

Riley Demond - Spirit of Discovery Award Nomination

Nominated by: Erika Head

For the Spirit of Discovery award, I am nominating my Teaching Assistant, Riley Demond. When I think of Riley, I think of a TA who was authentic. Riley was someone her students could count on to show her the ropes of college. She made lasting connections with students, and I know she also made lasting impressions on her students' college journeys. Even though Riley balanced a heavy class load herself, she worked hard to ensure her students felt supported every step of the way. Plus, Riley made my role as an SF easier by always asking if I needed help, turning in every lesson plan early, staying on top of grading/attendance, and planning activities that she knew her group would enjoy.

Another word to describe Riley is prepared. Whether it be prepared with an answer to her students' questions, prepared by setting up her small group space early, or prepared to make personal connections with each student, Riley impressed me by staying organized. We bonded over football and Jack Harlow, and I know Riley made personal connections with her students, too. On weeks when her group felt discouraged by school and the stress that comes along with a first semester of college, Riley encouraged her group and made sure to check in with students.

Riley displays some of the Honors College's core values - she is welcoming, she takes time and effort to include everyone, she seeks to learn more about others and from others, and she is proud to be involved with the HC and other events at Oakland University. I think Riley has great interpersonal connection skills and made a fantastic mentor to her students. She inspired me to continue doing my best and even encouraged me when I was feeling overwhelmed with school and work. I have really enjoyed working with Riley this semester and hope to remain friends outside of HC1000!