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Law School News: Meet RWU Law's Interim Director of Diversity And Outreach 02/07/2022

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February 7, 2022

Law School News

Meet RWU Law's Interim Director of Diversity and Outreach

Ana Barraza aims to help future lawyers 'achieve success through empowerment, advocacy, and collaboration.'

February 7, 2022

| Michael M. Bowden



RWU Law Interim Director of Diversity and Outreach Ana Barraza

Roger Williams University School of Law is pleased to welcome Ana W. Barraza as its new Interim Director of Diversity and Outreach. She brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience to help future lawyers “achieve success through empowerment, advocacy, and collaboration.”

Over the course of an 18-year career in higher education, Barraza has built an impressive track record, working with university and external organization leadership teams “to understand

campus trends, challenges, and opportunities, and to develop and implement policies and programs that give access to students of all identities and assist them to achieve their very best personal, academic, and professional successes.”

It’s a skill set that translates well to a legal education setting, Barraza said.

“I strive to help students feel they are part of the community, to feel that they are seen and heard,” Barraza explained. “I feel very comfortable with the work being done in this area at RWU Law, and I see my role here as a natural progression. I’ve always mentored students, including graduate students, helping them gain a realistic view of the fields they are moving into. Given the temperature of the world we’re living in right now, I see this as, more than ever, an essential element of a legal education.”

An alumna of the University of Rhode Island, where she earned both her B.A. and M.S., Barraza served for the past four years as Assistant Director of Brown University’s Robert Campus Center & Student Activities in Providence. She has also worked as Director of the Center for Student Development at Texas Woman’s University, as well as in multicultural and diversity-focused leadership and teaching positions with U.R.I., the University of Connecticut at Storrs, the Institute for Shipboard Education’s Semester at Sea, and other institutions and organizations.

“I think it’s important to have shared experiences and to be in spaces where you’re able to express those experiences to others, to provide both an education and a different context or lens,” she said. “I’m hoping that – through the various programs and activities that I’m able to bring to students at RWU Law – I will be able to help students feel comfortable enough to share those experiences with one another, and to help provide an adjustment in other people’s lenses.”

Barraza is an Inaugural Class Member of the Rhode Island Foundation’s Equity Leadership Initiative Program, an Inaugural Board Member of Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, and a Board Member of the Paul Cuffee School, all in Providence. She has also served as Education Committee Member of Times 2 STEM Academy, and a Board Member of Latino Dollars for Scholars, among other positions. She is also proud to note her 30-year commitment to service in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the first intercollegiate historically African American sorority.