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**NAF ALUMNI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM
GUIDE FOR MENTEES**

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The NAF Alumni Mentorship Program provides college-age NAF alumni with the ability to build professional skills and connect with alumni working in their fields of interest.

As a NAF alumni mentee, you will be assigned an alumni mentor who will serve as a guide and resource and who will share their NAF academy, postsecondary and professional experiences helping to pave the way for you to succeed in college and beyond. The partnership between mentor and mentee is built upon trust, respect, and professionalism.

The mentorship process is designed to be structured yet flexible allowing for a progressive development of the mentor-mentee relationship. A minimum time commitment of attending and participating in one session per month is expected to participate in the program. Micro-engagements (quick conversations to check-in or ask questions) between sessions are highly encouraged. Throughout the course of the program, participants should expect to receive regular communication from NAF staff regarding expectations and gathering feedback.

We hope this guide will be helpful as you begin your journey as a mentee!

**MENTOR DEFINED:**

A mentor is a more experienced individual who helps and guides another individual’s development. Mentoring is a developmental partnership through which the mentor shares knowledge, skills, information, and perspective to foster the personal and professional growth of the mentee.

**ROLE OF A MENTOR:**

A member that has a desire to serve as an educator, motivator, coach, and role model for other members. A mentor should be willing to educate, guide, motivate, act as a role model, and coach.

**ROLE OF A MENTEE:**

A mentee seeks out their mentor’s advice, knowledge, and experiences to further their own professional development. A mentee should be willing to actively engage with their mentor, accept advice and coaching from their mentor, candidly discuss their career aspirations and goals, discuss misconceptions/perceived challenges about the field they intend to enter, and discuss other personal questions related to a profession.

**PREPARING TO BE A MENTEE:**

1. *SELF-REFLECT* – Review your strengths and interests, understand your current goals, and be prepared to articulate what you are hoping to gain out of the mentor/mentee relationship.
2. *UPDATE YOUR MATERIALS* – Update your online presence, especially your LinkedIn profile, and your resume, so your mentor can learn more about you.
3. *CREATE A PLAN* – Create goals for the relationship so that you can share with your mentor and refine together. Next, discuss how frequently you would like to meet with your mentor, how long each meeting will last, and what platform will be used, e.g., Zoom, Skype, Phone, etc.
4. *DETERMINE YOUR NEXT STEPS* – Craft a list of topics that you are interested in discussing with your mentor before or at the beginning of each meeting. As a mentee, you are responsible for moving the discussion forward - the role of the mentor is to provide advice and guidance and not to solve your problems or provide answers. After each meeting, develop action steps and be prepared to follow-up on your mentor’s suggestions and guidance.

**FIRST MEETING:**

After you are introduced to your mentor via email, be proactive and reach out to them. **Do not wait for them to contact you!** Ask for their availability to help you in arranging your first meeting. Request that they suggest the most appropriate day and time of day. This is an opportunity for you to explore a career field of interest, practice professionalism, and work towards some personal or career-orientated goals with guidance. Your mentor is meant to be more than someone who will answer a list of questions, they are there to help you make decisions and prepare proactively for the future.

**SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR MENTOR**

The keys to a successful mentoring relationship are your enthusiasm, preparation, and ability to communicate clearly. Before you meet your mentor, think about the type of information which would be helpful for you. You may want to ask:

* Questions about your mentor’s career path/training
* Questions about their current position and responsibilities
* Questions about working conditions
* Questions relating to your current situation and future goals

**GOAL SETTING: \*\*SHOULD BE DONE DURING THE FIRST MEETING**

Create goals focused on what you would like to get out of the mentorship process. This is a learning opportunity for you to explore more about a particular industry and/or position. Create mentorship goals that can foster conversations and keep you on task with achieving your goals.

Mentorship goals can include the following topics:

* Identifying new professional organizations to get involved in.
* Homing in on and further developing skills needed for an industry.
* Ways to transition into a new career.
* Identify organizations in various industries.
* Professional Certifications and/or continuing your education.

**MISCELLANEOUS TIPS & TRICKS:**

Here are some suggestions on getting the most out of your mentor/mentee relationship adapted from NACE (2017):

1. CREATE A JOURNAL – start to keep track of your meetings and the content discussed in a notebook. Write about the advice or information you gleaned from your meetings and highlight action steps. Reflect on your conversations with your mentor by reviewing your notes later.
2. DRAFT QUESTIONS – use your journal to create a list of questions or ideas you would like to discuss in an upcoming meeting. Try not to ask simple questions that you can easily find on the internet. Remember that your mentor is there to provide insight and advice, so try to leverage this experience to guide what you would like to discuss.
3. DEMONSTRATE GRATITUDE – thank your mentor often. After you meet with your mentor, send an e-mail or quick note to express your ‘thank you’ and reflect some of what you learned through your conversation.
4. STAY IN TOUCH – try to check in with your mentor by providing an update, e.g., the book you investigated or the advice you took. You might also confirm your next meeting to make sure the dates/times still work with the mentor’s schedule.
5. REVALUATE YOUR GOALS – make sure the mentor/mentee relationship is still working for both parties by reassessing this process with your mentor. Midway through your experience, take some time to check-in to ensure the experience is still valuable for both participants.
6. BE RESPECTFUL – your mentor is providing you with an opportunity for professional growth, access to a network, and advice/information on career paths and industries. As such, your mentor not there to solve your personal problems or find you a job. Through your interactions, keep this in mind and maintain a ‘posture of learning,’ by respecting the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship.
7. SHOW ENTHUSIASM – show your excitement and eagerness as you interact with your mentor. By demonstrating your curiosity, it can help you to develop a friendly and warm foundation and show you appreciate your mentor’s time.
8. COME IN FOR A LANDING – understand when to end your formal mentoring relationship. At some point, you will need to move on from this experience. Try to summarize the mentoring experience in a thank you note to your mentor. Refer to your notes and write about all that you gained and learned.
9. DEVELOP NEXT STEPS – complete a self-reflection process, and ask where you are now in your career path?’ Determine whether you would like to work with another mentor or consider becoming a mentor to someone else.

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