

SMART SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Welcome to Valparaiso University! As a new student, I am sure that you are looking forward to your move onto our campus this Fall. The first semester is often difficult for some students in terms of dealing with the academic rigors of VU, adjusting to student life, and being away from home for the first time. Rest assured that we at VU are here to help make your academic and student life transition to campus smooth and successful.

One program at VU that helps in this area is the S.M.A.R.T. Scholars Program (Student Mentoring And Retention Team). This program consists of a 'select' group of VU students chosen to be S.M.A.R.T. Scholar Peer Mentors to new, incoming students. Peer Mentor Scholars are trained to work with their student mentee(s) throughout the year. Mentoring has been proven to benefit students in that it provides them with:

- A reliable contact person on campus;
- Academic support and guidance;
- Information about campus resources;
- Offers on-going assistance, support, and friendship;
- Assistance with campus life issues.

The S.M.A.R.T. Peer Mentor Scholars who participate in this program come from diverse backgrounds, but usually share the same initial feelings and concerns about the transition to college and a new environment as new students do. Hence, they serve as important resource for support and assistance during your transition.

I strongly encourage you to apply to be part of this 'unique' and outstanding program. The friendships you make and the activities you participate in will enhance the quality of your academic and campus life experience at VU!

Sincerely, Jane Bello-Brunson, Director Office of Multicultural Programs
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