist later on in his life. I was able to bring Raymond to my Intro to Exercise Science class at Independence Square. He was thrilled to be in a classroom where "physical therapists are created" as he described the experience. I explained to Raymond that in order to become a Physical Therapist, one must go to college for many years to earn his or her doctoral of Physical Therapy degree. Raymond told me that through his college crusade experience, he has learned that many "cool and high paid jobs are only available with a college degree." He also mentioned how "his parents did not go to college and have a hard time living pay check to pay check." Raymond said that he wants to be able to support his family later on in life with a well-paid job, one like PT that needs a degree.

**Evidence:** URI Shadow Day flier

### **Annotations:**

I was a role model to Raymond. One of my top strengths, achiever, highlights how I am living proof that any student can get accepted into college or any advanced education courses beyond high school through hard work and determination. I taught Raymond the harder he can work in middle school and high school, the more likely he could receive a scholarship that would help pay his college tuition. I was able to use my futuristic strength in order to envision a bright path for Raymond's future. Students like Raymond who come from low-income urban communities need extra support because their families financial situations inhibit them from furthering their education. I told Raymond that I saw the full potential in him and I encouraged him stay focused on school. As a believer, my dreams of tomorrow are very alive in my mind today. Hopefully I was able to inspire Raymond so that one day he can transform his dreams and possibilities into reality. As a disciplined leader, I mapped out a walking route for Raymond and prior to the URI shadow day. By planning a structured route, I was able to show Raymond many important buildings and structures in an orderly fashion. Because of my preplanned to-do list I

had created, Raymond and I remained proactive and busy the entire time he was here visiting the school. Overall, I was a very responsible volunteer this day. I abided by all the URI shadow day rules and regulations. At one point in the day, Raymond asked if he could look inside one of the dorm buildings. Although I could have easily sneaked Raymond inside my dorm room for a minute, I did not simply because this was against the College Crusade of Rhode Island's regulations.

I was able to apply the Relational Model of Leadership through this URI Shadow Day experience. This theory is deeply concerned with putting the relationships with people first, and that is exactly what I did with Raymond. I used an inclusive, empowering, ethical, purposeful, and process-oriented leadership style in order to encourage and praise Raymond throughout the day. As an inclusive leader, I made sure to offer meaningful advice to Raymond, but I also knew when to step back and become a listener for him. This gate-keeping effect allowed for great communication between the two of us. We both respected one another's diverse backgrounds, points of view, and opinions on issues. As an empowering leader, I strategized different ways to motivate Raymond into furthering his education beyond Central Falls. (his hometown) I explained how there are fun sports and clubs to become involved in through URI athletics, I pointed out the Feinstein Center for Service Learning, and we ate at Butterfield dining hall and got some ice cream. By touring Raymond around URI, he was able to see all the versatile aspects of college other than academics. As a purposeful leader, I inspired Raymond to set goals and visions for his future. Setting reasonable, achievable goals helps students stay motivated, interested, and inspired to achieve to their full potential. As an ethical leader, I inspired Raymond to live by his core values and to use them in all parts of his life in service for the greater good. Raymond said he values his faith; I encouraged him to keep his faith in the back of his mind whenever he is making important decisions in his lifetime. As a process-oriented leader, I told Raymond not to worry too much about his future! While at URI for a few hours, Raymond started to feel a little worried about the good grades he would have to maintain in order to go to college someday. I assured him that he must trust the process, and that good things happen when people trust the process!