

**AQ ALUMNI
MENTORSHIP
NETWORK PROGRAM
HANDBOOK
2020-2021**

AQUINAS
COLLEGE
Alumni



AQ ALUMNI MENTORSHIP NETWORK PROGRAM

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AQ ALUMNI MENTORSHIP NETWORK PROGRAM

WELCOME:

Thank you for your interest in the AQ Alumni Mentorship Network Program! From the AQ Alumni Association and the AQ Alumni Leadership Council we are happy you are looking to further your professional development. This mentorship program is designed to support senior students and recent graduates to build a meaningful relationship with an alumnus that have been successful in their area of study or comparable career path. This handbook will guide you through the mentoring process and act as a resource. Please read it thoroughly to become familiar with the different components of the program.

OVERVIEW:

Aquinas College is thrilled to announce the creation of the AQ Alumni Mentorship Network program in 2019 and now enter the 2nd cohort. The mentorship program allows AQ alumni to share their trials and tribulations in their area of study with senior students and recent graduates over a period of a year. Each mentee is paired with an Alumnus that has a similar area of study or comparable career paths. This program will include a minimum of 10 mentee/mentor pairs. Each mentee/mentor match will meet on a regular basis throughout the duration of a year. We hope to allow each mentoring relationship to develop in a way that best suits the individuals involved.

The program is designed to pair successful alumni mentors with current students/recent graduates to support their professional development by providing advice, assistance, and guidance. In turn, student and recent graduates' benefit with hands-on experience in personal development, connecting with area leaders, and gaining career insight in their respective fields. Acknowledging varying commitments, the program is flexible and can be easily adapted to fit all schedules. Mentors and mentees are asked to commit to meeting at least once or twice a month through the medium of their choosing (i.e. in person, email, phone, Go-To-Meeting, etc.).

The program aims to create connections both in and outside of the classroom during the student's time at Aquinas College and beyond. The program allows for current students to impart their knowledge and experiences attending Aquinas College, and enhance their communication and goal setting skills. Mentors have the opportunity to advise students on academic guidance, career advice, and professional development. Opportunities to interact with students include virtual chats, on-campus mixers and workshops, volunteer opportunities, and social events. Mentors and students will be paired based on a variety of factors, including common career interests and geographic preferences. There will be an expectation for both individuals to engage each other on a regular basis to ensure the relationship grows and benefits both the student and the professional.

Alumni do not have to be on campus to leave a footprint at AQ. Whether you are right down the street or across the globe, we invite alumni from around the world to apply and be part of the AQ Alumni Mentorship Network Program.

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WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a structured and trusted relationship that, in this case, matches AQ senior students/recent graduates with AQ alumni with the goal of guiding, supporting, and encouraging the development of the mentee. Effective mentoring places an importance on the relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Mutual trust, respect, commitment, and collegiality are important to the relationship and the process.

Overall, an effective mentorship can provide career assistance to mentees by enhancing a sense of professional competence and career identity.

- Mentoring is an important process in the development and growth of an individual.
- Mentoring can serve as a bridge to link expert knowledge and leadership practice to help foster a new generation of leadership in organizations. Some studies have shown a positive relationship between mentoring, retention, confidence, and professional and personal growth.
- Mentoring is an important process in the development and growth of an individual. The relationship between a person with an expert knowledge in an area and a person who wants to learn from an expert is defined as mentoring (Moore et al., 2007).

What makes a good mentor?

The dictionary defines a “mentor” as a wise or trusted adviser or guide (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). A mentor is not someone who knows everything, but rather someone who can advise a mentee and support them during their career journey.

Your knowledge, experience, and insight will help students maximize their AQ experience and open their eyes to the opportunities and challenges they will face after graduation. Whether you were supported by alumni during your own time at AQ or you simply want to give back to the institution that has helped shape your career, mentoring is an easy way to make a real, lasting impact on the AQ community!

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BENEFITS:

Here are some of the unique benefits experienced in mentee-mentor relationships:

Alumni Mentor:

- Share knowledge of your education, career path, successes, failures, and what your experiences have taught you
- Acquire experience in coaching and fostering the talent of current AQ community members
- Increase the value of your AQ degree by investing in future alumni
- Cultivate a stronger connection with AQ
- Deepen your knowledge of the current student body, and campus communities and activities
- Network with other alumni participants
- Experience renewed pride and excitement for your work
- Gain a heightened sense of purpose and professional development

Student Mentee:

- Grow in self-awareness and self-discipline
- Deepen your knowledge of a specific industry, employer, organizational culture, and/or job function
- Test ideas and construct a personalized development plan with the help of a real-world professional
- Learn to receive and accept both praise and constructive feedback
- Improve your job search and networking skills and expand your professional network
- Gain a heightened sense of purpose and professional development
- Increase career opportunities and further enhance relationship management skills

ELIGIBILITY:

Participants in the AQ Alumni Mentorship Network Program must meet the following eligibility requirements:

Mentor Eligibility:

Degree conferred from AQ in any academic program.

At least 5 year of professional experience in the chosen field.

Mentee Eligibility:

Current senior student enrolled in any AQ undergraduate degree academic program OR recent graduate within 4 years of graduation date. A junior year student could be eligible if there is recommendation from a professor.

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RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS:

As a mentor or mentee, it is important to follow the responsibilities and expectations outlined below to ensure a successful professional relationship.

Mentor Expectations:

- Communicate with your mentee at least once a month through applicable channels (i.e. email, phone, in-person, etc.)
- Set expectations with your mentee regarding how and when you will remain in contact
- Create and nurture a professional relationship with your mentee through thoughtful conversations related to professional development
- Respond to all communications in a timely manner
- Maintain confidentiality at all times, barring ethical or safety concerns
- Notify AQ Alumni Relations of any issues during your time as a mentor
- Provide feedback about your experience through pre - and post-surveys

Responsibilities:

- Clarify concepts and proactively seek answers to the mentee's questions
- Reinforce important competencies and skills valued for a successful career in the chosen field
- Serve as a role model by demonstrating professional behavior
- Help mentee identify and set goals, track progress, and adapt to changes
- Refer students to appropriate services, where needed
- Provide feedback about your experience through pre - and post-surveys

What is not expected as a mentor:

- To offer jobs or internships
- To have all the answers
- To initiate all contact with mentee

Mentee Expectations:

Communicate with your mentor at least once a month through applicable channels (i.e. email, phone, in-person, etc.)

- Set specific goals for the mentoring relationship with the mentor
- Be open to thoughtful conversations related to professional development, including suggestions and feedback
- Be appropriate in requests to mentor (i.e. not asking for a job or internship)
- Maintain confidentiality at all times, barring ethical or safety concerns
- Notify AQ Alumni Relations of any issues during your time as a mentee
- Provide feedback about your experience through pre - and post-surveys

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CONFIDENTIALITY:

The mentoring relationship should be based on trust and honesty. Information shared within the context of the relationship should be handled with discretion, and confidentiality should be honored in most situations. However, for the well-being of all involved parties, including the university, confidentiality cannot be offered in the following situations:

- The mentor/mentee talks about suicide
- The mentor/mentee discusses intentions to harm another person

If you believe your student may be in distress, please provide them with this contact information for the Student Solutions program:

AQ Advantage Center
616-632-1121

PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

Application and Training/Orientation:

Applications will be made available March 2019.

As part of the application process, student mentees and alumni mentors are required to attend a training/orientation session to be eligible for participation. If a mentor/mentee has previously completed training and their previous match wishes to continue with them, orientation requirements may be waived. Training information will be sent by AQ Alumni Relations. If you would like to make a donation to the program to help cover costs of mentor/mentee participation, you can do so at Aquinas.edu/give, include AALC Mentor Program in 'Other'.

Matching Process:

Prospective mentors and mentees complete the application. Submitted applications are reviewed and matched based on personal and professional commonalities. Depending on the interest generated by the program, everyone may not be matched at any given time.

Once the matching process is complete, mentors and mentees will receive email notification with the name and contact information of their match. Depending on the number of applications, a mentor might have more than one mentee.

Time Commitment and Communication:

The formal relationship is around a 1-year commitment (e.g. Spring 2020 to Spring 2021). Mentors and mentees should communicate at least once a month and in whichever form agreed upon by the pair (i.e. phone, email, video chat, in person, etc.). After the formal commitment has ended, pairs are able to continue of their own accord, if desired.

Aquinas College is not responsible for continued partnerships after the formal end of program. Participants assume responsibility for their own mentoring relationships. However, AQ staff are available as needed.

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Date Event Time & Location BELOW

MENTEE SCHEDULE:

Student Applications Due by January 31st, 2020

February 18th, 2020 Mentor Training/Kick-Off Reception 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

February 2021 Closing Reception 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

*Additional events will be held during the year program

MENTOR SCHEDULE:

Alumni Applications Due by February 7th, 2020

February 18th, 2020 Mentor Training/Kick-Off Reception 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

February 2021 Closing Reception 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

*Additional events will be held during the year program

EVALUATION:

Participants will be surveyed on a regular basis. Surveys are designed to evaluate the individual relationships and identify areas of growth for the program. At the conclusion of the formal relationship, participants have the option of continuing their relationship, applying to be matched with a new student/mentor, or exit the program.

BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES:

MENTOR ACTION PLAN

- Determine my goals and expectations
- Determine mentor's goals and expectations Contact information/ Preferred contact method
- Communication log
- Set up goal to work together – action plan for mentor and mentee
- Keep notes on conversations for goal setting and constructive feedback
- Review and offer feedback regarding your mentee's development plan Complete post survey

MENTEE ACTION PLAN

- Determine my goals and expectations
- Determine mentee's goals and expectations
- Contact information/ Preferred contact method
- Communication log
- Set up goal to work together – action plan for mentor and mentee
- Keep notes on conversations
- Construct a professional development plan based on discussion with mentor
- Complete post survey
- Send formal thank you note to mentor

**AQ ALUMNI
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MENTOR/ MENTEE APPLICATION**

Your information will be used to match you with your mentor/mentee. Contact information (i.e. name and email) will be shared only with your match.

Personal Information:

Name:

Gender/Pronouns:

Applying for roles as: _____mentor_____mentee

LinkedIn URL Profile:

Contact Information:

Personal Email:

Phone Number:

Mailing Address:

Preferred contact method (only preferred contact method will be shared with mentor/mentee)

__Personal Email _Phone

Additional Information:

For Mentor:

Graduation Year:

Major/Program:

Other degree(s) received: City/ Town of

Residence: Current industry:

Current employer:

Years at Current position:

How many mentees are you interested in mentoring?

___1 ___2___3

Areas of expertise:

.....
.....

What are your professional interests?

.....
.....

What personal experiences, knowledge and/or skills do you believe will benefit your mentoring relationship?
(e.g., starting your own business, changing career paths, relocation)

.....
.....

What type of guidance/assistance are you most interested in providing during the course of this mentorship?
Please check all that apply.

a. Career Advising

Résumé review / CV Writing, or Mock Interviews

Job Shadowing, Providing Employer Information

General career coaching, guidance and advice

b. Academic Advising

Information on graduate school experience

Advice on utilizing academic studies in professional capacities

Other: _____

c. Personal Support

Emotional support

Advice concerning post-college transition

Balancing work, life, family and values

d. Other: _____

How did you hear about the Alumni Mentoring Program?

Alumni Office (e.g. newsletter, staff, email)

Aquinas faculty/staff

Other student or alumni

Other: _____

For the Mentors, would you be willing to pay the suggested donation of \$50.00 to go towards costs of the events for the mentorship program?

Yes

No

For Mentee:

Planned Graduation Year:

Major/Program:

Areas of Study:

Internship or work experience:

Graduate School Interest:

Career Goals:

.....
.....

What city / state do you plan on living in post-graduation?

.....
.....

What are your academic and/or professional goals and interests?

.....
.....

What qualities do you want in a mentor?

.....
.....

What type of guidance/assistance are you most interested in receiving during the course of this mentorship?
Please check all that apply.

e. Career Advising

- Résumé review / CV Writing, or Mock Interviews
- Job Shadowing, Providing Employer Information
- General career coaching, guidance and advice

f. Academic Advising

- Information on graduate school experience
- Advice on utilizing academic studies in professional capacities
- Other: _____

g. Personal Support

- Emotional support
- Advice concerning post-college transition
- Balancing work, life, family and values

h. Other: _____

How did you hear about the Alumni Mentoring Program?

- Alumni Office (e.g. newsletter, staff, email)
- Aquinas faculty/staff
- Other student or alumni
- Other:

Commitment Here:

Signature Date _____ Date: _____