


NEXT  

WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

PROGRAM  
HANDBOOK

YOU ARE  
NEXT 



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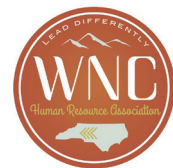
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# PREFACE

In 2018, we set out to bridge the gap between college students and professionals in the Asheville area. With the help of our partners at UNC Asheville, Western Carolina University, Warren Wilson College, and WNC Human Resources Association, we developed NEXT AVL, a mentorship program for second and third year college students. NEXT AVL pairs local university students with local professionals over a 9-month period to help students develop their professional acumen and make professional connections locally.

We are invested and committed to the success of NEXT AVL because we understand that in the real, working, professional world, economic opportunity and mobility is less about who you know and much more about WHO KNOWS YOU. Working professionals rely heavily on connections and networks when filling open positions. Asheville employers need to build relationships with the younger, more diverse population, many of whom are graduating college, so they can expand and diversify their talent pool.

As we reflected on our role in helping businesses grow and find talent, we knew this program would have to offer an opportunity for the students and professionals to cultivate meaningful and lasting connections with each other and others in their professional field. 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.



# WELCOME

Welcome to the NEXT AVL Mentorship Program. You are among an important cohort of individuals working to change the face of Asheville's future workforce.

The success of your NEXT AVL mentorship depends on YOU. 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.

As you embark on this journey, please remember you are not alone. Please see the contact page if you have any questions or concerns at any point during the program.

**GOOD LUCK**  
as you begin this **NEW ADVENTURE!**



# WHO'S NEXT?

## MENTEES

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
- Motivated and proactive
- Committed to the 9-month program
- Open to learning, collaborative and dynamic
- Strong work ethic but may lack established connections or need additional professional or career direction

Additionally, most students meet one of the following criteria:

- First in family to go to college
- From underrepresented or historically marginalized students
- Receive financial aid
- From culturally diverse backgrounds

## MENTORS

NEXT AVL mentors are seasoned professionals that are comfortable extending their professional network and connections to their mentee. Mentors are volunteering their time and are not compensated. Ideally, NEXT AVL mentors are working in or have connections in the mentees' field of interest. In the cases where they are not in the same field, the mentor and mentee work together to set up mock interviews, job shadows, and networking opportunities in the students' field of interest.

# THE PROGRAM

## ROLES & 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 and will follow up as needed.

The **mentee** will be prepared with complete assignments for each meeting. 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.

## 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

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## EXPECTATIONS

### MENTEES

- Proactively schedule monthly meetings with mentor
- If there's a scheduling conflict, reschedule with mentor at least one week in advance
- 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

### MENTORS

- 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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# RESOURCES

## MENTEES

12 Keys For Being a Supermentee

<https://www.inc.com/scott-mautz/12-keys-to-being-a-supermentee-the-kind-of-mentee-every-mentor-loves.html>

40 Questions to Ask a Mentor

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jomiller/2018/03/25/40-questions-to-ask-a-mentor/#13492cad261b>

8 Tips For an Amazing Mentor Relationship

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurencebradford/2018/01/31/8-tips-for-an-amazing-mentor-relationship/#55ca697621e2>

Why You Should Make Time For Self-Reflection

<https://hbr.org/2017/03/why-you-should-make-time-for-self-reflection-even-if-you-hate-doing-it>

## MENTORS

What the Best Mentors Do

<https://hbr.org/2017/02/what-the-best-mentors-do>

How Generation Z Will Transform the Future Workforce

<https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/the-2019-workplace-7-ways-generation-z-willshape-it.html>

Why College Students Need to Self-Reflect

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ehrllichfu/2013/08/15/why-college-students-need-to-self-reflect/#338d03364c69>

8 Tips For an Amazing Mentor Relationship

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurencebradford/2018/01/31/8-tips-for-an-amazing-mentor-relationship/#55ca697621e2>

7 Key Qualities of an Effective Mentor

<https://www.inc.com/jayson-demers/7-key-qualities-of-an-effective-mentor.html>



# CONTACTS

## NEXT AVL PROGRAM MANAGER

April Brown, Director of Existing Industry and Workforce Development  
Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County  
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce  
828-258-6128  
[abrown@ashevillechamber.org](mailto:abrown@ashevillechamber.org)

## UNC ASHEVILLE

Cate O'Connor, Student Engagement Coordinator  
[coconno2@unca.edu](mailto:coconno2@unca.edu)

## Career Center at UNC Asheville

224 Highsmith Student Union  
828-251-6648  
[career.unca.edu](http://career.unca.edu)

## WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Courtney Gauthier, Associate Director of Career Integrated Learning  
[cgauthier@wcu.edu](mailto:cgauthier@wcu.edu)

## Center for Career and Professional Development

[careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu)

## WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

Hannah Richardson, Director of Internships  
[hrichardson@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:hrichardson@warren-wilson.edu)

## Center for Integrated Advising and Careers

828-771-3815

## How are meetings set up and conducted?

Mentors and mentees are responsible for scheduling their meetings per the mentorship program schedule. In addition to attending the monthly large group meetings, plan to touch base with each other on a weekly basis, through Slack, messaging, or audio calls. For one-on-one meetings, it is up to you to decide if you want to meet face-to-face or virtually. The mentee is responsible for proactively arranging meetings, preparing the agendas based upon the curriculum and schedule, and completing assignments ahead of the meeting.

## 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 role the 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](mailto:nextavl@ashevillechamber.org) with any questions or concerns.



NEXT **AVL**

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