

# KAMP

Knox Alumni Mentoring Program

## Mentoring Handbook

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THE HUMAN POWERED EDUCATION

Mentor



**KNOX**  
COLLEGE

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## Knox Alumni Mentoring Program

Dear Mentor,

Welcome to the Knox Alumni Mentoring Program (KAMP)! At the heart of Knox's mission to challenge each other to explore, understand, and improve ourselves and our world, stands a tradition of alumni engagement and active involvement. KAMP is designed to foster new opportunities for alumni to assist current students in connecting the classroom experience to preparing for career paths. We are excited for the connections you will make and the life-learning information that will be gained. With more than 16,210 living alumni with enriching stories to share, we are certain your experience will open mentees' eyes, keep you connected to the innovation that defines Knox, and play a crucial role in building a dynamic, enriching Knox community.

KAMP is a collaboration between the Bastian Family Career Center and Alumni Relations. It serves three critical functions: to ease the transition from college to the real-world for students, foster networking opportunities, and provide engagement for our alumni. In order to meet these goals and to ensure lasting relationships between students and their mentors, a great attention to detail is placed in the pairing of alumni mentors with students who share similar hobbies and career interests.

This handbook will provide you with an overview of the program and, hopefully, answer some basic questions about mentoring. Please use it as a guide and resource throughout your mentoring experience and feel free to share with us any suggestions for improving its usefulness to our future alumni mentors and students.

Thank you for your participation. If at any time you have questions or concern, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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## Knox Alumni Mentoring Program

### PURPOSE

Community is central to the Knox College experience, dating back to the founding years of putting learning to use to accomplish both personal and communal goals. The Knox Alumni Mentoring Program links the classroom to the real-world, by fostering meaningful and productive connections between students and alumni mentors. The yearlong program provides students with practical application of networking skills, an understanding of the occupation of interest, and personal and professional growth.

### GOALS

- Provide insight and tools to help Mentee make informed & ethical career decisions.
- Provide a forum for the observation, practice and mastery of professional networking skills.
- Grant alumni an opportunity to expand their affinity to Knox College by interacting with current students.
- Develop confident graduates with creative thinking and interpersonal skills who will discover where their degree will lead them.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF A MENTOR

Your own life experiences in learning and working with others qualify you to be a mentor. The best mentors are people whose own enthusiasm for their work is so contagious they inspire others just by doing what they enjoy most. Sharing your own interests with a mentee is just the beginning of mentoring.

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### BENEFITS

#### **Mentor**

We believe that mentoring will be a positive and enriching experience for you. Specifically, we hope you will:

- Refine coaching and mentoring skills.
- Develop meaningful connections with students.
- Learn about the Knox of today and the next generation.
- Gain professional synergy.
- Expand your professional network.

#### **Mentee**

Following are some general ways that we hope the students will benefit from being in a mentoring relationship:

- Build a professional network.
- Develop and enhance professional and communication skills.
- Connect academics and career; gain perspective and support on academic pursuits and challenges.
- Explore new ideas and areas of interest.
- Gain exposure to career options.
- Develop an affinity to Knox College.

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### EXPECTATIONS

Outstanding mentors are intentional about their mentoring role. They seek to make the match a good one, invest significant time and energy in getting to know their mentee, and deliberately and proactively offer the career guidance and emotional support most useful to their mentee.

#### **Mentor:**

- Listen to the needs and expectations of your Mentee.
- Be committed to serve as a resource to the Mentee.
- Encourage your Mentee to explore new areas.
- Work with college staff on how to successfully navigate students through Knox College.

#### **Mentee:**

- Initiate (at least) monthly communication. You drive the relationship and indicate needs. Your mentor may reach out as well.
- Respond to correspondence within 48 hours.
- Proactively prepare for meetings and identify goals you hope to achieve.
- Follow through with timelines and communication.
- Contact mentor in a timely manner if unable to attend scheduled meeting.
- Be open and listen to mentor. Accept criticism and listen to constructive feedback.
- Share your ideas and insight.
- Look for opportunities where you can help your mentor. Recommend new apps or software, educate them on social media, pop culture, etc.
- Contact program staff if there is a concern with the mentor relationship.

### **Suggested timeline for in-person meetings, WebEx/Skype or Phone Meetings**

<b>OCTOBER</b> <i>First Initial Contact</i>	<b>NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER</b> <i>Winter Break</i>	<b>FEBRUARY/ MARCH</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>MAY</b> <i>Contact prior to graduation/final exams</i>
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### EXPECTATIONS (continued)

#### Both:

The amount of time we ask to be committed is illustrated below:

- **In-person meetings:**

Face-to-face interactions throughout the year

- Face-to-face interactions may also be conducted through Skype, Facetime, or other forms of video communication.
- In-person meetings will most likely vary depending on your proximity to Knox. If you plan to visit campus or will be present for events such as homecoming, please consider arranging an opportunity to meet with your student mentee face-to-face.

- **Communication:**

- **Communicate at least once per month.**
- Respond to your mentee in a timely manner.
- Clearly articulate expectations for mentorship
- Be flexible with expectations and meeting changes.
- Maintain confidentiality during and after mentorship.
- Discover common ground and respect your differences.
- Review the Mentor & Mentee Agreements.

There are numerous ways to communicate with your student. Today's student grew up with e-mail and instant messenger...but we all know that they love receiving "snail mail." Birthday and final exams are great opportunities to send a note or card wishing your student well. The best method of determining how to contact your student is to discuss with him/her what is most convenient and comfortable for both.

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### PROCESS

#### **Match:**

Once you complete and submit the Mentor Profile, we will e-mail you confirming receipt of your profile. The pairing process is determined by the KAMP committee, comprised of Alumni Relations and Bastian Family Career Center Staff. The committee will match mentors and mentees by similarities in their personal and professional experience and demographics. Once we find a mentee that best matches your profile, we will reach out to both parties and notify you of a match.

Complete and submit the Mentor Agreement form before initial contact from students is made. The mentee has the responsibility of reaching out to you, so be attentive to the best form of communication you have provided such as email or phone number.

#### **Initial Meeting (October)**

You are paired with a remarkable student with a great interest in your career field. Your Mentee will demonstrate their enthusiasm for the connection by initiating contact once the match is made.

Meetings should be relaxed and casual and typically last an hour. You are not responsible to pay for your Mentee's meal or any of your Mentees' expenses, nor vice versa. However, you are welcome to treat if you wish.

**Topics of conversation** for this meeting will vary.

**There are two objectives:**

- Become acquainted.
- Establish communication expectations, including frequency and methods (email, phone, in-person, etc.).

**Below are some questions to think about as you prepare:**

- What are some things I should tell my students about myself that would help us get to know each other?
- What about me and my life story might be interesting and relevant to this person?
- What do I want to gain from the mentoring relationship?



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### MONTHLY COMMUNICATION TOPICS (NEW FOR 2016-2017)

- **November (Career Planning)**
  - Continue your discussion about your mentor's history
  - Discuss short, mid, and long term goals and how you both plan to achieve them
  - Discuss skills and on-going professional training necessary to achieve these goals
  - Updating a résumé, letters of recommendation, and improving interview skills
  
- **December (Work-Life Balance)**
  - Discuss the challenges in achieving work/life balance
  - Work together to create a plan for you to pursue educational and professional success without sacrificing your personal/family life/hobbies
  
- **January (Managing people and dealing with difficult people)**
  - It's natural to gravitate toward those relationships that bring you the most happiness, growth, and fulfillment. However, despite your best efforts and intentions to the contrary, we're sometimes forced to deal with challenging relationships and difficult people.
  - Discuss ways to better deal with stress, tension, and anxiety that negatively impact your mood and expose you to unpleasant emotional toxicity.
  
- **February (Improving communication style and skills)**
  - Communication is more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion/intentions behind the information. Effective communication is a two-way street.
  - How to convey different messages? Was your message understood?  
How to be a better listener?
  
- **March (Service work/Philanthropy, Professional Organizations)**
  - How to get involved
  - Pros and cons and appropriate selection
  
- **April (Turning a degree into a profession)**
  - Some degrees do not set a student up for specific jobs.
  - Unless you are earning or have earned your degree in a very specific field, you have many options as far as you career choice goes.
  - This means that half the battle is deciding what you actually want to do.
  
- **May (Evaluating & Looking ahead)**
  - Discuss what worked and didn't work in your mentoring relationship
  - Create a list of suggestions to help future mentoring teams for next year's program

**A DINNER FORUM WILL BE SCHEDULED MONTHLY FOR MENTEES TO MEET AS A GROUP AND DISCUSS TOPICS WITH ONE GUEST MENTOR VIA WEBEX VIDEOCAST, ALONG WITH KNOX ALUMNI RELATIONS AND CAREER SERVICES PROFESSIONALS.**

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## QUESTIONS FOR MENTEE

### Personal

- Tell me about yourself?
- Why do you hope to gain from this mentorship?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- Have you had a mentor before? What worked and what didn't work?
- What inspires you? What holds you back?
- What are some things you feel you do well? What challenges you?
- What accomplishments have made you most proud?

### Academic

- Why did you choose this major?
- What classes are you currently taking?
- Have you participated in:
  - Study abroad
  - Internships
  - Club or organizations on campus
  - Research opportunities on campus
- What do you plan to do after you graduate?
- Who is your favorite professor? Why?

### Future

- What do you really want to be and do?
- Where do you hope to be in the next year? 5 years?
- How can I help you reach your goals?

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## BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR & MENTEE

### Communication

An initial goal for the mentorship should be to establish a knowledge base of one another, so that a comfort level develops.

Effective communications are essential to any healthy relationship. We have created four stages of guiding the mentoring conversation.

#### 1. Explore

The end result of this phase is to have an understanding of what is going on in the mentee's world.

#### 2. Collaborate

A key outcome of this phase is a plan of action.

#### 3. Implement

This phase is where the mentee implements or commits to implementing the strategy.

#### 4. Evaluate

What worked? What did not work?

At least one correspondence a month has proven to be most beneficial for cultivating mentee-mentor relationship. Establish a schedule that works best for both and plan around it.

### E-Mails

E-mails are very important, a simple pledge to one another to acknowledge and respond to each other's request in a timely manner is highly recommended.

- E-mails will be acknowledged within 48 hours.
- Response to content will be provided within 5 days.
- The mentor should inform the mentee when other obligations affect availability and when he/she will be available to the mentee.

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### SUGGESTED MENTORING ACTIVITIES

#### Conversations

- Discuss your educational background and the role of educational preparation in your field.
- Share information about a current event or issue in your field.
- Inquire about Mentee's internship endeavors.
- Discuss projects and developments in your company and industry such as: technology and trends, time management, globalization, diversity, and ethics in the work place.

#### Career Search Process

- Critique the mentee's resume and/or cover letter.
- Lead your mentee through a mock interview.
- Offer guidance on where to best look for jobs/internships in your field.
- Role-play telephone skills in anticipation of phone interviews.
- Share articles relevant to his/her major or career interests as well as encouragement to read relevant magazines, and journals.

#### Graduate School

- Share what you learned about navigating your graduate studies.
- Discuss how you worked with your advisors.
- Communicate the transition from school to the real-world.

#### Networking

- Introduce your mentee to other colleagues and/or contacts.
- Attend a professional association meeting or conference together.
- Guide your mentee in how to conduct an informational interview.
- Have them attend a morning staff meeting, or shadow you for a day.
- Encourage your Mentee to connect with you on LinkedIn and critique their profile.