

To: WBASNY Chapter Presidents

From: WBASNY Equal Opportunity in the Legal Profession Committee

Date: May 21, 2020

Re: Mentoring Initiatives Across WBASNY Chapters

Dear Chapter Presidents:

First and foremost, we hope that this message finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy during these unprecedented times. The Equal Opportunity in the Legal Profession (EOIP) Committee is committed to the elimination of gender bias and the promotion of fair and equal treatment of women in the legal profession, including law schools, the workplace and the courts. Particular emphasis is placed upon conducting educational programs that will advance the careers of women in the legal profession.

In furtherance of WBASNY's mission, the EOIP Committee focuses on, among other things, promoting both traditional and reverse mentoring and collecting and sharing informational resources that furthers equal opportunity.

Consistent with the EOIP Committee's purpose, it has been gathering information from individual chapters on programs that the chapters have put on with a focus on mentoring. Based on the Committee's outreach, it appears that eight of WBASNY's twenty chapters offer some form of mentoring program or event. Enclosed is a list of the programs and events, which contains a brief description of the nature of the program and the presenting chapter. Also enclosed is a short F&Q on mentoring programs. This information will also be posted on the EOIP Committee's webpage at: <https://www.wbasny.org/about/committees/equal-opportunity-in-the-profession/>.

We encourage you to work to develop, or expand, your mentoring outreach and programming efforts within and among your chapters. We recognize that during the pandemic crisis, opportunities for in-person mentoring will be significantly decreased. It is therefore more important that we seek to connect with each other, and those we mentor, in other ways. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance in developing a mentoring program or event for your chapter, or if you have any ideas or suggestions to share.

Sincerely,

EOIP COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Ravi Cattray and Elizabeth Kraengel

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Mentoring Programs Across WBASNY Chapters

Chapter	Mentoring within Chapter	Law School Mentoring	Undergrad/HS Mentoring
Brooklyn	Chapter connects newly admitted attorneys with mentor based on area of interest or career goals and plans social programs for mentors and mentees to attend together.	Mentoring programming within the chapter is also also open to law students.	Pipeline Program - to mentor college students interested in a career in the legal field
Central New York	Chapter hosts 3-4 mentoring luncheons focused on a different topic: general practice, health/wellness, federal judges	(None)	(None)
GRAWA	Women's Connections Committee seeks to bring together senior attorneys with those seeking mentors in their job search, early career or career transition along with Newly Admitted Women Attorneys Committee to create specific mentoring opportunities	(None)	(None)
New York	Used to have mentoring circles with 8-10 people in each circle, made up of junior and senior attorneys and they met on their own schedules (program not presently active).	Speed mentoring program at Fordham Law School.	(None)
Orange Sullivan	Recent program for members; good mix of newly admitted and more experienced attorneys. Guided topics. Organically creating mentorships Meet at local bakery that stays open late for them.	(None)	(None)

Chapter	Mentoring within Chapter	Law School Mentoring	Undergrad/HS Mentoring
Queens	Started new program in October 2019 called Private Law Committee for purpose of bringing together private practitioners for networking and possible mentoring opportunities. Involves breakfast round tables with different topics discussed every month about issues related to practice of law in the private sector, including courtroom anxieties, writing tips and marketing.	Partnered with St. Johns Law School for speed mentoring with law students.	(None)
Westchester	(None)	Partnered with Pace Law School for informal mentorship; set up a mentor kick off event and then allow mentors and mentees to set up their own individual meetings. Started the program in 2018; 90 law students and 75 mentors participated; invited students to holiday party..	(None)
Western	(None)	Partners with SUNY Buffalo Law School for 8 minute speed networking (f/k/a speed networking). 20-25 law students participate as well as 20-25 mentors. This program has been in place for more than 10 years and is offered annually.	(None)

Mentoring Program FAQs

How should my chapter gather information regarding who is interested in being a mentor or being mentored?

Some chapters have included a question on their membership application asking if members want to either be a mentor or be a mentee and also asking specifics of the area of law in which they practice or are interested in practicing (for law student members). An email to your membership with a form for interested members to fill out can also be a good way to determine the interest in such a program.

For mentoring programs with law schools or colleges, focus on a local law school or college in your chapter's region and create connections with the career services office through alumni of the law school or college who are members of the chapter. The career services office can help determine interest within the school of a possible mentoring program with the chapter. Chapters have also asked for students to provide resumes and a short response explaining why they want to participate and what they hope to get from the program.

What are the types of events that current chapters hold for their mentoring programs?

Chapters that currently have mentoring programs have hosted a variety of events. For mentoring with law schools, chapters have hosted a speed networking event which allows students to meet members of the chapter and create organic relationships. Chapters have also encouraged members of the chapter to invite and sponsor law students to attend chapter events.

The events for mentoring within the chapter are varied and include formal pairing up of mentors and mentees for introductory meetings and then allowing them to meet up as their schedules allow. Some chapters also hold monthly meetings where the mentors and mentees discuss a designated topic.

Where can mentoring events be hosted?

The place to host mentoring programs can differ based on the type of event you are hosting. If conducting a mentoring program with a law school or college, the law school or college may be able to offer space to host the event. Other places that chapters have used are local cafes, local bar association offices and at the office of a member.

What are some costs associated with having a mentoring program?

There may be costs associated with booking/renting space in order to hold your mentoring program and/or providing refreshments for the event.

What are some ways to alleviate costs for events?

The cost may be reduced by obtaining sponsorship for the event, charging non-members a small fee to attend the event, offering a reduced fee to law students to encourage them to attend

events specifically designed for mentoring, and asking members to sponsor law students to attend events where mentoring or networking will be a key focus.

Should there be a limit on the number of participants in the mentoring program?

It is important to have a sufficient number of mentors for the number of mentees who are interested in participating in the program. Therefore, it may be necessary to limit the number of people involved in the program in order to ensure that real relationships are being formed for members and law students.

How often should the mentors and mentees meet?

The number of times that mentors and mentees meet will depend on the type of program the chapter creates. Some chapters have monthly meetings for the mentors and mentees while others allow the mentors and mentees to set their own schedule of when to meet once they have been formally introduced.

How often should our chapter collect feedback about the mentoring program?

Chapters have found it helpful to collect feedback after running programs for a few months. This allowed chapters to figure out what was working best for them and what they needed to improve.