

LSU School of Dentistry Mentoring Program



A collaboration of the:

**LSU School of Dentistry Alumni Association
&
Louisiana Dental Association**

LSU Health
NEW ORLEANS
School of Dentistry

ILDA
LOUISIANA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

WHAT IS THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

The Mentor Program introduces students to dental professionals who are members of organized dentistry. The program fosters relationships between practitioners and students during their training. It provides an avenue for students to take when looking for additional information, considering career options and seeking opinions from "someone who has been there." The Mentor Program also introduces students to the concerns and ideas that will be important in their careers.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

The Mentor Program enables students to obtain advice and guidance for some of the concerns involved in beginning a dental career. It is intended to integrate the dentist of tomorrow with the dental community. Students will have the opportunity to interact with practitioners from organized dentistry to begin to better understand real world experiences and the benefits of organized dentistry.

HOW DOES THE MENTOR PROGRAM WORK?

Interested students and practicing dentists complete a registration form. The form will be used to pair students with dentists. A dentist may be paired with no more than two dental students. Each program participant is asked to commit for two years, though long-term, informal professional relationships may continue.

The program begins with an email, conference or telephone call between the mentor and mentee. From there, the mentor and mentee define how they want the relationship to progress. Several organized social opportunities will be offered throughout the year. These organized events should be supplemental with visits to the mentor's office to answer the students' questions regarding the operation of a private office.

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A mentor is a practicing dentist who is a member of organized dentistry and willing to be an additional resource to the dentist of tomorrow.

A mentor can be:

- A wise and trusted friend.
- A good listener, someone who cares.
- Someone who helps another develop his or her vision and work to their fullest potential.
- A resource for information.

Responsibilities of the mentor:

- Initiate the first contact and then communicate frequently.
- Express your expectations for the relationship and define what you hope to gain from and offer to the relationship.
- Provide an opportunity for the mentee to observe the operation of a dental office.
- Invite your mentee to participate in professional activities with you, such as component meetings, continuing education seminars, and meetings with dental suppliers.
- Complete and submit feedback form to the LDA.

WHAT CAN A MENTOR DO FOR A MENTEE?

A mentor can help a mentee:

- Explore career possibilities.
- Network with colleagues.
- Work through problems with a new perspective.
- Share expertise and experience.
- Aid in developing dentistry's future professionals.
- Give back to the profession.
- Stay apprised of changes in dental education.
- Make a real difference in the life of a dental student.

WHAT IS A MENTEE?

A mentee is a dental student interested in enhancing his or her dental education by forming a relationship with a practicing member of the dental profession.

A mentee has:

- An open mind.
- A willingness to learn.
- A commitment to his/her future.
- A willingness to be an active participant.

Responsibilities of the Mentee:

- Communicate openly and freely.
- Honor appointments and commitments.
- Express expectations for the relationship and define what you hope to gain from and offer to the relationship.
- Provide feedback to your mentor.
- Attend 1 to 2 planned meetings through LSUSD.

BASICS OF EVERY MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIP:

- Be willing and eager to listen and talk.
- Be honest.
- Be enthusiastic and positive.
- Feel free to share your opinion, but guard against telling someone what to do or not to do.
- Enjoy yourself, have fun, and thank your mentor for the time and attention.

WHAT IF THE RELATIONSHIP DOESN'T WORK?

If you have tried your best to communicate with each other and the relationship is not working, contact the Louisiana Dental Association's mentor program coordinator. If you feel you are not well-matched, another attempt will be made to pair you with a new mentor/mentee.

The LSU School of Dentistry, the LSU School of Dentistry Alumni Association, and the Louisiana Dental Association are excited about the Mentor Program's opportunities. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and your commitment!