

# Wildcat Mentor Society

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## MENTOR GUIDE



2020-21

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA | ALUMNI CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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Adapted from the "Mentoring Guide: A Guide for Mentors" by Center for Health and Leadership and Practice | Public Health Institute | Oakland, CA  
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Excerpts from YNG + YPO Next Generation Mentoring Sessions.



## Letter from Wildcat Mentor Society founder Andy Harris

Dear Mentor,

What is one of the most important decisions we may make in our life? ***To have a mentor! And then to be a mentor!***

I learned the importance of having a mentor the hard way – by not having one until I was approximately 40. I worked very hard and struggled on my own to get through college, graduate, choose my career, evaluate job options, and make key life decisions - learning from trial and error in the school of hard knocks! Meanwhile, I watched some others accelerate in their careers, networking, relationships, investments and life in general. The common difference was they had mentors in their lives to leverage other’s experiences and networks. They were working smarter, not harder. Once I took the active decision to engage with mentors my life took a different trajectory personally and professionally and several breakthroughs started to happen.

Since then I have also learned an even greater importance of being a mentor. The feeling we get when we give back personally and make a difference in other’s lives is extraordinary. I’ve been blessed to mentor several people where our focused time together has been life changing for them (and for me!) in areas such as career, family, relationships and just creating more and better opportunities. Being a mentor has been one of the most rewarding and joyful activities in my life with a very pure sense of purpose and meaning.

For these reasons, we have created the Wildcat Mentor Society which is truly differentiating for the University of Arizona, our students and alumni. The Wildcat Mentor Society provides a structured, supported program to connect small groups of mentees with an accomplished Wildcat mentor in a confidential and collaborative cohort designed for reciprocal learning and personal growth. We have learned from experience and best practice benchmarking that a trusting, small group experience is most powerful for personal and professional breakthroughs with the issues that matter most. The Wildcat Mentor Society is designed with this in mind to create a one-of-a-kind “game changing” program.

For just a few hours a month your engagement in the Wildcat Mentor Society will change lives!

Bear Down and Go Cats!

Andy Harris  
CEO/Board Advisor

# I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

This program aims to connect world-class alumni with the university's thought-leaders of tomorrow in a mutually beneficial mentorship program. Our program links students with highly experienced mentors in a high touch, competitive, mentor program that takes place over an eight-month period.

The goals are to:

- Help UArizona students and alumni learn how to navigate through everything from college to career to personal experience in a cohort environment that facilitates peer to peer learning as well.
- Help UArizona students and alumni build their professional network, strengthen their alumni network and create deep, meaningful mentor-mentee relationships which may last well beyond this program.
- Create a pipeline that encourages mentees to return as mentors and mentors to also have the opportunity to support the program financially.
- Mentors feel that they are able to give back to a program and share experiences and expertise.





## II. MENTORING

Mentoring is a process in which an experienced individual helps another person develop his or her goals and skills through a series of time-limited, confidential, one-on-one conversations and other learning activities.

Mentors also draw benefits from the mentoring relationship. As a mentor, you will have the opportunity to share your wisdom and experiences, evolve your own thinking, develop a new relationship, and deepen your skills as a mentor.

### **Mentor Expectations:**

- 1. Maintaining Good Communication** – practice communication skills in each session with mentees such as active listening, open discussions,
- 2. Addressing Equity and Inclusion** – identify, reflect upon, learn from and engage with diverse perspectives to foster effective mentoring relationships
- 3. Available and Accessible** – within the bound of your cohort agreement, respond to mentee questions in a timely manner, participate and be engaged with programs and events as possible, and reach with support.
- 4. Personal Growth and Learning** – practice strategies to build their mentee’s confidence, establish trust and foster independence. Create an environment in which mentees can achieve goals. Teach and model ethical behavior. Be aware of issues that can arise due to the power dynamic between mentor and mentee. Reflect on how you can teach and model good ethical behavior to the mentees.

### **Be the Best Mentor You Can Be**

- *Listen Actively*
- *Build Trust*
- *Determine Goals and Build Capacity to Achieve Them*
- *Encourage and Inspire*

### III. ACTIVE LISTENING

#### Active Listening Skills

Active listening not only establishes rapport but creates a positive, accepting environment that permits open communication. By listening actively, you will ascertain your mentee's interests and needs. Examples include the following:

- **Show interest** in what he or she is saying and reflect back important aspects of what he or she has said to show that you've understood.
- **Use body language** (such as making eye contact) that shows you are paying attention to what he or she is saying.
- **Reduce background noise and limit interruptions**, especially if you are talking to him or her by phone or digital conferencing. Your mentees will feel that they have your undivided attention. When utilizing email, answer within 24 hours if possible, and be sure your message is responsive to his or her original message.
- **Listen first, response second.** Reserve discussing your own experiences or giving advice until after your mentees have had a chance to thoroughly explain their issues, questions, or concerns.



## IV. BUILD TRUST

Trust is built over time. You will increase trust by keeping your conversations and other communications with your student-athlete confidential, honoring your scheduled meetings and calls, consistently showing interest and support, and by being honest with your mentees. See “Braving” by Brene Brown below.



### ***BRAVING***

## **THE SEVEN ELEMENTS OF TRUST**

***Boundaries*** | You respect my boundaries, and when you're not clear about what's okay and not okay, you ask. You're willing to say no.

***Reliability*** | You do what you say you'll do. At work, this means staying aware of your competencies and limitations so you don't over promise and are able to deliver on commitments and balance competing priorities.

***Accountability*** | You own your mistakes, apologize, and make amends.

***Vault*** | You don't share information or experiences that are not yours to share. I need to know that my confidences are kept, and that you're not sharing with me any information about other people that should be confidential.

***Integrity*** | You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy. And you choose to practice your values rather than simply professing them.

***Nonjudgment*** | I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need. We can talk about how we feel without judgment.

***Generosity*** | You extend the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words, and actions of others.



## V. DETERMINE GOALS AND BUILD CAPACITY

Your mentees' capacity for learning and achieving their goals can be increased through the following strategies:

- **Resources and Contacts** | Assisting him or her with finding resources such as people, books, articles, tools and web-based information. Many mentors bring in peers and guest speakers to their cohort meetings to help mentees explore and network in the community.
- **Skill Development** | Imparting knowledge and skills by explaining, giving useful examples, demonstrating processes, and asking thought-provoking questions.
- **Empowerment** | Helping them gain broader perspectives of their responsibilities and controllable action steps in their personal and career development.
- **Examples** | Discussing actions you have taken in your career and explaining your decision-making process.
- **Accountability** | Encouraging and holding mentees accountable to their goals and action items can be very impactful when trust is established.





## VI. ENCOURAGE AND INSPIRE

Encouragement is one of the mentor's skills most valued by mentees. Mentors can consistently give encouragement to their mentees through several ways:

- Comment favorably on mentee accomplishments.
- Communicate your belief in their capacity to grow personally and professionally and reach their goals.
- Respond to their frustrations and challenges with words of support, understanding, encouragement and praise. (*Just knowing that someone else has been there can be tremendously helpful.*)
- Describe experiences, mistakes, and successes you or others have encountered on the road to achieving your goals.
- Talk to mentees about people and events that have inspired and motivated you.
- Introduce mentees to your colleagues who can be additional useful contacts or inspiring models.

### **Praise vs. Affirmations**

- Affirmation is a direct way of showing someone that you believe in them.
- The use of affirmations is a different approach to improvement, *focused on developing strengths* not just rectifying weakness, probably voiced thus:
- "You have most of what it takes to change; my job is to come alongside you and help you to see new approaches to old problems. How might I help you get unstuck and move forward?"

## VII. MENTOR CARE

### Mentors Do Not

- Have an instant rapport with their mentee
- Tell their mentee what to do
- Be an expert in every area
- Do the work for the mentee
- Manage the mentee as a supervisor would

### Care for Yourself as a Mentor

- **CONSULT** – remember, you are not alone. You don't need to solve the problems, figure it out, etc. Utilize the mentor meetings and the Wildcat Mentor Society for help.
- **SUPPORT** – identify issues you may need support around.
  - Are there things that might hit too close to home for you?
  - Who can you debrief with after that conversation?
- **PERSONAL BOUNDARIES** – identify topics you are comfortable, and not comfortable discussing. These will likely change over the course of the relationship, and that is totally normal and acceptable. What is important is always staying clear on what you're not ready to discuss.
- **PREPARE** – what do you want to do in an emotional moment?
  - Some recommendations – be empathic, open up; don't need to problem solve; listen first
- **KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS AND REFER** – if something comes up that needs greater support look to campus and non-student support services.



## VIII. Mentor Resource Guide

These contacts are designed to be a resource to help when directing current students to university services.

### **General**

Please use Lacey John, [lacey.john@al.arizona.edu](mailto:lacey.john@al.arizona.edu), or designated UAAA staff as your first line of support with any serious student issues. This way we can help to point you in the right direction of existing resources.

### **Dean of Students:**

Student Assistance serves as a central support resource for all students. We help students and their families manage crises, life traumas, and other barriers that impede success. The staff works to address the needs of students who struggle in such areas as psychological health, physical health, victimization, relationship issues, social adjustment, and academics through a variety of interventions, referrals, and follow up services. We strive for a culture of caring on campus.

<https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-assistance/students/student-assistance>

### **Mental Health:**

Our mission at Counseling & Psych services (CAPS) is to help students thrive personally and academically. To do this, we offer direct clinical services to enrolled students, consultation with concerned family, friends, faculty, and staff in service of students, and outreach and education to the UA community.

<https://health.arizona.edu/counseling-psych-services>

### **LGBTQ:**

The Office of LGBTQ Affairs works to build, sustain, and strengthen a safe, inclusive, and open environment for faculty, staff, appointed professionals, students, alumni, parents, and guests of all gender identities and sexual orientations. To better serve students who identify as LGBTQ, the UA established the Office of LGBTQ Affairs in 2007. This momentous decision was brought about after nearly twenty years of advocacy by LGBTQ students, faculty and staff. They devoted hour-upon-hour to promote equity in University policies and practices. They worked equally as tirelessly to sponsor educational opportunities to build an inclusive campus climate.

<https://lgbtq.arizona.edu/>



### **Safe Zone Training:**

Safe Zone is a campus-wide training program committed to making The University of Arizona a safer, more welcoming, and inclusive environment for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) community. The intention of the program is to shift campus climate through education. All workshops are free and open to the campus community. **Any mentor is welcome and all are strongly encouraged to participate just reach out to UAAA staff and we can facilitate the connection to this resource.** An individual's participation in Safe Zone often sends a strong message to campus community members that they are an identifiable source of support and nurturance for LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty on our campus,

### **Veterans:**

Veterans Education and Transition Services strives to provide the tools and assistance necessary for students to achieve academic success while fostering camaraderie and engagement. VETS is an organization run by veterans, spouses, dependents, and current service members who through their shared experiences endeavor to maintain a dynamic and effective program which is responsive to the needs of our community.

<http://vets.arizona.edu/>

### **Career:**

At the University of Arizona, Student Engagement & Career Development leads and coordinates our campus-wide commitment to foster career success for each student we admit, retain, and graduate. As students, families and the public become increasingly interested in measures of the return on their investment in higher education, we commit to our mission to inspire and prepare all graduates to create lives of opportunity aligned with their purpose and values.

<https://career.arizona.edu/about-us>

### **Handshake:**

Every current, degree-seeking UA student and recent graduate from within the past year has a new account on Handshake ready and waiting. On Handshake, you can easily search and apply for on-campus jobs, internships, and full-time opportunities with employers recruiting UA students and alumni.

<https://career.arizona.edu/jobs/handshake>

## IX. SUGGESTED MEETING AGENDA ~45-60 min.

0	One Word Open - Go around to gauge how everyone is feeling today	
1	Icebreaker	Use for other sessions due to opening Intro's in 1 <sup>st</sup> session
2	Confidentiality reminder	Reiterate expectations for safe and inclusive environment.
3	Take Off	Mentor shares a topic example or past challenge and how she/he overcame it. Mentees invited to share a experiences or current challenge.
4	Discussion & Questioning	Guided discussion on how to address the topic or challenges
		Use the following guidelines to dive deep & challenge Mentees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logic = Help me understand</li> <li>• Behavior = Can you explain to me what you are intending to achieve there? (not being judgmental)</li> <li>• Assumptions = What factors are you taking into account here? What assumptions were you making?</li> <li>• Perceptions = Can you explain to me the context in which you were looking at this?</li> <li>• Values = What's important to you in this situation?</li> </ul>
5	Next Steps	Discuss the actions mentees will prepare for next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any homework/articles/reading lists</li> <li>• Get volunteer for next session Icebreaker question</li> <li>• Confirm everyone committed to next meeting date and time</li> </ul>
6	One Word Close	Go around to gauge how everyone is feeling after session
7	Confidentiality Reminder	Reiterate
8	Session Concludes	

**Bear Down and Mentor Up!**

