

Dr. Rita Smith Wade-EI

Dr. Rita Smith Wade-EI has been a dedicated mentor in many capacities over the past three decades, most-importantly as a teacher-mentor to countless students, as a corporate mentor for at least 16 years with the Lancaster Partnership Program, and also as a mentor for 4 years in the Partnership Freshmen Mentoring Initiative. This mentor truly believes in the empowerment of students through effective mentoring and is constantly working to identify with her students, understand their needs, and provide them with the tools to be successful in an environment where many are at a great disadvantage. This mentor reaches out to students daily, even when they might not realize they need someone to reach out to them. Over the years, this mentor has effectively and tirelessly encouraged students through to graduation. Many students have publicly attributed their success largely to the efforts and impact of this mentor.

Mentee comments:

Dr. Rita has inspired me in so many ways. She was a great mentor to me when I was a freshman (Fall 2006) and still to this today offers wonderful advice and a helping hand. Dr. Rita and I have gone out to dinner a couple of times together and I've discussed my plans in the future and she of course gave her input. There have been a couple of situations where I was unable to get into a class and she has pooled a couple of strings for me and assured me that she would get me into the courses and she did. Dr. Rita really has touched my heart because she really puts a lot of passion, hard work, and determination into everything that she does. I remember freshman year I had to register for classes at 7 a.m. and forgot to set my alarm clock. Dr. Rita, being the angel that she is, called at 6:50 a.m. just to make sure I was up and ready to register. She really is a wonderful and courageous individual. Even when dealing with her personal health she still somehow manages to have a smile on her face and a positive attitude that will always influence others around her. This is why I believe Dr. Rita should receive The Mentor Award of the year.

Dr. Rita should definitely be considered as mentor of the year!!!! She is extremely tough, honest and in some cases pretty brutal when it comes to students. But I would NOT have it any other way. She is one of a kind and is a very inspirational and influential person. Her strong opinions and honest criticism is what we students need to become better not only in school but in life. She honestly cares about the students and only wants the best for us. Her guidance

2009 Outstanding Mentor of the Year Nominees

will extend way past a Millersville University degree. She will always be there when needed and that's why she is the Mentor of the year!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dr. Rita is truly a woman who could never ever be described by jotting down just a few lines, but I will try my best. Her unique personality will inspire growth in both your academic and personal life despite obstacles in the most difficult environments. She herself even had enough courage to continue to teach despite dealing with her own health issues. For that alone she deserves the honor of receiving MMAP's Outstanding Mentor of the year Award.

Dr. Rita or Rita for those who know her affectionately, has impacted my life as a student and a young professional. During the second week of my freshman year at Millersville, I stumbled across her office in Byerly and asked for help. Without a schedule to recall the class I was supposed to attend, I attempted to ask Dr. Rita if she knew where a Child Adolescence and Development Course was inside of Byerly. After this first encounter, I realized that asking for help from Dr. Rita was much more than I bargained for. I also realized that whenever I worked with Dr. Rita, I needed to have as much information as possible and references to back up my data. After calling every professor in the department, Dr. Rita corrected my description and informed me that the professor whose name I could not recall was Dr. Green and she was a red head not a blondie. Sitting with Dr. Rita during her office hours during the next few months of my first semester was a treat and I began to view her as a positive role model and mentor. Throughout my college career, she has advised my academics by serving as my professor in several courses including Introduction to African American Studies, Psychology of Racism, and Senior Seminar in African American Studies as well as serving as my advisor for my undergraduate thesis for my University Honors College requirement. Dr. Rita has also impacted my spiritual growth by encouraging me to engage in benevolent and charitable efforts through working with local community agencies and shelters. Also, she provided me with guidance during my tenure as president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Millersville University College Chapter, by serving as a co-advisor. She leaves a lasting impression on everyone she encounters in her journey as a professor and community activist. Her commitment and compassion to causes such as the field of psychology, African American Studies, Womens Studies are elements which help to make her a one-of-a-kind Wyld Woman with a big heart. She holds a special place in my heart and I could not imagine attending Millersville without her helping to guide me. Dr. Rita's mentorship is worthy of acknowledgement and I am thankful for the Millersville Mentoring Alliance Program recognizing her dedication to all students she encounters.