SDAPA Mentorship Program Participant Guide

A Career Development Program Developed for the Young Planners Group of the San Diego Section

Developed by:

the SDAPA Young Planners Group mentorship & education subcommittee

2014 Mentorship Year

Program Coordinators:

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Program Overview

Mission Statement
Foster an exchange of professional expertise and innovative planning practice in an effort to enhance both personal and professional skills while creating mutually beneficial relationships and friendships between students, young planning professionals and experienced planning professionals in the industry.

Program Goal
The goal of the Mentorship & Education Program is to successfully match YPG members and students (Protégés) with experienced planners (Mentors) for guidance and support, while offering mentors an opportunity to strengthen ties with our future leaders of the planning community and APA.

Objectives
- Recognize APAs commitment to professional and technical development;
- Accelerate and enhance career and professional development of participants;
- Increase knowledge of the technical and/or organizational aspects of planning;
- Make friends and develop long-lasting relationships between participants

Sample Program Sessions
Program Sessions are intended to be a formal 1-hour lesson activity on a specified topic intended to provide an educational component to the Program that is relevant and oriented to the expertise of the Mentor, or the interests of the Mentorship Team participants.

Each 1-hour Program Session would consist of a set agenda with specific objectives for the lesson. Specified agendas are developed appropriate to the event’s educational purpose or objectives. Program Sessions should cover no more than one topic or theme, and each lesson and discussion should stay relevant to the subject throughout the hour. Examples of lesson activities and subjects include:

- Planning case law
- Planning theory
- Planning processes
- Public participation techniques
- Zoning
- Subdivision/land development ordinances
- Conflict resolution
- Transportation planning
- Planning for renewable energy
- Recreation planning
- Economic development
- Transit oriented development
- Scheduling techniques
- Environmental clearance
- Quantitative analysis techniques

As part your participation, AICP CM Credits may be available to participating mentors and protégés. By offering a learning experience in a small group setting, mentors will benefit professionally by offering first hand knowledge and relevant planning experience of the topic; while protégés benefit from gaining a real world perspective on the issues that face...
MENTOR/PROTÉGÉ AGREEMENT

Commitment

Protégés and Mentors in a Mentorship Team must commit to a minimum of four (4) one-to-one or team meetings of at least one hour each over the course of the program year. The program year will typically last about 5 months from February through June in a given year. A Mentor and a Protégé may, upon mutual agreement, exceed the four required meetings, as well as meet beyond the program completion date.

Communication

The Protégé should take the initiative to schedule the first meeting. The individuals involved should establish and maintain open lines of communication. At their first meeting, both parties should bring their calendars, schedule various meeting dates and times, and identify the best fit avenues for communication and coordination. Both parties should return phone calls and emails promptly. Mentors are encouraged to invite their Protégés to APA activities.

Program Elements

The Mentor is committed to providing professional exposure and experience. Protégé: The Protégé is committed to honoring meeting dates and times.

Issue Resolution

Mentors and Protégés are encouraged to contact the Mentorship Coordinators if issues arise that cannot be resolved between the two parties.

Evaluation

Upon completion of the program, the Mentors and the Protégés will have the opportunity to evaluate the program, expressing benefits and/or shortcomings.

Who We Are

Program participants are comprised of the following:

1. Protégés - Protégés are planning students and YPG members who are less experienced in the profession or who are interested in learning more about the profession from more senior-level planners in the field. There are no restrictions on who can participate or how long they should be matched with a mentor. All students and YPG members are encouraged to participate!

2. Mentors - Mentors are practicing planners with significant experience and first hand knowledge of planning issues and the profession. Mentors have a range of experience and can provide technical assistance, direction, guidance, support, and feedback, and serve as an advocate for the Protégés.

Mentor Contributions

Mentors can contribute to the Program in a variety of ways, including the following:

- Be a Mentor or lead a Mentorship Team
- One-time interview for newsletter or YPG website
- 2-hour job shadow
- Case Study Presentation or Site Visit
- Career Development Sessions or Lunch & Learns
- Resume Workshops
- Mock Interviews
- Career Advice
Program Benefits

Benefits to Protégés

Protégés can benefit from the Program in the following ways:

- Gaining fresh perspectives and new experiences;
- Obtain valuable networking and recruiting opportunities;
- Increase self-awareness of personal and professional capabilities;
- Further refine professional and personal goals
- Enhance planning skills and improve job performance
- Diversify understanding of the discipline
- Strengthen ties with the planning community and APA

Benefits to Mentors

Mentors can benefit from the Program in the following ways:

- Enhance coaching and mentoring skills
- Gain satisfaction in being able to contribute back to the profession
- Gain new perspective on emerging trends in various fields of planning
- Expand professional network and professional contacts

Benefits to SDAPA

Mentors can benefit from the Program in the following ways:

- Recruit volunteers for personal/organizational projects and events (Protégés are asked to volunteer for at least 2 planning related events per year)
- Make a difference in the lives of young professionals by contributing to the success and growth of protégés.
- Promote companies and organizations to the participants of the Young Planners Group

Mentorship Teams & Professional Growth Plans

Mentorship Teams

Mentorship teams are intended to foster professional development with a personalized experience for Mentors and Protégés. Each Mentorship Team is intended to be comprised of: one (1) Senior-level Planner; one (1) Associate or Assistant-level Planner; and 2-3 Students or YPG Members (Protégés).

Professional Growth Plan

Through the duration of the Program, Mentors and Protégés work collaboratively to strengthen the skill set, knowledge base, and professional abilities to meet the goals set forth in each Protégé Professional Growth Plan. The questions within the PGP are intended to facilitate communication and collaboration amongst team participants (protégés and mentors) and sharing of personalized professional experiences.

Each question within the PGP targets a particular facet of professional development. At the time of application, Protégés are asked to document their goals and objectives of entering into the Program to establish a baseline for personal and professional growth. Throughout the duration of the Program, Mentorship Coordinators follow up with each participants to ensure goals are being sought.

The Professional Growth Plan is intended to provide a structure for effective dialogue between Protégé and Mentor to enhance professional development, but is not required. Mentors and protégés may collaboratively utilize variations of this suggested format to achieve similar or greater levels of dialogue.