



FIRST In College

A MONTHLY E-MAGAZINE FOR FIRST-GEN AND
LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

A background image showing a close-up of a person's hands working on a laptop keyboard, with a spiral notebook and a pen nearby.

Mentorship Edition

OCTOBER 2020

EDITION 2
GENERAL
INTELLIGENCES



F1RST In College

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Editor-In-Chief's note



I am absolutely pleased with how great of a reception we received on our first edition of our e-magazine. We hope that our insights on housing were beneficial—especially during such challenging times.

For our next issue, we decided upon focusing our discussion to mentorship. As many of us are acutely aware, connections are important and often underrated. It is crucial, especially for internships and competitive fields, to grow your social capital.

Our goal of this issue is to introduce you to how you can seek out mentorship on your campus as well as how you can find a good, supportive mentor virtually. Mentorship is a valuable experience. As both a mentee, and a mentor I have been able to see both sides of the proverbial "same coin." For this reason, I'm very pleased to announce the latest edition of our magazine that has been put together by our lovely General Intelligences team.

We hope that this issue engages you and empowers you to take the steps towards finding reliable mentorship.

Magda Wojtara
**Editor-In-Chief First in
College
Founder General
Intelligences**

EDITION 2: MENTORSHIP

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BENEFITS OF
MENTORSHIP

01



A MONTHLY E-MAGAZINE FOR FIRST-GEN AND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS



The Importance of Finding a Mentor 101

**BY: NATALIE
TJAHJADI**

*"Every great achiever is
inspired by a great mentor" -
Lailah Gifty Akita*

Lailah Gifty Akita, a Ghanaian author, once wrote that "every great achiever is inspired by a great mentor." I really love this quote because it reminds me that even the most successful people need guidance from others. When I was younger, I avoided asking for help because I thought it was a sign of weakness. However, as I have gotten older, I have come to recognize the many benefits of receiving help, especially from those who are older and more experienced than us. As an incoming college freshman, I have recently signed up for my school's Honors Mentorship Program and Health Professions Association Mentorship program. I am so excited to meet my mentors and learn more about college from them! I highly encourage you all to find mentors! Why should I find a mentor you might ask? Well, simply put, mentors can be a long-term source of wisdom, guidance, motivation, and support in many aspects of life. Mentors can take on many roles from sharing career advice and insight, to helping you identify your life goals, to introducing you to their network, to even being your personal cheerleader. For high school and college students specifically, mentors can provide important advice about college and grad school applications, finding internships/jobs/other opportunities, making the most of your education, and being successful in school.

One of the questions that may now be coming to mind is how do I find a mentor? One of the easiest ways to do so is finding older students at your school. You can reach out to people with the same major, career goals, or interests as yourself. Many schools offer a variety of mentorship programs for freshmen and transfer students that would be great to check out. Older siblings, cousins, and family members could also be great mentors because they know you well and will be trustworthy individuals.





The Importance of Finding a Mentor 101 cont.

Another way to find mentors, especially professional ones, is through LinkedIn. General Intelligences' website has an article that goes more in-depth on this process. You can also find mentors by having people introduce you to their own connections and network. Furthermore, don't be afraid to aim high and reach out to people you don't know! The worst that could happen is you get no response. Additionally, General Intelligences will be starting an 8-week mentorship program that you can get involved in (more details on the General Intelligences website)!

Another thing to consider as you are finding a mentor is what you want to get out of the mentorship? You can ask yourself the following questions:

- What would I like to learn?
- What am I looking for from my mentor?
- How will the mentorship "look"?
- How often would I like to meet with my mentor? Where?

In my opinion, being mentored is one of the most valuable opportunities you can receive as a student. Having the guidance, encouragement, and support of a trusted and experienced mentor can provide a mentee with a broad range of personal and professional benefits.



The Importance of Finding a Mentor IOI cont.



Here's a list of some of these benefits:

- Advice on developing strengths and overcoming weaknesses
- Guidance on professional growth and advancement
- The opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge Exposure to new and diverse ideas and ways of thinking
- Individual encouragement, psychosocial support, and so much more!

Overall, mentors can help us grow in numerous ways and provide us with invaluable guidance and advice. I hope to take the knowledge and confidence I gain from my mentors and eventually become a mentor myself; I encourage you all to do the same:) As we become more knowledgeable and experienced, it will be our job to mentor future generations. I wish you the best of luck with school and I hope that you find an amazing mentor!

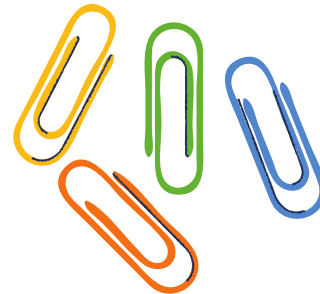
Why look for a mentor?

Positive role-models and mentors can help you avoid mistakes or errors.

Role models are known to be nothing, but a positive. This doesn't mean that your role model, however, is perfect. But, you may be able to learn more about mistakes that you can potentially avoid.

One of the most crucial aspects of a mentor is having someone that is supportive of your ideas. For many FGLI students, they may not have this type of support from their family or homes. Therefore, mentorship is especially useful for FGLI students who may not have a supportive environment. It is also crucial to have a mentor because your mentor may be able to connect you.

"Being a role model is one of the most powerful forms of educating"



For example, you may be struggling to find a research position or job, however, your mentor may know people that are hiring and advise you on how to apply. This type of advice is offered free of charge by mentors and they are being incredibly generous with their time.

Besides support and connections, a mentor can help be a confidante or someone to share your concerns and challenges with. They can help you craft a plan or course of action for you to utilize. Be aware that this may include constructive criticism, but a good mentor will tell you when there is room for improvement.

Anatomy of A Good Mentor



-Relevant experience

-Enthusiasm and empathy

-Respectful Attitude

-Eagerness to Help

-Constructive Critic

-Reflective Listening and
Communication

-Willingness to Connect

-Patience

How to Communicate

- Establish Communication Style

-Which media do you want to use to communicate? Do they prefer phone calls, in-person or email?

- Regular Meeting Time

-Determine the frequency you want to communicate and also settle on some dates that you intend to connect.

- Flexibility and Understanding

-Make sure that you allow sufficient room to be flexible and cognizant of their busy schedule

- Keep In the Loop

-Make sure to update your mentor on your successes! They love to hear it.



02



02



Where

TRY LOOKING AT MANY PLACES

- Your University
- A Prospective University/Program
- Social Media
- Volunteer Event/Organization
- Local Company
- Career Fair
- Place of Religion



COMMON BARRIERS AND QUESTIONS

Pro-Tips

BE FLEXIBLE

Mentors can have busy schedules with many responsibilities. Be early and flexible when you want to meet or talk, so that they can carve out a convenient time for you and be more receptive to mentorship when you do meet.



YOU NEED PROACTIVITY AND CONSISTENCY

It is good idea to reach out to your mentor early, but if you do not maintain the relationship you lose much of what you originally gained.



WHAT DO YOU TALK ABOUT?

Be honest with your mentor about your questions, hopes, struggles, and achievements. They will feel closer to you as you share more about yourself and they understand who you are.



START PROFESSIONAL

Although you may want to have a friendly relationship, it is a good idea to maintain professionalism at the start of the relationship. Adjust to your mentors mannerisms and expectations as you build your relationship.



DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO MAKE A REAL CONNECTION?

Look at your mentor's office space, their LinkedIn, or their academic interests. Ask them about their journey, if they have kids or hobbies. Pay attention to details that they share and continue to follow up in following visits or interactions.



EXPRESS APPRECIATION

Even if you do get to be on friendly terms or you maintain the relationship for a long time, it is important to not take your mentor for granted. Your appreciation for their time and efforts will go a long way.



COMMUNICATING WITH A MENTOR 101

By: Natalie Tjahjadi



Like any other relationship, the key to starting and maintaining an effective mentorship is communication! Strong communication will ensure that both the mentor and the mentee get what they want out of the mentorship and allows clear expectations to be established. However, it can be hard to determine how one should go about approaching potential mentors, the level of formality one should use when talking to their mentor, and what one

can and can't discuss with them. Through this article, I hope to address some of the questions and concerns you may have about communicating with a mentor.

Once you have identified some possible mentors, it's time to reach out to them! Some of the best ways to do so are in-person (once the pandemic is over), through email, or on LinkedIn. When initially contacting a mentor (especially someone you

don't know well), it is essential that you use professional etiquette, whether it be verbal or written communication. This will help you make a good first impression! Also, make sure to always say "please" and "thank you" when making requests.

Check out the example email for how to reach out to a potential mentor on the next page!

Communicating with a Mentor 101 cont.

Subject line: Inspired by your career

Hi Mike Wazowski,

I hope you are doing well! My name is John Doe and I am a freshman at Monsters University pursuing a scare major. I was also recently initiated into Oozma Kappa, your alumni fraternity! A few years ago, my older brother introduced me to your work and I have been interested in becoming a scarer ever since. I truly admire your fearlessness and dedication to the field of scaring. Additionally, I have much respect for your work in exposing Mr.aternoose to the CDA.

I was wondering if we could schedule a time to talk more about your college experience and job? I am looking for a school/career mentor and would be honored if you would meet with me once a month. I'm really passionate about scaring and am hoping to gain more knowledge about the classes, work environment, and different careers. I would love to learn more from you and am excited to put in the work necessary to be successful! We could discuss the details of the mentorship over a Zoom call and make the commitment work with your schedule. However, I understand you are very busy, so if this isn't possible, would you be willing to answer some questions over the phone?

Thank you so much for taking your time to read this email!

John Doe

—

After you send your first email or message to a potential member, make sure to check back regularly. Don't be discouraged if the person does not reply to you right away; they are likely busy with their studies or work. If the person does write back to you, make sure to respond quickly so it doesn't seem like you have lost interest.



Communicating with a Mentor 101 cont.



Once you have found someone to be your mentor, it is important to set clear guidelines and expectations regarding the mentorship. It might be awkward to have this conversation, but it's better to come to a mutual understanding about the expectations, time commitment, and the boundaries of the mentorship earlier rather than later. You can even make a "mentoring agreement" that outlines meeting frequency, session lengths, topics of discussion, expected outcomes/goals of the mentorship, etc.

Along with keeping professional etiquette and clear communication with your mentor, you should be open to discussing your weaknesses or challenges you are facing. Your mentor is there to support you, so don't be afraid to be honest about your struggles;

they can offer you advice and insight on how to handle difficult situations.

Finally, it is extremely important to express your gratitude to your mentor. Mentors are taking their time and energy to help you, oftentimes with no incentive. Keep them updated about new internships, job promotions, achievements, and other opportunities they help you receive. By sharing these updates, you are showing them that they have made a direct impact on your success; I believe this is one of the best ways to convey your gratefulness. And if there's one thing you take away from this article, make sure to ALWAYS say thank you:)) I wish you the best with your mentorship experience!



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03



LINKEDIN &
NETWORKING

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LINKEDIN AS AN ASSET FOR ANY FIELD

LINKEDIN AS A RESOURCE

Getting Started with LinkedIn Regardless of Major

A lot of people consider LinkedIn to be a networking resource exclusively for business students or professionals. But, more and more, it is becoming apparent that all fields and majors can benefit from interacting with professionals in the field.

For example, pre-med students usually don't consider LinkedIn as a resource that could be helpful for them. But, it is a good way to connect with physicians and ask them about their journey and/or ask them to allow you to shadow them and get a better idea of their specialty.

Likewise, a lot of my friends in engineering use LinkedIn to be in contact with recruiters and to hear the "word on the street" about what recruiters at firms like Amazon are really looking for.

So, I would encourage you to get creative on thinking through just how you are able to use LinkedIn as an asset for your field. LinkedIn also has a lot of helpful features that you can use. For example, you can follow articles and posts by reputable names in any field and join groups with alumni for your current school.



How to Get Started on LinkedIn

1. Choose a Profile Photo
2. Writing a Headline
3. About
4. Experience
5. Education
6. Skills
7. Accomplishments
8. Featured

Here are some notes to follow:

- PHOTOS should be professional looking with a blank background often preferred
- Your ABOUT section should talk about yourself and your goals in a short blurb
- SKILLS can be endorsed by your connections + co-workers

THE DO'S & DON'T'S OF THE JOB SEARCH ON **LinkedIn**



DO



Detail your profile

Recruiters need to find keywords related to your industry. You can add them by detailing your experiences or by writing a summary.



Create search alerts

It's an effective way to be quickly aware of any new open position on the market and to be among the first applicants.



Add a profile picture

Profiles with a picture are 40% more visible. Be careful though, your picture must be professional (e.g. no selfie)!



Check who has viewed your profile

Thus you will know who is interested in your career path.



DON'T



Don't send an invitation without personalization

Writing a message when you ask someone to connect increases the chances they accept your invitation.



Don't apply for a position without a resume

Even if your profile is complete, most recruiters receive applications by email and will need your resume.



Don't be pushy

Most recruiters don't consider this behavior as motivation, rather as a lack of professionalism.



Don't forget to read your messages every day

If you don't quickly answer an interview request, you strongly compromise your chances of being selected.



Dos & Don'ts

Of your LinkedIn profile photos

Get a professional photographer

Your photo will be the first thing a potential employer will see, so we recommend getting a professional photo taken of yourself. It's worth the investment since you can use the pictures for multiple social platforms and purposes.

Look personable

You don't have to give a goofy smile, but you don't want to appear unfriendly either. When in doubt, ask others to give their opinions before you publish.

Use most of the frame

Your face should be centred, leaving a small space over your head with the picture extending to your shoulders.

Choose a familiar picture

Keep the photo true to life. If you wear glasses, have a beard or often wear a tie, make your profile photo representative of how you normally look at work.

Be professional

LinkedIn is not Facebook. Structure your profile according to how you would act at work.

Balance formality

Don't go overboard yet don't be underdressed in your picture. Let the photo reflect your work attire and mood.

Leave Fido out

It's a cute sentiment but leave dogs and other pets out of your LinkedIn profile picture.

Keep the background neutral

Don't let the background distract viewers. Choose a neutral and non-busy background.



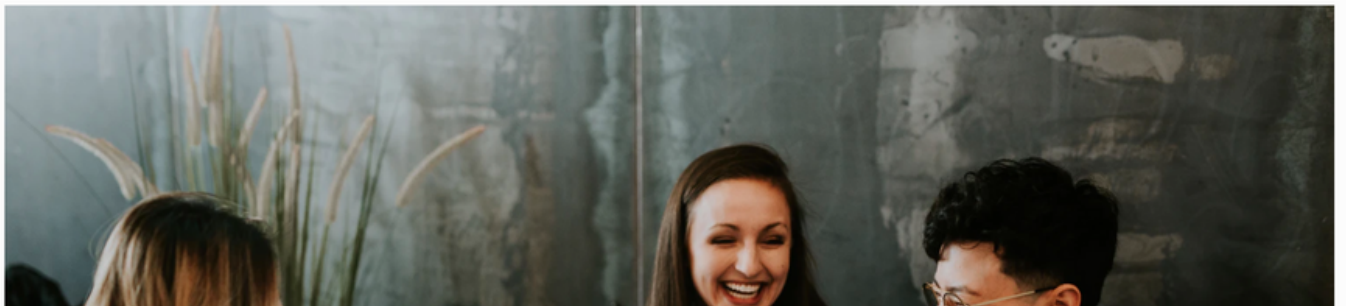


MAY 15, 2020 | MAGDA WOJTARA | EDIT

Using LinkedIn to Connect with Professional Mentors

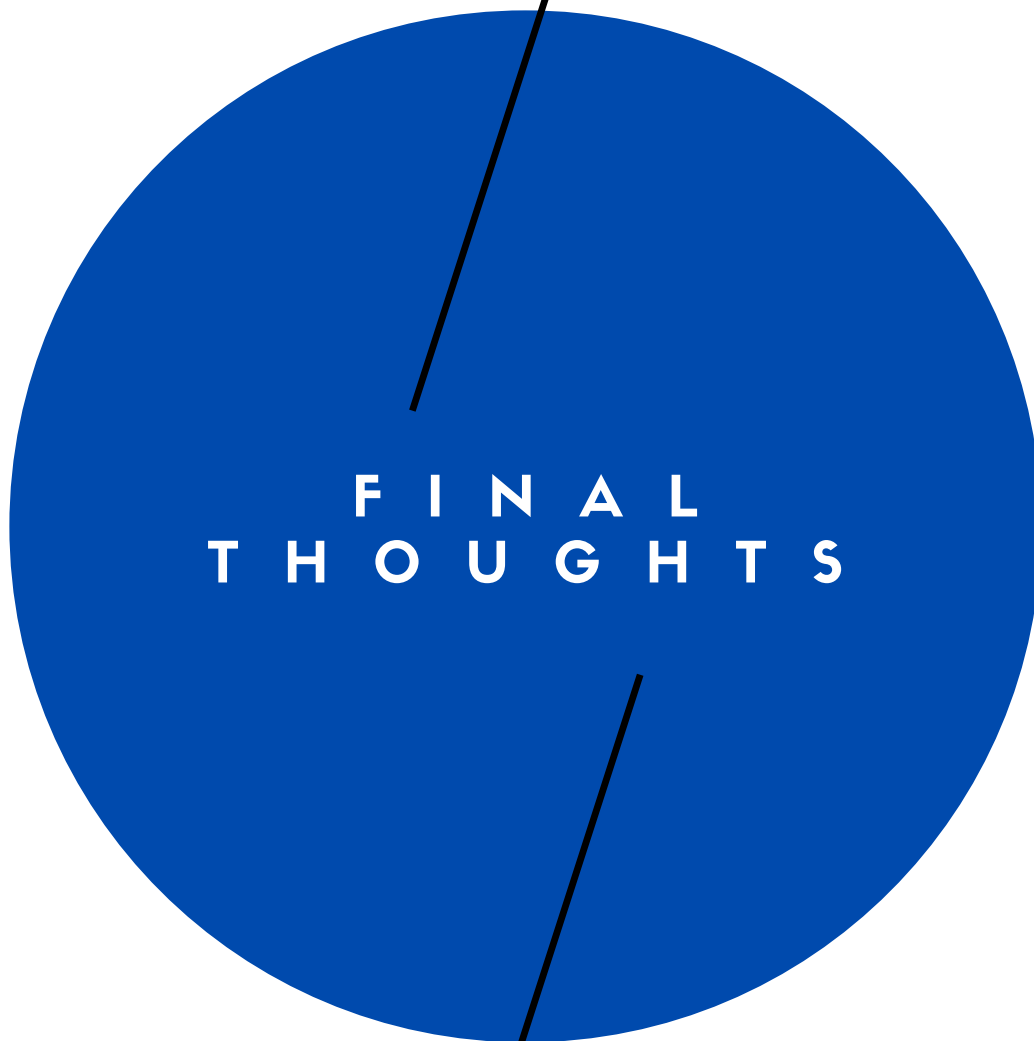
JULY 10, 2020 | SHARMIE AZUREL | EDIT

Creating a LinkedIn Profile: A FGLI Student Guide





04



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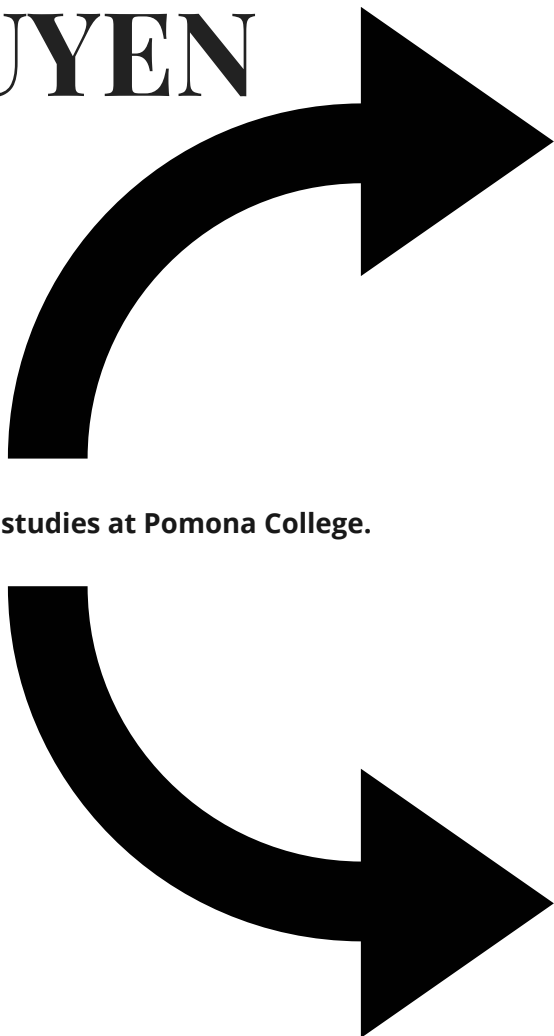


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INTERVIEW: DERRICK NGUYEN



Derrick Nguyen studies at Pomona College.

What does mentorship mean to you and how has it impacted you?

Derrick: My understanding of mentorship has changed over time as I've come to realize that mentorship really is a reciprocal relationship. I've taken so much out of being a mentee as I did as a mentor, and I believe this reciprocity cultivated through a mentoring relationship has shaped my understanding of myself and others. When I just came to college, I had two First-Generation Low-Income mentors and an additional pair of Asian-American mentors that guided me throughout my first year as an undergraduate, and to this day I am actually close friends with almost all of them. I've always associated mentors as an unchangeable status, i.e. that they couldn't be both my friends and mentors. However, the more we talked and grew to know each other the more I realize that I had built a wall between myself and them. We were all growing in our own ways and just because they were upperclassmen didn't mean that they knew everything. We grew together in college and I think that is my biggest takeaway from my mentorship experience. (Of course, I went on to have mentees of my own! To this day I try to actively mentor incoming students to Pomona College to help them in the ways that I needed help navigating college for the first time)

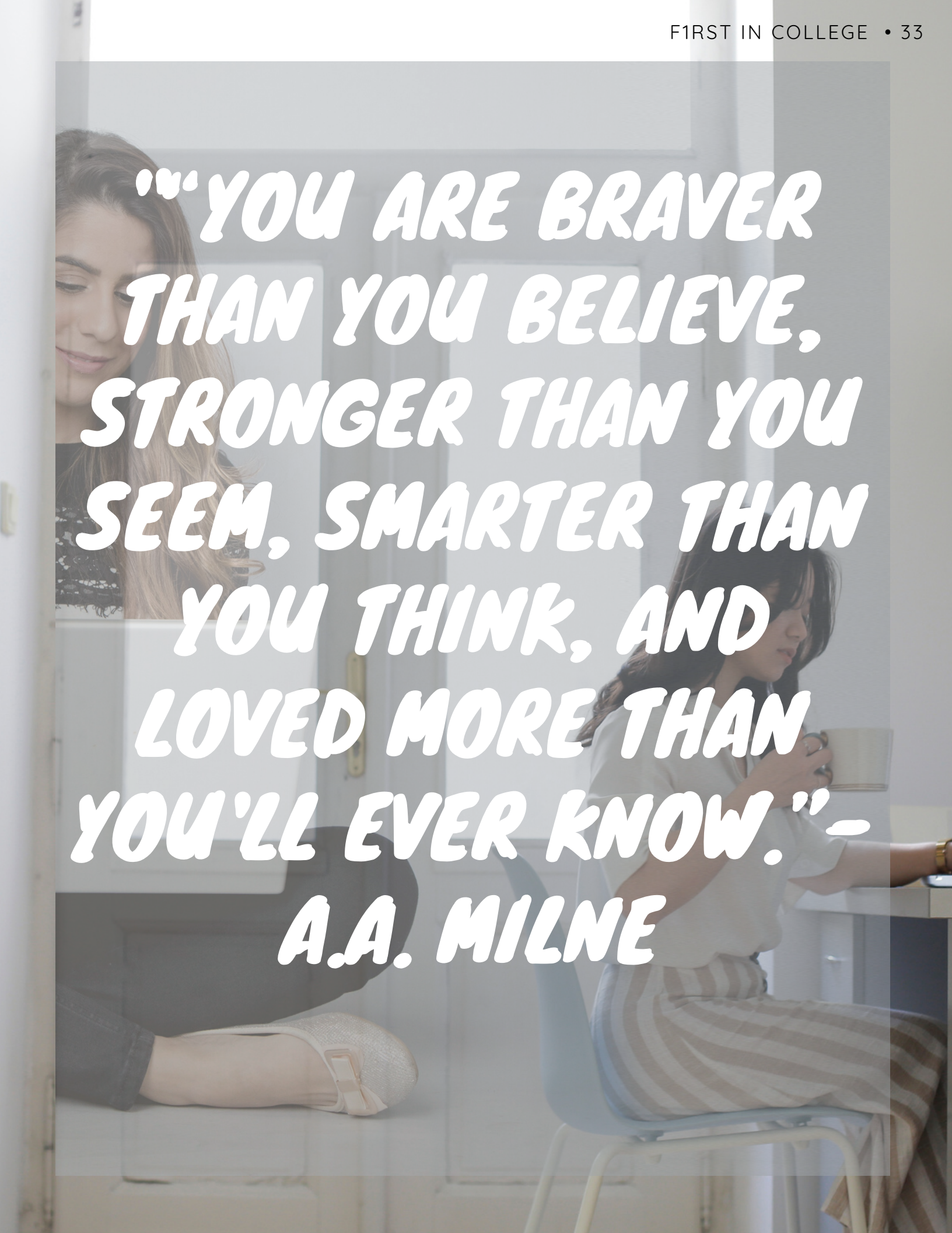
INTERVIEW: DERRICK NGUYEN

What are some pieces of advice you have for someone seeking out mentorship? What advice do you have for students who wish to mentor others?

Derrick: Don't be intimidated by your mentors. We are all changing and we are here for each other to learn from one another. Mentors have much to learn as mentees do. It's good to find mentors who share similar identities with oneself such as socioeconomic class, race/ethnicity, physical/mental abilities and ailments, geographical, career interests, etc. It isn't a must but the more similar a mentor/mentee reflects in identities and possible lived experiences the better the understanding of each other can be related. If you wish to mentor others, realize that you are also mentoring yourself in the process. The mentor-mentee relationship isn't hierarchal but reciprocal. A valuable and fulfilling mentoring relationship will be realized through this understanding of co-learning and sharing lived experiences in an introspective manner. It's unrealistic and potentially harmful if a mentor views themselves as having all the answers. The main priority of a mentor is support and guidance, not a know-it-all handbook in life.

Please describe an instance where mentorship played a role in a success (i.e. getting a good grade, job, better mental state etc.

Derrick: I'll never forget this particular day in October, just a month after my start at college. I was fighting imposter syndrome as I had just received my first graded paper with jarring inadequacies and a failing grade. I fell into a depressive state and convinced myself that I had been dreaming, that there was no way a FGLI student from a public school in the South could be matched with my peers who attended boarding schools and aced national standardized testing exams. By chance, one of my mentors messaged me and asked how I was feeling. In the spur of my frustration, I told her I didn't think I was going to stay any longer at Pomona College and considered transferring back to a local community college. To my surprise, she pulled up in a rental car and took me to get ice cream in town. We chatted and opened up about our experiences being FGLI in college, and we shared similar sentiments. I was surprised when my mentor confided in me that she still felt inadequate, but assured me that there was no mistake in my presence at Pomona. Eventually with her help, I've come to realize that my existence as a FGLI student was radical in itself, and that I had every right to study amongst my peers. Higher education wasn't meant for students like me, but yet here we all were, fighting for our place daily at these institutions by just being present on campus. My mentor graduated from Pomona College in 2019 and resides in Phoenix, Arizona, and I still visit her occasionally to this day despite the distance from my hometown in Arkansas.

A woman with long dark hair is sitting at a desk, holding a white mug. She is wearing a white top and a striped skirt. In the foreground, the legs of another woman are visible, wearing black pants and white shoes. The background is a simple room with a white door and a window.

***"YOU ARE BRAVER
THAN YOU BELIEVE,
STRONGER THAN YOU
SEEM, SMARTER THAN
YOU THINK, AND
LOVED MORE THAN
YOU'LL EVER KNOW."***
A.A. MILNE

INTERVIEW: HANNAH CHO

Hannah Cho studies honours psychology, neuroscience and behavior at McMaster University



What does mentorship mean to you and how has it impacted you?

Hannah: Mentorship has been a valuable and rewarding experience for me as I alternate between the roles of being a mentor and mentee. As a mentee, it's an opportunity to learn from someone who has been where you are, who has made mistakes that you can avoid, and has knowledge and advice that will help you on your own journey. My mentors have taught me so much about decision-making and self-care, and I think as a mentor myself, the role encourages me to constantly participate in self-reflection about my thoughts, actions, and goals. I think as much as we can learn from others, we can learn a lot from ourselves too, but that is something I realized because of the people who mentored me.

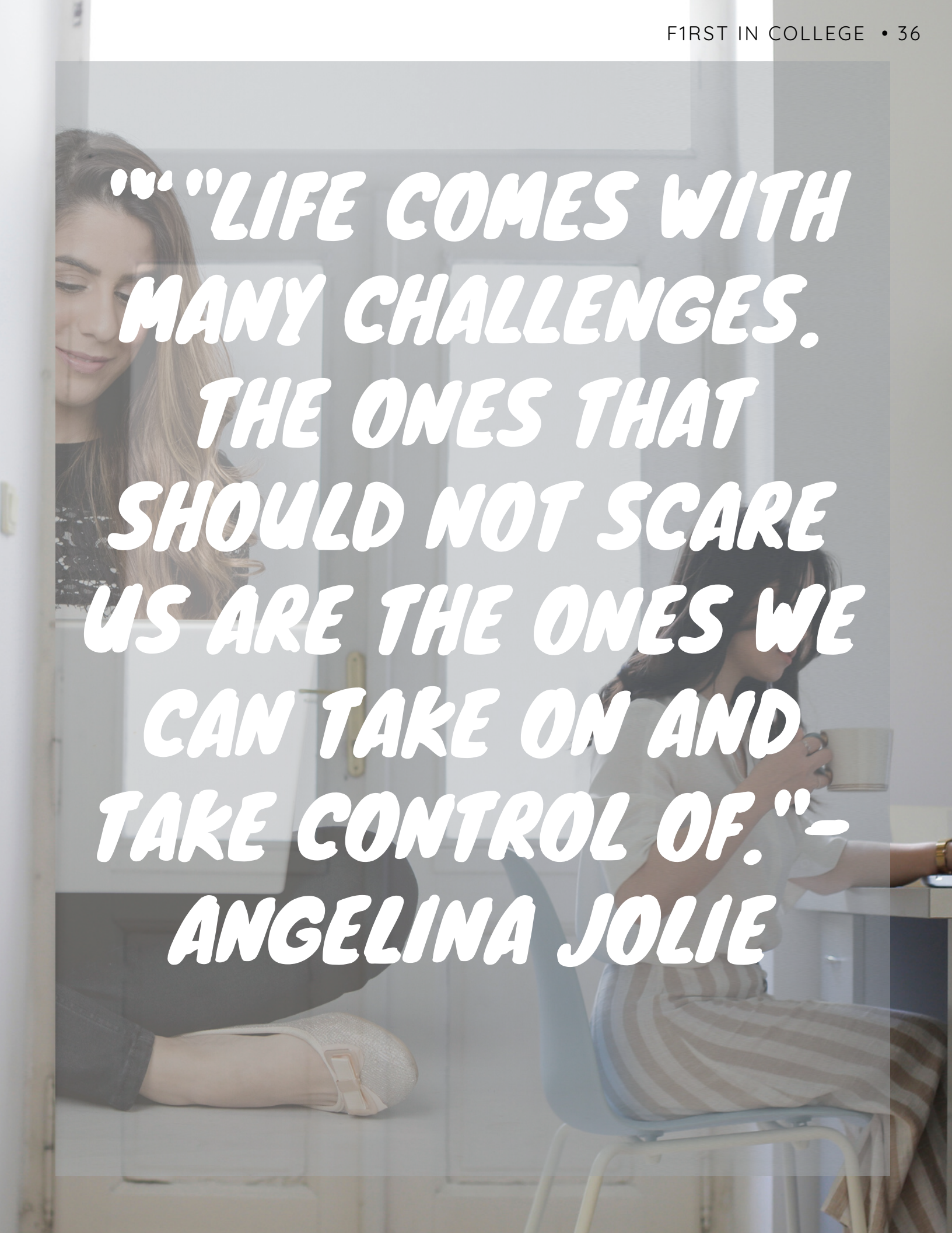
INTERVIEW: HANNAH CHO

What are some pieces of advice you have for someone seeking out mentorship? What advice do you have for students who wish to mentor others?

Hannah: I think having a mentor leaves a lasting positive impact on your life in all that you do, so I'm glad you are seeking one! There are so many amazing organizations that offer mentorship services in several areas (i.e. career, academics). I highly recommend taking the time to find an organization that shares your values and your future interests for a good fit. For those who plan on mentoring others, be patient and kind to those who seek your advice and know when to listen. Think about what kind of support you may have wanted when you were in their shoes, and ask how you can help them.

Please describe an instance where mentorship played a role in a success (i.e. getting a good grade, job, better mental state etc.)

Hannah: As an undergraduate student, I've had a lot of upper year students in my program mentor me. With their advice, I became more knowledgeable about doing well in certain classes and getting research opportunities. It certainly boosted my self-esteem because I realized the potential that others saw in me. I also don't think that I would be enjoying or partaking in research like I do now had I not had those mentors who told me about their experience and encouraged me to make those connections.

A woman with long brown hair is sitting at a desk, looking down at a laptop. She is wearing a white top and a striped skirt. She is holding a white mug. The background is a bright, indoor setting with a white door and a window. The text is overlaid on the image in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font.

**"LIFE COMES WITH
MANY CHALLENGES.
THE ONES THAT
SHOULD NOT SCARE
US ARE THE ONES WE
CAN TAKE ON AND
TAKE CONTROL OF."—
ANGELINA JOLIE**



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Email:

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Interested in being featured? Send
a message to
[@generalintelligences](https://www.instagram.com/generalintelligences) on
instagram and we will interview
you for an upcoming edition





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