

CONGRADULATIONS!





# Dear Graduate,

Congratulations! You have successfully completed your high school journey and are ready for the next chapter in your life. Whether you're planning to attend college, join the military, travel overseas, or go directly to work, we hope that you will proudly carry the skills, knowledge, and networks gained during your academy experience with you.

And we hope you'll stay connected – because your NAF experience doesn't end at graduation. By joining the NAF Alumni Network, you have access to a growing network of business professionals, mentors, and fellow NAF alumni rooting for you. The connections you made and skills you built in your NAF academy can grow into lifelong relationships and opportunities to meet new people and discover new careers.

The NAF alumni network offers exclusive access to scholarships, networking events, and career development – like our Alumni Mentorship Program. You'll also gain access to opportunities to earn professional certifications and have the chance to apply to NAF's prestigious national awards as well as job opportunities with our corporate partners. And it's all at no cost to you!

Please be sure to fill out [this form](#) and provide a personal email where we can continue to send you NAF updates and alumni opportunities. Join our [alumni group on LinkedIn](#) to connect with your peers and to be the first to hear about initiatives and events. This graduation packet contains additional information on how to stay in touch and get involved.

Thank you for representing the very best of NAF. It has been a true joy to be a part of your high school journey and we look forward to continuing to support, highlight, and celebrate your accomplishments for years to come. On behalf of NAF staff, business partners, educators, industry professionals, welcome to the NAF Alumni Network!

Lisa Dughi, NAF CEO

# WELCOME



## Greetings from the NAF Alumni Network!

We're so excited to have you join us. Click on the video above to hear Wilmar Gálvez Alfonso recap her NAF experience!

### Over 87,000 NAF alumni currently enjoy exclusive benefits including:

- Opportunities to attend/host In-person networking events and attend/speak at NAF national events.
- Access to the Alumni Opportunities Board (jobs/internships/scholarships) & the Alumni LinkedIn group.
- The ability to participate in the Alumni Mentorship Program.
- Stories, resources, and opportunities in our monthly Alumni e-newsletters.
- Invitations to attend free virtual professional development sessions.

**Be sure your contact information is up to date to receive our free benefits.**

[Click here to join and complete the form with your personal email.](#)

# GET INVOLVED

The vast alumni network can provide lifelong opportunities and friendships to those who stay connected. If you want to get involved or even give back to a new class of NAF students, email [Susan Climan](mailto:Susan.Climan@naf.org) to stay in touch and indicate your interest. Here are some ways you can get involved:

1

Share your story with us. If you're making a difference or doing something special, we want to feature you! You can submit your story or give a shout-out to another NAF alumnus [here!](#)

2

Attend a NAF alumni event! We regularly email our alumni and post to LinkedIn to let them know about events in their area. If you're interested in attending an alumni event, make sure your information is up to date so we can keep you in the loop!

3

Be a guest speaker at a NAF academy! Some of our most successful alumni events have been classroom visits. NAF students are eager to hear from alumni, so expect a Q&A session filled with insightful questions. NAF can help organize details of a classroom visit - email [alumni@naf.org](mailto:alumni@naf.org) and let us know you're interested!

4

Join the Alumni Mentorship Program! This unique program just for NAF alumni was started in 2020 with the purpose of providing meaningful mentoring relationships for college-aged individuals who completed their academy program and have moved into the postsecondary phase of their lives. The program also provides seasoned alumni professionals with a chance to reconnect with NAF and make a difference in a young person's life and career. There are also opportunities with our corporate partners throughout the year!

5

Advocate for NAF in your community and in your workplace! As a NAF alumnus, you are living proof that work-based learning and high school internships help students succeed. You are our best spokespeople! So when you have the opportunity to advocate for NAF, whether it be at a job, an internship, a professional organization, or a college club, take that opportunity! Share what made NAF special to you, and encourage those who are interested to get involved, too! Email [alumni@naf.org](mailto:alumni@naf.org) for tips and tools to help you be a NAF advocate.

# ALUMNI LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

This council is comprised of NAF graduates who have stayed connected with NAF and want to give back. What's next? Our ALC shares tips on entering college and the workforce.

## If you're heading off to college...



"The easiest and best thing you can do is familiarize yourself with all of the resources your institution has to offer (counseling services, tutoring, writing/math centers, etc.) and then USE THEM!"

**Shatiek Gatlin, Academy of Finance 2012, Mondelez**



"Take advantage of every opportunity ahead! This is the time to experiment, learn and grow. Continue to grow your network with new friends, peers, and mentors. Get involved on campus and leverage all the incredible resources."

**Lauren Budzich-Goren, Academy of Finance 2015  
Immediate Past Chair, Johnson & Johnson**



"College is your chance to step outside your comfort zone. Say yes to new experiences, meet new people, and explore different interests. Growth comes from taking risks, so don't be afraid to put yourself out there—you never know what opportunities will come your way!"

**Melanie Sacca, Academy of Finance 2012, NAF**



"As soon as you can, go to the career center at your institution and begin to build strong connections there. You will set yourself apart from other students and will be a familiar name and face when opportunities arise that you may be interested in."

**James Norman, Academy of Finance 2014, ALC Vice Chair, Grant Thornton LLP.**



Be intentional about how you spend your time – college is one of those few special moments where you can explore broadly while building deeply. Say yes to opportunities that challenge you, invest in relationships with mentors and peers, and don't ever be afraid to pursue paths that don't yet seem clear!

**Kartik Tyagi, Academy of Health Sciences 2019, JD Candidate at Duke University**

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## If you're heading into the workforce...



"It's a job in itself looking for a job so always keep building your network, never stop. Stay curious and don't be afraid to make mistakes, you'll learn your biggest lessons from your blunders. Don't let pride get in the way of asking for help, there is no shame in it, everyone needs help."

**Julie Kennedy, Academy of Hospitality & Tourism 2004, Miami Music Project**



"Find small moments throughout the day to clear your mind. This could be in the form of going on a walk outside. If you are stuck on a problem, stepping away for even a few minutes can allow you to come back to the problem with a new perspective. If that fails, then don't hesitate to ask for help! Odds are someone else has encountered a similar problem."

**Gerardo Carranza, Academy of Hospitality & Tourism 2013, Google**



"Never throw out a business card or burn a bridge. You never know when or who will help you advance in life. When someone reaches out to connect or network, take advantage of that opportunity."

**Connor Nolan, Academy of Finance 2011, ALC Chair, Integrity Core Realty**



"Be extremely detailed on all assignments and manage your time efficiently. Don't use your email inbox as a to-do list, find another way to stay organized and on top of the tasks you need to finish."

**Erich de la Fuente, Academy of Hospitality and Tourism 1989, EDF Communications**



"Always bring your authentic self to the table. You are uniquely made and opportunities will arise once you begin to share that uniqueness with the world."

**Antonio Smith, Academy of Finance 2014, White & Case**

# STAY IN TOUCH

There are tons of opportunities for NAF alumni to

- Attend events
- Win scholarships
- Participate in contests
- Gain job opportunities from our business partners

To get the most out of your NAF experience, make sure you take advantage of these opportunities!

 [Join the Alumni Group](#)

 [@NAFCareerAcads](#)

 [@NAFCareerAcads](#)



*Alumni with Lisa Dughi, NAF CEO*

**YOU DID IT!**  
**CONGRATS!**



**We can't wait to see  
what you'll do next.**

Learn more at  
**NAF.ORG**

Follow us on        
**@NAFCAREERACADS**