

# I Am...

---

Monday, January 25, 2016

⋮



I am a mentor, advisor, educator and administrator. I am a proud liberal arts graduate. I was not a business major. Though not a business major or employee, I am a learner. I am a listener. I am a questioner. I am a reader. I am an observer. I am the person who encourages students to find their interests and follow that path. I am in love with the college student experience and watching growth from freshman to senior year.

I am intrigued by new challenges, therefore when Dean Merrill-Sands came to my office to ask if I was interested in helping with the Dean's Ambassador Program I was excited. What I didn't know is that it would be one of the best decisions I've made at UNH.

The Dean's Ambassadors are a group of 14 students nominated by faculty and selected by the Dean to serve as her student advisory board. This year the Dean decided to take the group to visit alumni in Silicon Valley with the common theme of innovation.



Three days on the ground, five alumni site visits, two social innovation incubators, one makers' tour and a redeye later I am *still* tired. I am also am eager to share what I observed and learned!

I am a firm believer that success is a combination of working hard, taking risks (calculated risks for my type A personality), staying positive and enjoying what you do. I have always tried to direct students toward their interests. I learned I am right!

What I heard: In Silicon Valley we met with alumni who are all *very* successful in both conventional financial terms, but also in terms of personal satisfaction. They all had different yet similar stories of failure and success. None of them experienced immediate success, many of them were miserable in their early jobs. What each one of them shared was the classic tale of working hard, overcoming disappointments, taking advantage of opportunities and staying positive.

What I experienced: In my office we talk a lot about goals, attainable, measurable goals. The alumni we met with lived by their goals. I need to raise X dollars by X day. I need to reach out to X customers per day. They also talked about how their goals changed as they moved along their path. In our planning for student success we talk about skills.

The alumni we met with ALL talked about the ability to network, to talk with others, to think critically, to be understood. Basic, simple concepts that all of us can employ.



What I saw: Everyone “works” somewhere, be it an office on the 30th floor, a classroom, a rented table or a converted garage. Success is not determined by where you physically work. We saw every kind of office space (Google is as amazing as you’ve heard!) **What does matter? Passion, perspective, perseverance and personality.** Cheesy? Perhaps. Attainable? Definitely!

The current generation of students has somewhat of a bad reputation of considering themselves “special” and having the belief that by being their wonderful self they will stand out and be successful. I am now more confident than ever that the FIRE Program is right on track (even though the current participants may not yet see it.) Why am I confident?

FIRE encourages team work and collaboration. The students are forming their UNH network now and working together on grand challenges. They will share successes and failures. We hope they will encourage and support each other. The business world relies on teamwork. No one we met with experienced success without the support of mentors, teams and partners.

*“Your network is everything in life. You will get back what you give in when you need it.”  
—Jeff Moore, '96, Google Staffing Manager*

FIRE is introducing research early in the students’ academic careers. I believe this will help us to create students who can be problem-solvers, thinkers and entrepreneurs.

*"Ideas are easy, execution is hard." Rick Marini, '94, Entrepreneur & Angel Investor.*



FIRE aims to find a balance between recognizing hard work and helping those who need support. There are competitions and awards for people who are working hard the traditional way (earning high grades), but also those who excel in specific areas like writing, professional development and communication. We are challenging students to work hard.

*"I think of challenges as an opportunity. Am I learning something to move my career forward?" —Rick Marini, '94*

For those who need support we schedule private conferences because we know most can succeed when guided in the right direction. We can encourage students to use their resources. Among the successful innovators, those who used the network and resources had a chance at success.

*"We have to be thoughtful about what we know and don't know." —Edward Aten '03, Merchbar Founder.*

FIRE wants students to set goals for their academic career. FIRE encourages students to look beyond the classroom toward skill development and experience through involvement on campus. We can encourage students to find their passion. The FIRE program wants to produce the kinds of students that companies want on their teams!

*"I recruit people I believe in." —Brian Lamb, '99 Swivl Founder.*

There is no doubt that today's students are different than "my generation." FIRE will keep working to help our students find passion, encouraging dreamers, but introducing reality as well. While everyone can't be "special" your path is one of a kind; enjoy the journey and learn from each step.

I am hopeful. I am inspired. I am excited. I am ready.

—Tamara Rury

## About Tamara Rury:



Tamara Rury is currently the Associate Director of Undergraduate Advising for Peter T. Paul College of Business & Economics. Tamara began working as an Advisor in the Undergraduate Programs and Advising Office in Paul College 10 years ago. She has worked with the Peer Advising Program since she began at UNH and is excited to help craft a revision of the program through the FIRE Program. Prior to working at UNH Tamara worked at the Center for Enhanced Performance at the United States Military Academy. Tamara graduated from Hamilton College with a B.A. in Intercultural Communications and James Madison University with an M.Ed in Counseling Psychology/Student College Personnel.

Outside of UNH, Tamara is a proud mom to Amelia (8 years old) and an avid reader and crafter. During the summer Tamara spends as much time as possible at Lake Winnepesaukee.

### UNH TALES



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.

The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).

Email us: [unhtoday.editor@unh.edu](mailto:unhtoday.editor@unh.edu).

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#)   [CONTACT US](#)

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter

Follow us on YouTube

Follow us on Instagram

Find us on LinkIn

UNH Today RSS feeds

UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234

Copyright © 2022 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)