



National Association of Women Lawyers (R)
the voice of women in the law™

NAWL MENTOR PROGRAM

About NAWL

The mission of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL®) is to foster social and professional advancement of female attorneys by promoting the social, political and professional empowerment of women.

NAWL was founded in 1899 and was the first nationwide association of women lawyers in the United States. Throughout its existence NAWL has been an advocate for women's legal rights. In 1912 NAWL campaigned for women's voting rights during the women's suffrage movement. Six years later, NAWL began an initiative to achieve for women the right to serve on juries. More recently through the Women Lawyers Journal, NAWL's quarterly magazine, NAWL has spread awareness on topics including domestic violence, gender bias, and sexual harassment in the workplace. Today NAWL continues to be a strong supporter of women's rights and is proud to direct the NAWL Mentor Program.

For more on NAWL's history visit our website at www.nawl.org.

Mentor Program

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Quick Facts: The Mentor Program . . .

- Is a program for law school students that is geared towards the social and professional advancement of female attorneys.
- Matches attorney mentors from a variety of legal fields and geographic locations with law students mentees.
- Provides mentors who are committed, encouraging, motivating, and supportive.

B. Goals and objectives of the program

- ✓ Empower women in law school with professional and social guidance.
- ✓ Promote NAWL's mission.

II. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPECTATIONS IN THE MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIP

A. Mentee Roles

NAWL's Mentoring Program has three main goals: (1) supporting the mentee; (2) providing mentors as a resource; and (3) helping a mentee achieve his/her goals. Mentees are expected to work with their mentors by taking an active role in their own development. Below are general roles that a mentee may assume.

i. Team Player

- Identify and share your needs with your mentor.
- Be receptive to feedback.

ii. Planner

- Set realistic goals with your mentor.
- Contribute ideas to solving problems.

iii. Communicator

- Don't be afraid to ask questions!
- Communicate clearly and effectively.
- Listen and be respectful.

B. Mentee Responsibilities

Mentees are encouraged to play a substantial role in the Mentor Program and therefore have accompanying responsibilities.

- i. **Respect.** Respect your mentor's time and confidentiality.
 - Don't share a mentor's personal feelings or ideas with a third party unless authorized by your mentor.
 - Respect your mentor's time as if it were your own.
- ii. **Communicate.** Be clear about your needs and limits.
 - Communicate early on your preferred method of communication, the best days to be reached, and your time constraints.
- iii. **Professionalism.** Conduct a professional relationship at all times.
 - Work through a conflict with care and respect. Contact the Mentor Program Committee for assistance if necessary.

- iv. **Evaluate.** Continually evaluate how well you are meeting the goals of the program.
 - Be committed to self-development.
 - Be able to work interdependently.
- v. **Recognize.** Recognize your mentor when you achieve goals you have discussed.
 - Send a thank you email or take the time to make a phone call.

C. Mentee Expectations

NAWL expects all mentees to be committed to the program. However, we understand that conflicts may arise. If at any time you feel you cannot work with your mentor please contact the Mentor Program Committee. The Mentor Program Committee will work to resolve the issue or reassign mentees if necessary. If at any time you no longer wish to participate in the program please contact the Mentor Program Committee as soon as possible.

D. Mentor Roles

NAWL's Mentoring Program has three main goals: (1) supporting the student; (2) acting as a resource; and (3) helping your mentee achieve his/her goals. The roles a mentor adopts will differ depending on the student. Sometimes you may be performing one role, other times you may be performing several. Below are general roles that a mentor may assume.

- i. **Guide.** Help law students navigate through the transition from student to professional.
 - Reveal any "unwritten rules" for interviewing/negotiating.
 - Provide information on the dynamics of a law firm, in house law department or government agency.
 - Everybody makes mistakes, share yours!
- ii. **Motivator.** Generate motivation within your mentee through encouragement and support.
 - Motivate your mentee to achieve an ambitious goal.
 - Focus on what your mentee is doing successfully and relate this positive feedback to your mentee.
- iii. **Coach.** Provide constructive feedback to promote professional growth.
 - Encourage positive behavior with positive feedback.

- Discourage negative behavior with constructive feedback.
- iv. **Advisor.** Help your mentee develop his/her professional interests and set realistic goals.
- Set goals that are reachable, specific, clear, and time-framed.
 - Goals are not static. Keep goals flexible and modify them when necessary.
 - Direct your mentee to career resources that he/she may require.
- v. **Role Model.** Always project high standards of professionalism and a positive attitude.
- Remember mentees are likely to imitate their mentors.
 - Provide an opportunity for your mentee to learn the positive attributes of an experienced attorney.

E. Mentor Responsibilities

A mentor's responsibilities, like their roles, will vary depending on the mentee. However, because a mentee is a lesser-skilled and/or experienced person the following guidelines are universal:

- vi. **Respect.** Respect your mentee's time and confidentiality.
- Don't share a mentee's personal feelings or ideas with a third party unless authorized by your mentee.
 - Respect your mentee's time as if it were your own.
- vii. **Communicate.** Be clear about your needs and limits.
- Communicate early on your preferred method of communication, the best days to be reached, and your time constraints.
 - Set boundaries from the beginning.
- viii. **Professionalism.** Conduct a professional relationship at all times.
- Carefully consider encouraging a close friendship.
 - Work through a conflict with care and respect. Contact the Mentor Program Committee for assistance if necessary.
- ix. **Evaluate.** Continually evaluate how well you are meeting the goals of the program.
- Invite your mentee to discuss any concerns.
 - Encourage your mentee to meet his/her goals, not your own.

- x. **Recognize.** Recognize your mentee when he/she achieves goals you have discussed.
 - Send a congratulatory email or take the time to make a phone call.

F. Mentor Expectations

NAWL expects all mentors to be committed to the program. However, we understand that conflicts may arise. Once a mentor is assigned a mentee, you are expected to contact them via email or other preferred method of communication at least once a month. If at any time you feel you cannot work with your mentee please contact the Mentor Program Committee. The Mentor Program Committee will work to resolve the issue or reassign mentees if necessary. If at any time you no longer wish to participate in the program please contact the Mentor Program Committee as soon as possible.

V. CONTACT INFORMATION.

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