

Notes for Alumni/Scholar Summer Coaching Conversations

Summer 2024

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We piloted Alumni/Scholar Coaching Conversations for Summer 2023 with great success. Alumni enjoyed the conversations, and Scholars came away with renewed energy and purpose. These conversations were especially powerful for Scholars who were truly trying something new and hard and needed someone to cheer them on. Here are a few notes:

- All of our Scholars are now familiar with our emerging model that frames leadership based on connection and commitments, on knowing ourselves and each other and being clear about what's important. Integrity—being good to our word—is one of the central components.
- *We've invited Scholars to participate* in the Summer process for 2024, as we tried for the first time last summer. This puts the motivation for a Summer in the hands of Scholars themselves. To support Scholars' agency as they plan, we've designed a system of optional resources, including these coaching conversations.
- You might have a conversation with a Scholar working on Exploration (post-sophomore year) or Launch Summer (post-junior year). Scholars working on Exploration Summer are currently preparing for Campus Switch, which still takes place during Spring of sophomore year. The two Summers differ mainly in the function they play for Scholars—is the Scholar exploring truly new territory, or moving toward the future in a planful way? All Scholars benefit from engaging with Alumni, regardless of the specific Summer.
- We're encouraging Scholars to focus internally and to ground their planning on what's important to them and how they want to grow as a leader. Of course they want to settle all the details and figure out the "why" later, but we're asking them to disrupt that familiar approach.

We see so much potential in these conversations. As an Alum, you can say things in a way no one on staff can, because you lived it! For example:

- Summers are an amazing way to learn about yourself and your leadership, regardless of what you actually do, whether it's an internship, research, an art project, etc. Hearing this from you will be so helpful for the Scholars.
- Summers help define the Robertson experience. Wherever you go, you can meet another Robbie and share memories of Summers. You know this for sure.
- Summers require Scholars to actually engage. Scholars create their experiences, which is one of the reasons they can be such excellent learning opportunities.
- Isolation is the greatest challenge for these summers. Scholars can avoid some of that and also build community by planning and traveling with other Robertsons.
- Alumni care about Robertson Scholars and Robertson Summers. Your participation in the process is so meaningful!
- Robertson Summers unfold over time. You are excellent examples of this. For those of you who did Summers with me, I **know** this for you.