

The summer before I entered college, a friend confided in me that she had experienced sexual and domestic violence. I was only the second person she told, and I couldn't fathom how much pain she must've felt not sharing this with anyone for her whole life.

During that same summer I attended New Student Orientation at Rutgers. I saw a mandatory skit by SCREAM Theater about campus sexual assault and bystander intervention. Their message was clear: if you see something wrong, say or do something. Be a positive, active bystander no matter how big or small your intervention. We all have a responsibility to create a positive change in our community. I knew this organization and their service were my calling. Having a friend directly affected by interpersonal violence deeply affected me too. I wanted to fight for justice for her, and for every other individual whose voice has not been heard. This drive has propelled me toward various campus leadership, research, and career development opportunities that allowed me to bring about change at Rutgers.

As a member of SCREAM Theater staff, I traveled throughout New Jersey and across the country to educate people about sexual and domestic/dating violence through improv theater. I also helped create change on Rutgers campus through helping organize and promote different meetings, programs, and events. My creative talents with photography and videography helped me find my niche in SCREAM. Throughout the past four years I created images and videos that helped spread our message and motivate others to join the revolution to End Sexual Violence Now, a campaign created by Rutgers Student Affairs to change campus culture. For example, I created a video called "I Am Part of the Revolution," showcasing other student leaders who spoke about why they choose to take a stand. This video was used as a marketing tool to invite students, staff, and faculty to attend a screening of *The Hunting Ground*, which was Rutgers New Brunswick's biggest event in Fall 2015. I was proud of this video and the event in general because we were able to rally students from all walks of life to come together: Greek life,

athletics, the sciences, the arts, multicultural organizations, and more. The changes at Rutgers that I've made through SCREAM – whether it be raising awareness about these issues, inspiring more people to be active bystanders in their community, or creating art that is meaningful to multitudes – have made me a better student and person. Empowering others makes me feel empowered.

I believe a successful leader knows when to lead and when to listen. I have carried this lesson with me throughout my life as an activist, student leader, and an aspiring clinical psychologist. My role in SCREAM Theater pushed me to be a better listener and to be able to connect with students and faculty from all backgrounds. Through SCREAM, my research experience, and classes in Psychology and Women's & Gender Studies, I found my niche in Clinical Psychology.

I taught a First-Year Interest Group Seminar (FIGS), an accredited pass/no credit course, to 25 undergraduate freshmen during Fall 2016; the name of the course was *Exploring Psychology*. Teaching my students about a field to which I want to dedicate my life was an enlightening and humbling experience. I was challenged to continually grab the attention of each unique student, while exposing him or her to various subfields in psychology. Students came to my office hours frequently, and I also became their mentor. While I thoroughly enjoyed being my students' instructor in the classroom, serving as their mentor and advising them during their adjustment to college was especially gratifying. I guided an international student as he researched study strategies for his TOEFL exam; I shared Rutgers resources with a student who felt lost academically. After our course ended, my students continue to say hello when they see me around campus. These experiences reaffirmed my career goal of becoming a therapist.

My involvement in Psychology has been another route in which I brought about change at Rutgers. I was selected as an intern for the Internship Program in Applied and Community

Psychology offered by the Rutgers Psychology Department. At University

Behavioral Health Care I helped serve members of the Rutgers community and beyond by observing clinicians, co-facilitating groups, and helping with other clinical tasks and research. I am currently helping implement a mindfulness project for both staff and patients, which will encourage people to have more open minds and focus on the present moment. My internship is especially meaningful to me because I am able to be part of a change not only in the Rutgers community, but also in the communities in New Brunswick, Piscataway, and other towns.

As a research assistant at the Emotion & Psychopathology Lab, I am indirectly creating change within Rutgers as well. Whether it's investigating new interventions that will help relieve stress and decrease rates of smoking, or studying the relationship between minority stress and obesity, I feel as though I am contributing to research that will change the way we see and view the world, especially in regards to physical and psychological health.

Although my student leadership chapter as an undergraduate may be ending, I am thrilled to continue my education and activism here at the Rutgers University Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology in Fall 2017. Pursuing a doctoral degree was not something I had always planned to do, however I couldn't be happier and more confident in this decision. I am interested in working with individuals who have experienced trauma, the LGBTQ population, and immigrant populations who are more likely to experience discrimination and may be less likely or able to seek mental health services.

I remember my first day at Rutgers when I thought the university was so huge I could get lost going from one campus to another. It gives me great pride to say that, despite me feeling lost at times, Rutgers continually helped me find myself.