

PRSA And Mentoring: Take Advantage Of This Important Membership Benefit

PRSA and its network of 21,000 members has much to offer its new and mid-level professionals when it comes to mentoring. PRSA's College of Fellows (COF) considers mentoring to be "the calling card" of the College and has an active Mentoring Committee; and opportunities exist at the national and local levels as well. Here is a birds-eye view of the programs in place you can take advantage of as a PRSA member:

One-On-One Mentoring At PRSA ICON. The PRSA International Conference is an annual opportunity for PR professionals to gather for professional development, and the College of Fellows sponsors a program to connect members in search of mentoring with seasoned professionals in their industries or with specialties of interest. To be eligible, you must register for PRSA ICON and express an interest in mentoring. PRSA will provide you with a brief form so you can give your areas of interest and contact information. From there, the Mentoring Committee will match you with a fellow PRSA member for a one-on-one session that could range from 30 minutes to one hour. This program has continued even during the virtual conferences; meetings happen via phone conference and Zoom vs. in-person in this scenario. For more information, contact Susan Belanich at Susan.Belanich@prsa.org or Robin Schell, APR, Fellow PRSA, Co-Chair of the COF Mentoring Committee, at rschell@jjwpr.com.

Mentor Connect. PRSA has upgraded its platform from the days when this program was called "Mentor Match". Essentially, those seasoned professionals who are willing to provide mentoring services complete an online application that updates their profile in the PRSA membership database, so when individual PRSA members are seeking mentoring in a specific industry, geographic location or PR specialty area, they can search the directory by those specifics and reach out to any PRSA member who has identified themselves as willing to mentor. This is the link to register: <https://www.prsa.org/career/mentor-connect>.

PRSA also offers mentoring training for those interested. This program is driven by PRSA; for more information, contact Susan Belanich at Susan.Belanich@prsa.org.

PRSA's 75th Anniversary DEI Mentoring For Graduating PRSSA Seniors and New Professionals. This program, sponsored by PepsiCo, allows PRSA to offer up to

350 PRSA memberships to ethnically and racially diverse PRSSA college seniors and New Professionals. In addition to the membership, this group receives mentoring, coaching, training and professional development. For more information about this program, contact Dave Thompson, APR, Fellow PRSA at dave@davidhthompson.com.

This program is a great complement to the work the COF does to mentor PRSSA students during the academic year. Those members of the College of Fellows who are interested in participating in a longer mentoring relationship (8-10 meetings) with a student can contact Gail Rymer, APR, Fellow PRSA at grymer.strategiccommunications@gmail.com. We will be working with Cal State Fullerton students in the fall of 2022.

Mentoring for the APR Exam. PRSA has excellent resources for those who have decided to pursue the APR exam. In addition to “APR Bootcamp”, PRSA offers an online study course led by distance learning professional Michael Henry – for more information, visit PRSA’s website at

https://apps.prsa.org/SearchResults/view/8583/105/APR_Online_Study_Course_Log_in_for_success#.YdgVsxqYXIU. In addition, there are opportunities to seek

individual mentoring for the APR exam – some local chapters offer APR prep courses, and individuals who have passed the APR exam may be willing to help as well.

<https://accreditation.prsa.org/MyAPR/Content/Teach/mentors/Mentors.aspx>.

Mentoring For Young Professionals. PRSA’s College of Fellows has been actively providing outreach to new professionals, offering guest speakers from the College for their PD programs and guest columns for their newsletter. For more information, visit the New Professionals section website or contact New Professionals leadership at <http://prnewpros.prsa.org/about/meet-the-executive-committee/>.

Recent newsletter contribution by PRSA COF member Kirk Hazlett, APR, Fellow PRSA:

<https://www.prsa.org/event/2021/04/07/default-calendar/prospects-for-new-pros-finding-your-footing-during-covid-19-and-beyond>

Mentoring For COF Applicants: It is our goal to grow the College of Fellows, a group of senior professionals who have practiced PR for at least 20 years and have demonstrated excellence and have given back to our profession by speaking, writing, teaching and volunteering for PRSA and other important organizations. Members of the COF volunteer as “Goodfellows” to coach potential Fellows through the application process by working with them one-on-one and offering advice to emphasize their strengths and highlight the outcomes of their work. To learn more about the PRSA College of Fellows, visit:

<https://www.prsa.org/home/get-involved/college-of-fellows>

Mentoring Presentations. Over the years, members of PRSA’s COF have contributed articles to PRSA’s Strategist and offered professional development sessions on the topic of mentoring – see the link below to a session presented by Susan Walton, APR, Fellow PRSA and Robin Schell, APR, Fellow PRSA in March of 2021 on navigating the challenges of mentoring during COVID-19:

<https://connect.prsa.org/events/event-description?CalendarEventKey=b5ddbc24-53a0-4d3e-a156-271b5089cf1b&Home=%2Fhome>

PRSA Local Chapter Mentoring Programs

On March 10, 2022, the PRSA College of Fellows and PRSA will offer a webinar entitled, “Developing Effective Mentoring Programs: Success Stories from PRSA Chapter Leaders”. Register at

https://prsa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EvahvfeiR9GJD1zuFJ2Avg

In addition to opportunities at the National level, PRSA Chapters offer a variety of mentoring opportunities ranging from general mentoring to mentoring geared specifically to the accreditation exam. Examples include:

[PRSA Mentorship Program | PRSA \(prsasiliconvalley.org\)](#)

<https://prsancc.org/mentoring/>

[APR Mentor Program - PRSA Hoosier](#)

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