



# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Inspire

Network

Guide

# Purpose of Program

## **Mission:**

The Georgia Recreation and Park Association is furthering one of its missions:

“The Association reiterates the value of parks and recreation services as a vital aspect of communities, personal lifestyle and citizen rights.”

## **Vision:**

Empower GRPA professionals with the tools needed to get involved within the association and motivate members to be creative and enhance our organization.

## **Why:**

As the field of parks and recreation continues to grow in needs and services, providing quality leaders is essential. This developmental focused mentoring program is designed for individuals who recently entered the field of parks and recreation for a career change, starting in their career or eager to grow professionally. There is a need to keep them motivated and passionate about parks and recreation. GRPA strives to engage a diverse group of professionals who will lead and advance the overall development of parks and recreation.

# Guide for the Mentee

Prior to speaking with your mentor, write down your goals, what you would like to gain from the conversation and your expectations of your mentor.

Mentee success tips:

- Remember your mentee is a volunteer- Know that they may have more experience than you and their giving of their time to you. Don't waste the opportunities to meet and interact. Make it meaningful for you
- Develop trust- All people take time to develop trust and it must be nurtured. When you have it communication is more open.
- Be Realistic in your expectations- Know the boundaries and limits of the relationship. They are a guide for you there is still work you will have to do on your own.
- Come prepared for meetings with an agenda- Your time with your mentor is yours, Make the most of it. Be prepared to discuss your goal progress, a situation you want guidance on, or ask for your mentor to come prepared with an agenda.
- Be open about your needs- This is a safe space, sharing your challenges will help your mentor to know how to help. Be honest about your weakness or strengths.
- Be Flexible and Learn- This is an opportunity to better yourself, take advantage of the relationship. Being willing to stretch yourself out of your comfort zone will help to be open to what this relationship can do for you.

Self-Reflection questions for mentee:

- What type of leader would I like to become?
- What would be my ideal role/career position? How does my current position provide experience?
- What is my short term (less than 1 year) goals related to professional development?
- What would I like to learn from building this mentor/mentee relationship?

### Roles/Responsibilities of Mentee:

- Assumes most of the responsibility in ensuring that the program works and meets their expectations.
- During initial meeting, try to determine topics that you may want to explore with your Mentor.
- Be prepared to tell your Mentor what is important to you, what you would like to learn, be ready with any questions or problem areas.
- Don't expect your Mentor to read your mind! This program is for you to professional and personally advance.
- Be sure to communicate your expectations and what you would like to gain for your Mentor/Mentee relationship.
- Develop trust – All people take time to develop trust and it must be nurtured.
- Be realistic in your expectations. Know the boundaries and limits of the relationship.

## Guide for the Mentor

Prior to speaking with your mentee, write down your goals, what you would like to gain from the conversation and your expectations as a mentor.

### Mentor success tips:

- Set your expectations together in the beginning- set your boundaries, establish goals to work on, and be honest about any conflicts you may have.
- Take a genuine interest in your mentee- Be an Active Listener. Really get to know them likes/dislikes, how they interact with others, and what their personality preferences are. This information will help you to be able to guide your mentee maybe not that day but in the future.
- Know when to wait before giving advice- It may not happen the first time you meet that you have a light bulb moment with your mentee. The more your relationship grows the better you will be help to guide or advise. Don't feel rushed to make a difference it will come.
- Give Constructive Criticism- Honesty is the best Policy. No one can learn or grow if you are not honest with them. This is an opportunity for the mentee receive feedback that is not tied to job performance from a supervisor. This is their opportunity to grow in a safe space.
- Share your learning moments (mistakes)- The best gift you can give is sharing mistakes or failures you have had. It shows your human and willing to show that you overcame it. Many younger professionals struggle to admit to mistakes, therefor you offering your mistakes up can help them to feel more comfortable to admit theirs.
- Celebrate their Achievements- Sometimes your conversations are centered around negative situations. Take the time to celebrate the positives. This will help to balance the conversation but also will give them more encouragement for their successes.
- Give more than you ask for- Mentees are younger or less experienced and can feel like they are a burden. Show them you are happy to help and give advice or help freely. This will help ease their anxiety, and let you be successful in this relationship as well.
- Learn from your Mentee- Different experiences lead to knowledge. You never know what you may learn from your mentee that will help you. It could be a new program idea or learning more about younger professionals and how they are different. Be open to what you can gain as well.

### Self-Reflection questions for mentor:

- Looking back over my career, what is something I wish I had knowledge of to aid in my career development?
- What advice would I give to someone seeking to advance in parks and recreation?
- What would I like to gain as a mentor from this experience?

- How can I provide supportive feedback to my mentee and what challenges may I face?

#### Roles/Responsibilities of Mentor:

- During initial meeting try to determine what is important to the Mentee – i.e., career goals, resume review, professional development, leadership in GRPA and agency, etc.
- Primary role is to listen and ask open-ended questions to determine areas of focus for Mentee.
- Make sure you have monthly visits – pick a certain day, date, and time each month for your visit. This will help you and your Mentee be successful.
- Exposes mentee to different areas of the industry.
- Encourages candor and maintains confidentiality.
- Provides feedback regarding mentee's performance, career, etc.
- Challenges and supports the mentee.
- Actively listens to the mentee.
- Avoids the following behaviors: offering advice, criticizing, building barriers, etc.

## Getting Started

### **Assignment**

The mentorship program is designed as an 8-month commitment both mentor and mentee agree to actively participate in. There will be an application and criteria created to match mentors/mentees with one another and an initial meeting with all participants. The agreement should be completed, signed, and returned after the initial meeting. Prior to GRPA annual conference, both mentee and mentor will receive a survey to complete, outlining their feedback regarding the mentoring program. At the annual conference, the mentorship program will have a final assignment of providing space for the mentee and mentor to meet face-to-face and receive recognition for participating in the program.

### **How to Start your first conversations**

Getting to know someone new is always an adventure. Never assume that you know everything about someone. While you may know a piece of their story you may not know it all. During your first interactions you should have three goals:

1. Build rapport and familiarity
2. Set expectations for the relationship
3. Learn from each other

As a mentor you will want to learn what career goals they have, what are their current challenges, what is going on in their as a mentee you will want to learn about what your mentors strengths are, how they got started, and how they got to where they are. All this information will help both to make the most of this relationship.

### **Meeting Expectations**

You are expected to meet at least once a month for at least an hour. There is no requirement for how you meet phone, video call, in person that is left for you all to set the expectation. Some suggestions: meet before or after district meetings, meet during Board of Trustee meetings, have virtual visits, invite the mentee/mentor to office or event – be open to flexible meeting times. Meetings should be structured either by the mentee or mentor. Having an agenda can keep everyone on topic and makes sure that the goal of the meeting was met. This also helps to

prepare either mentee or mentor for the conversation ahead. If you are unsure of topics the following are some suggestions:

- Goal progress/Goal setting
- One recent challenge experienced or working on
- Upcoming event
- Skill Topics
- Career path
- Share a learning moment
- Reflection of an experience with mentee/mentor (i.e., recent presentation at conference, story of their event)

## How does this end?

The mentorship program will conclude at the GRPA annual conference with a final one-on-one meeting for mentors and mentees and recognition of program participants. Each mentor and mentee will receive a final survey prior to the annual conference to highlight their input of the program. We encourage the mentorship to extend beyond the program and both parties actively continue to network with one another.

# The Mentor and Mentee Agreement

We understand the responsibility each of us hold to ensure success of our mentorship program and to achieve the greatest benefit of this relationship. We agree to meet monthly, with no less than 6 hours dedicated to career development.

We hope to achieve (3) goals:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

To accomplish the above goals, we will:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Communication

We will plan to communicate at least \_\_\_\_\_ times per month, for a minimum of six months, and utilizing \_\_\_\_\_ as the main mode of communication. If the scheduled meeting should change, we will notify one another in a timely manner to reschedule the meeting.

We agree to put forth effort and take accountability for our time management and action required throughout our meeting.

## Privacy

Our conversations will remain confidential. We will remain honest if a conversation is uncomfortable and decline to answer or share certain information. If specific conversations become off-limits to share, we will notify our partner of the changes.

This is an agreement to outline the goals and expectations of the mentoring program designed by GRPA which both mentor and mentee shall comply. If either party determines that can no longer honor the agreement, it is their responsibility to notify the mentorship program administrator with the request. This agreement shall dissolve on

\_\_\_\_\_ (the last day of GRPA annual conference)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentee (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentee Signed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor Signed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date