Sarah Wood's Story

Arriving on the Westhampton campus as an undergrad, I brought the typical gear – bedding and bath supplies, too many clothes, junk food, and a mini-fridge. I also came with a few other things that weren’t as visible – perfectionistic tendencies, unhealthy coping skills, and a touch of anxiety. Transitions are stressful, even good ones, and I quickly found opportunities to turn to alcohol to assuage any feeling of uncertainty and bond with new friends. Within two years, the consequences related to my drinking had begun to pile-up; and I found myself in outpatient treatment, battling a dependency on alcohol.

When I quit drinking at the age of 20, there were not Collegiate Recovery Programs. During those early days of my sobriety, I felt alone on the UR campus as I struggled to attend classes and avoid challenging emotional and social situations. I did persevere; and facing and addressing my chemical dependency as a young student, allowed me to complete my education and graduate from The University of Richmond. For decades, now, I have been able to rely upon the resilience that recovery has provided me as I have built a family, been active in my community, and pursued a career and earned advanced degrees in Education.

I am excited to begin this new job of Recovery Resource Specialist at The University of Richmond and support other young people who are setting out on their own recovery journeys. A Collegiate Recovery Program will bring essential, life-changing services to students as they strive to complete their education while also becoming healthier, stronger young adults. I am certain this program will strengthen and enrich their lives; and I am eager to witness the ways that these students will go on to strengthen and enrich our community, at UR and beyond.

Sarah Clark Wood (WC ’90)