



Mentorship Program Handbook

2026

Welcome to the AFP Hampton Roads Mentorship Program!

We're so glad you've chosen to take this next step in your professional journey. Whether you're participating as a mentee seeking guidance from a seasoned fundraising professional, or as a mentor eager to support and encourage someone newer to the field, we're delighted to have you as part of the program.

The Mentorship Program runs for eight months, from May through January. Mentees are responsible for scheduling meetings and helping set the direction and focus of each conversation. Mentors, we encourage you to be open and candid in your guidance - mentees may not always know which questions to ask, and your insight and experience are invaluable.

This handbook is designed to support both mentors and mentees throughout the program. Please use it as a helpful guide rather than a set of rules. It includes the commitment expectations and some prompts to help your conversations.

We hope you find the Mentorship Program rewarding and enriching. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions along the way – I'm always here to help.

Sincerely,

Jacklyn Banas
AFP Mentorship Chair, 2026
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GOALS

AFP Hampton Roads Mentoring Program Goals:

- Foster collegial, supportive relationships between seasoned professionals and mentees.
- Help fundraising professionals build a strong network for ongoing guidance, collaboration, and creative problem-solving.
- Strengthen mentees' skills by identifying and focusing on specific areas of professional practice.
- Enhance the professional growth of both mentors and mentees through shared learning and experience.
- Encourage enjoyment and connection through meaningful, engaging mentorship experiences.



COMMITMENTS

MENTOR COMMITMENTS

- Commit to serving as a mentor for the full eight-month program (May–January).
- Meet with your mentee once per month. Meetings are ideally held in person and last approximately one hour; however, phone or Zoom meetings may be used as needed to accommodate schedules.
- Provide guidance, insight, and encouragement to support and accelerate your mentee’s professional growth.
- Assist your mentee in setting meaningful goals and offer support as they work toward achieving them.
- Respond to your mentee’s individual development needs as they grow as a fundraising professional.
- Support the success of the program by completing a brief evaluation at the conclusion of the mentorship period, as requested by the AFP Mentorship Chair.

MENTEE COMMITMENTS

- Commit to participating as a mentee for the full eight-month program (May–January).
- Meet with your mentor once per month. Meetings are ideally held in person and last approximately one hour; however, phone or Zoom meetings may be used as needed to accommodate schedules. *Scheduling and meeting requests are the responsibility of the mentee.*
- Identify specific areas of focus to work on with your mentor in support of your professional growth.
- Prepare questions, topics, or work for review in advance of meetings to make the most effective use of time together.
- Be respectful of all scheduled meeting dates and times.
- Support the success of the program by completing a brief evaluation at the conclusion of the mentorship period, as requested by the AFP Mentorship Chair.

It is the responsibility of the mentee to prepare for the meetings with questions and topics. Here are some ideas for getting started:

Introductory Meeting:

- What are three goals you would like to accomplish with the assistance of your mentor.
- How do these goals for the AFP Mentoring Program align with your career goals?
- What are your career goals over the next 5 – 10 years? How could your time with your mentor help you achieve those goals?
- Take time to get to know one another, including your employer, career path, goals, strengths, and areas for growth.
- Share how you each got started in fundraising, what drew you to the profession, and why you chose your current organization.
- Discuss advice and best practices for someone new to the fundraising field.
- Talk openly about approaches to managing work–life balance in a demanding profession.
- Discuss what each of you hopes to gain from the mentorship experience and how you can make the partnership most meaningful.

Additional Topics and Questions to Explore:

- Ethical situations your mentor has encountered in their fundraising career and how they navigated them.
- Professional challenges your mentor currently faces or has faced, and the lessons learned.
- Areas where your mentor sees room for growth, and the strategies they use to address those challenges.
- Reflection on the goals you identified at the start of the mentorship and progress made toward them.
- A detailed discussion of long-term career goals, including creating a roadmap to help chart your path forward.
- Organizations, professional associations, or community groups your mentor is involved with that they would recommend to support your career development.
- How your mentor stays informed and engaged in the field, including preferred news sources and professional development opportunities (e.g., Chronicle of Higher Education, podcasts, AFP webinars, conferences).
- Attend an event hosted by one another’s organization—or attend an event together—to build connections and make introductions to new colleagues.