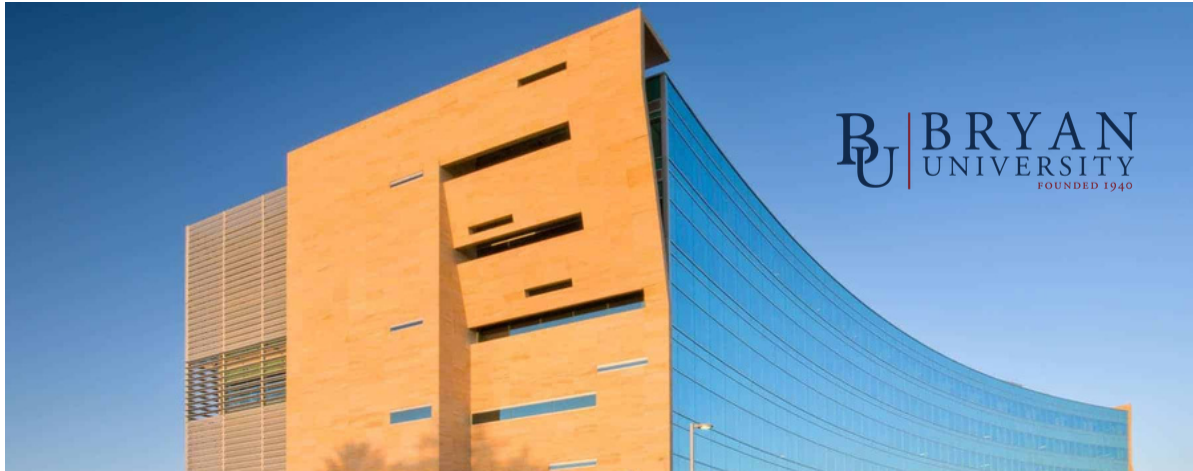


The Searchlight

June 2026



Career Woman Chronicles

Dr. Makisha Cheeks

Hacking Your Brain for Health and Happiness

Starting your career can feel exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Between learning a new job and balancing personal responsibilities, it is important to remember that your mindset matters just as much as your skillset.

“Hacking your brain” means building small habits that help your mind work for you instead of against you. Positive routines can improve confidence, reduce stress, and increase happiness.

Start by protecting your mental energy. Replace negative self-talk with realistic encouragement. Instead of saying, “I’m not good enough,” try, “I’m learning and improving every day.”

Prioritizing rest and movement is also important. Sleep, short walks, hydration, and breaks from screens can improve focus, mood, and productivity. Success is about creating healthy routines you can maintain long term.

Gratitude can also shift your mindset. Recognizing small wins each day trains your brain to focus on progress instead of pressure.

Finally, surround yourself with positive people who support your growth. Mentors, friendships, and professional connections can help build confidence and remind you that you are not alone in your career journey.

Upcoming Events

CS Live: Identifying
Transferable Skills

Wednesday,
June 17 at 3:00 p.m.
MST

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Alumni Corner

Michael Scalice

Giving Back Through Mentorship

Becoming a mentor is one of the most rewarding ways alumni can give back to students and recent graduates. Whether you are helping someone navigate their first internship, prepare for interviews, or explore career options, mentorship creates meaningful connections that can shape a person's future. Even sharing lessons learned from your own early career experiences can make a significant impact on someone just starting out.

New mentors should remember that mentorship is not about having all the answers. Instead, it is about listening, encouraging, and helping mentees think through decisions. Students and recent graduates often benefit from honest conversations about workplace expectations, networking, and professional growth. Mentors who are approachable and willing to share both successes and setbacks create an environment where mentees feel comfortable asking questions and seeking guidance.

One of the best ways to build a successful mentoring relationship is to establish clear communication early. Discuss goals, preferred methods of contact, and how often you plan to connect. Flexibility and consistency are key, and even a short monthly conversation can provide valuable motivation and direction.

Mentorship also benefits the mentor. Alumni often discover that guiding others strengthens their own leadership and communication skills while helping them reconnect with their alma mater in a meaningful way. Most importantly, mentoring allows alumni to help the next generation build confidence and succeed in their careers.

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