January 2011

Bynum Mentor Selection Committee

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to nominate Chris Maroldo from University College for the Alvin S. Bynum Mentor Award. I have known Chris for the last four years and have worked with him as his Assistant with the STAR (Students Taking Academic Responsibility) Mentoring Program. On a daily basis Chris continues to remind me why we are here – To help students succeed. He does this through his respect, availability, and kindness towards all students regardless of academic status. He gives students, in particular those not doing well academically, a hope that someone here at IUPUI does care and wants them to succeed.

Chris imparts direct experience that has made significant contributions to the academic success programs for first year students through University College. As an Assistant Director for Academic and Career Development his commitment to creating, implementing, and maintaining intervention programs for first year students on academic probation has shown great success. The STAR mentoring program now serves over 250 + students each semester with a mentor database of 100+ mentors campus wide. The program has shown an average of 70% retention rate over the last three years. This type of retention rate is incredible and is evidence that his contributions to the program have been sustainable over time.

Chris has shown pride in IUPUI and has a strong recognition of outstanding record by being recognized at the local and national level. STAR is featured on the University College website and has also been spotlighted in the Sagamore newspaper. Chris has presented about the STAR program to NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) and published an article for the NACADA Monthly Journal. After presenting with NACADA Chris receives requests from Universities across the country asking for his assistance and knowledge in how they can set up a program similar to STAR at their University. This year Chris accepted the Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Award for STAR Mentoring from NACADA as part of the 2010 Annual Awards Program for Academic Advising. The impact and idea behind mentoring has shown to be effective. With his creation of a mentoring program, it has allowed IUPUI to stay at the front line for innovative intervention programs serving those academically at risk.

Chris demonstrates devotion beyond the ‘call of duty ‘on a weekly basis. Chris sees the importance in students needing face-to-face, one-on-one contact with someone at the University. Students need to feel connected and have someone to go to in seeking assistance. He has made this become a reality for students through the STAR mentoring program. Chris makes

connections with students in a way I have never seen repeated. He is able to truthfully talk with students about why they are in college, and their life goals.

Chris has recognition of outstanding record by students and colleagues in multiple ways. One way Chris has shown recognition is by consistently recruiting mentors across the campus to help with our first year students. He sees the need as a campus wide/community approach and not something for just University College staff. It says a lot when we have assistant deans, faculty, staff, and upper level students volunteer their time to meet individually with UC students to help them navigate through college. I think much of this is due to the leadership and mentoring philosophy Chris uses to guide all of us, including our students, in creating meaningful relationships across campus.

Not only does Chris maintain the STAR program, but he also implements new policies for the retention of our first year students. This fall he was able to get a new grade point average policy passed and implemented for first semester freshmen. This shows Chris's desire to continue setting the bar, and the quality of learning, for University College and our first year students.

Chris also contributes to the success of Learning Communities. Each fall semester he volunteers to be the Academic Advisor for the Adult Learning Community. This learning community meets later at night but Chris gives his time so that he can better serve our non-traditional students.

It is with highest honor that I nominate Chris Maroldo for this prestigious award. I have personally learned a great deal of knowledge from him as I look up to him as my professional mentor. He truly has a gift in assisting students to get back on track academically, while helping them develop personal growth and confidence to carry with them throughout their time at IUPUI. He leads all of us to make a difference in the life of our students.

Sincerely,

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