



WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

Mentor Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the NEXT AVL Mentor Program. NEXT AVL pairs local university students with local professionals for a 9-month professional mentorship. The mentor spends time with their mentee every month (see schedule below) to extend their networks and offer connections and professional development. The big idea is that if the student develops professional connections and networks in the area before they graduate, they can leverage those relationships and find their first job here in Asheville, post-graduation.

The success of NEXT AVL depends on the participants. The relationship between mentor and mentee should be mutually rewarding, collaborative, engaged, and dynamic. It is important to remember that the mentor is volunteering their time and expertise. Likewise, it is important to remember that the mentee is a college student juggling the demands of academic studies and obligations and nascent in the concepts of professionalism and time management.

The Program: Roles and Responsibilities

This is a formal relationship in which the mentor will guide the mentee in their field of interest and provide exposure and greater understanding of the profession.

The **mentor** will answer questions, take personal interest in, guide, encourage, and support the mentee. The mentor agrees to meeting monthly – either in-person or virtually – and will follow up as needed.

The **mentee** will set up the first meeting and be prepared to discuss topics they would like to cover and timing for subsequent meetings. The mentee will also initiate discussion regarding professional goals with the mentor.

Both **mentor** and **mentee** will commit to the program and stay connected for the duration of the program.



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Objectives

As a result of this mentorship program, students will:

- Have a clearer vision of their career aspirations and goals
- Talk about themselves and their professional aspirations clearly and concisely in a public or private setting
- Identify 3-5 employers in the Asheville Area within their field of interest
- Have professional contacts in their field of interest they can call to help them continue to navigate their transition from university to career

Mentor Expectations

- Upstanding and professional in your interactions with mentee
- Enthusiastic and responsive
- Committed to the spirit of the program
- Committed to the content and structure of the program
- Accountable and proactive
- Committed to being in service to the mentee
- Not making a commitment to hire
- Participation is voluntary and there is no financial compensation

Mentee Expectations

- Proactively schedule monthly meetings with mentor
- If there's a scheduling conflict, reschedule with mentor at least 1 week in advance
- If transportation is needed, arrange with the Career Office or mentor at least 1 week in advance of the meeting
- Follow dress code for meetings - business casual, unless otherwise informed by mentor
- Participation is voluntary and there is no financial compensation
- Arrive to meetings well-rested
- Arrive to meetings prepared
- Arrive to meetings at least 5 minutes early





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Who's NEXT?

NEXT AVL mentees are college students who are interested in professional and meaningful job opportunities in the Asheville area post-graduation. Their career interests span a broad spectrum of professional fields including (but not limited to) marketing, engineering, biology, psychology, sociology, art, finance, criminal justice, political science, and business management.

Students accepted into the program meet the following criteria -

- Sophomore or Junior year
- Highly motivated and proactive
- Committed to the 9-month program
- Prepared, punctual, professional and personable
- Open to learning, collaborative and dynamic

Additionally, most students meet one of the following criteria:

- First in family
- Students with a strong work ethic who may need additional professional or career support
- Underrepresented or historically marginalized students
- Students from low-income families
- Students with culturally diverse backgrounds

Important 2019-2020 Dates

- August 15 – Final match; will receive email with more information
- September 5 – Mentor Orientation
 - 8:00 – 9:30 am
 - Location Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- September 10 – NEXT AVL Kick-Off Reception
 - 4:30 – 7:30 pm
 - Location TBD
- November 6 – Speaker and NEXT AVL Networking
 - 4:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Location: Asheville Chamber of Commerce





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- February 5 – Speaker and NEXT AVL Networking
 - 4:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Location: Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- March 26 – Speaker and NEXT AVL Networking
 - 4:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Location: Asheville Chamber of Commerce
- April 16 – Closing Reception and Celebration
 - 5:00 – 7:00 pm
 - Location TBD

NEXT AVL Mentor Testimonials

“This is our talent pool for the next 10-15 years. NEXT AVL provides an opportunity to invest in our future talent pool – which is no less important than what we do to invest in ourselves - for our own future prosperity.”

“The Asheville Chamber of Commerce provided a solid structure and format to support a robust mentoring program; I really appreciate the encouragement and accountability built into NEXT AVL. I was also grateful for the learning I get from the mentor relationship, which has helped me to see my duties and role within my company in a different way.”

“It is very rewarding to work with someone who is starting out on their career journey. The intersection of a little experience and a lot of experience made both of us beginners on this journey - and it was fun! We co-created the way we wanted it to unfold so that both of us found our meetings satisfying and enlightening. I highly recommend it!”

“NEXT AVL has allowed me the opportunity to work with and mentor an individual that I may not naturally/organically have connected with. This has stretched me a bit and hopefully allowed both of us some new perspectives. The program has been well planned and structured.”

“To all future mentors: Even though you may all be busy and not believe that you have the time to mentor, please consider how much you may impact another person's life. We all had mentors along the way that took the time and energy to help us. Pay it forward. You will receive much satisfaction in knowing that you helped another person find their way too.”

“I feel as a mentor you not only assist with the growth of the mentee but also your own personal growth. It will make you even better at your job by strengthening your coaching and leadership skills. You also can learn much from the mentee especially if they are in a different generation group than you. It can change their life but also yours, as well!”





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Mentorship Program Calendar

Month	Meeting/Agenda	Time commitment	Assignment
August	1 Orientation to NEXT AVL & the journey of mentorship – MENTEES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-campus at campus career office Thursday, August 29 and Wednesday, September 4 Review program guide and calendar, personal goal setting, review important dates, discuss resume next steps, activity on how to be a SUPER mentee 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please bring planner and academic schedule DUE: READ 12 keys for being a Supermentee
	1 Orientation to NEXT AVL & the journey of mentorship – MENTORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chamber of Commerce Board Room Wednesday, August 28 8:00am Review program guide and calendar, review important dates, review traits of generation Z, activity and discussion on being the best mentor you can be 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please bring personal availability calendar DUE: READ What the best mentors do DUE: READ 9 Fast facts of Gen Z students
// Classes Start // UNCA August 15 WCU August 15 Warren Wilson August 26			
September	1 ALL COHORT Kick-Off Reception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuesday, September 10 4:30-7:30 Location TBD 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress business casual
	2 One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare to share responses to NEXT AVL application



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational interview format – casual and comfortable • Review program guidelines & expectations • Schedule one on one meetings • Discuss ideal outcomes of the mentorship • Discuss career interests & goals • Discuss classes and opportunities to tie mentorship to an in-class assignment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please bring program guidelines and personal planner
October	1	<p>One-on-One Mentor Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review resume for feedback and suggestions • Discuss tips and tricks for typical interview process in specified industry or company • Brainstorm 3-4 companies or organizations to visit for job shadows • Discuss how to prepare for and why to attend on-campus career fair 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: First draft of resume • Bring dates of on-campus career fair
	2	<p>One-on-One Mentor Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit final resume • Mock interview with colleague of mentor (15-30 min) • Debrief and review calendar 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Final resume • DUE: Prepare Q&A for mock interview
November	1	<p>ALL COHORT meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, November 6 • Chamber of Commerce Board Room • Speaker TBD: importance of networking and how to make the most of networking • Review final assignment 	2-3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress business casual



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking hour 		
	2	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual (audio or video call) Finalize job shadow locations (2 total) and confirm dates Discuss final assignment work plan 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Prepare a list of local companies and organizations for potential job shadows DUE: Read handout for final assignment
December	1	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual (audio or video call) Check in and touch base on student assignments and finals prep Identify a networking event to attend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCHRA, Venture Asheville, Monthly Pitch Parties, Asheville Chamber of Commerce, WNC Diversity Engagement Coalition, Young Professionals of Asheville Set goals for work to do over winter break (see mentor prompts) 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Look online for networking events that sparks interest. Prepare list with dates for mentor
Winter Break starts Monday, December 16				
Spring semester starts Monday, January 13				
January	1	MENTEES ONLY – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required on-campus check-in meeting at career office 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Bulleted list of points to cover in elevator pitch for review and discussion
	2	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual phone or video call to discuss/prepare for job shadow and practice 1-minute elevator pitch Employer A job shadow 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: First draft of elevator pitch (written) Complete feedback survey Bring notebook and pen to job shadow site



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up phone or video call to debrief 		
February	1	ALL COHORT meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaker TBD: social media in a professional setting; leadership development as a young professional; Q & A for final assignment Networking hour 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dress business casual
	2	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual phone or video call to discuss/prepare for job shadow and practice 1-minute elevator pitch Employer B visit Follow up phone or video call to debrief Confirm networking event and finalize registration, if necessary 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Edited elevator pitch for next job shadow (written) Bring notebook and pen to job shadow site
March	1	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Review/finalize/practice 1-minute elevator pitch Debrief on mentorship experience and best/worst part of job shadows 	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Final elevator pitch for review and discussion (written)
	2	Networking Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend together as schedule allows 	2 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Elevator pitch (verbal)
	// Spring breaks // Warren Wilson week of March 2 WCU week of March 9 UNCA week of March 16			
April	1	One-on-One Mentor Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person 	1 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Written answers to dream job questions





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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate final edits into elevator pitch • Practice 1-minute elevator pitch as dry run • Review together how response to dream job questions has/has not changed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Final elevator pitch (verbal)
2	ALL COHORT meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, April 16 • Location TBD • Closing reception and celebration 	3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Final elevator pitch for public presentation • Complete final feedback survey
ACS/BCS Spring Break week of April 6			
WCU Easter Break April 9-10			
Total time commitment			24-28 hours

Frequently Asked Questions

What do you offer mentors in terms of resources and support?

At the mentor orientation and workshop, you will be given the digital and print version of the Program Guidelines, which outlines the structure and suggested curriculum of the 9-month mentorship program. Additionally, we will host monthly conference calls in order to provide an opportunity to ask questions, share stories with other mentors, and remain engaged in the program. These calls are voluntary and available to you only if you need them, therefore, you are not required to call-in. Finally, there are 4 all cohort meetings, which are intended to provide an opportunity to meet and network with other mentors and mentees in-person. During these meetings we will have the opportunity to check in on progress and share ideas and resources with each other.

How are meetings set up and conducted?

Mentors and mentees are responsible for scheduling their meetings per the mentorship program schedule. It is up to you to decide if you want to meet face-to-face or virtually, but should meet for a minimum of one hour, twice a month, including the all cohort meetings. The mentee is responsible for proactively arranging meetings, preparing the agendas based upon the curriculum and schedule, and completing assignments ahead of the meeting.





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What happens once the 9-month program is finished?

You may continue an unofficial relationship if both parties agree. Mentors will be asked to confirm their interest in being available to the next cohort of mentees. Additionally, all mentees will be enrolled in NEXT AVL as an ambassador to help identify and recruit future mentees and participate in other NEXT AVL programming.

What is the role of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Coalition?

The Chamber and EDC are here to facilitate the relationship—to assign mentors/mentees and to provide a basic framework to launch the relationship—but is not directly involved. Of course, if you run into problems or have an issue related to the program you would like to discuss, you should direct those to the mentor program manager.

Who was involved in developing NEXT AVL?

The Asheville Chamber and EDC initially developed NEXT AVL in 2018 as a pilot program in partnership with UNC Asheville, Western Carolina University, and WNC Human Resource Association. In 2019, we have students participating from UNC Asheville, Western Carolina University, and Warren Wilson College. WNC Human Resource Association continues to be involved as a working group partner to recruit mentors and develop content.

Developing NEXT AVL: Your Input is Requested!

NEXT AVL is an ongoing program, and your thoughts, ideas, and recommendations will help ensure that it is an effective workforce development, networking, and professional development tool. To keep NEXT AVL relevant and effective, we welcome any feedback or suggestions. Please send to the current program manager.

Other Questions?

Please contact the program manager at nextavl@ashevillechamber.org with any questions or concerns.

