



COLLEGE OF  
**Saint Benedict**

**Bennie Mentor Program  
Handbook**

2019- 2020

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# **Program Guidelines and Goals**

Thank you for joining the College of Saint Benedict Bennie Mentor Program! The mission of the Bennie Mentor Program is to foster an exchange of ideas, friendship and expertise between CSB alumnae. This program facilitates a connection between alumnae who are experienced in life and in their profession with a mentee for career and life guidance and development. The program follows the Peer Mentoring approach and is designed to make networking and mentoring available in a flexible, timely and customized manner.

## **Program Guidelines**

Mentors and mentees should talk, email or meet at least once a month to get advice, direction and wisdom for life. Alumnae should schedule these interactions based on their own personal calendars. Mentors can also invite mentees to work, to a volunteer activity or a social event. Mentoring tracks, developed by fellow CSB Alumnae, are available at the end of this handbook for your use throughout the year. These tracks can serve as a guide to a successful and purposeful mentoring relationship.

## **Program Goals**

1. Bring together alumnae based on common career and/or personal interests.
2. Create frequent and continuous dialogue between alumnae on a wide range of topics.
3. Help alums network with the wider CSB alumnae community across the United States and abroad.

### **For Mentees:**

- Enhance and influence career strategy
- Seek advice and insight from an experienced professional
- Provide sounding board for ideas/plans
- Gain skill in networking

### **For Mentors:**

- Create an environment of open communication and active listening
- Share knowledge about your education, career path, successes and failures and what your experience has taught you
- Look for opportunities that your mentee should explore and encourage her to explore them
- Gain experience in coaching and advising
- Help young alumnae make effective and informed decisions about their careers and personal lives

# **General Overview and FAQ**

## **EXPECTATIONS AND COMMITMENT**

### **Mentors are expected to:**

- Read and respond to Bennie Mentor Program correspondence (generally via email) in a timely manner.
- Provide mentoring and/or opportunities to your mentee with professionalism.
- Respond to communications from your mentee in a timely manner.
- Fill out a match feedback survey in order to contribute to future improvements to the program.

### **Mentees are expected to:**

- Initiate contact with assigned mentor
- Read and respond to Bennie Mentor Program correspondence (generally via email) in a timely manner.
- Respond to all mentor replies professionally and in a timely manner.
- Develop goals for what you want to accomplish or gain as a part of a successful mentoring relationship.
- Reference Mentoring Tracks for discussion ideas with your mentor.
- Fill out a match feedback survey in order to contribute to future improvements to the program.

### **What is the time commitment?**

The time commitment is determined individually by each mentor/mentee pairing. There is an expectation that if you submit an application, you will follow through when contacted by your match. Depending on your schedule and your mentor/ee's schedule, you can meet as many or as few times in a month as you desire. We request that you have a meaningful connection with your match *at least once a month* for the duration of the program (September through May).

### **What do I do after I receive an email from my match?**

Simply put, you email your match back (or call, if the person left a phone number), and the two of you pursue the mentoring relationship requested. One of the most successful ways to start the mentoring relationship is to meet in person (if possible) and establish goals. Please see the section on Defining Goals to assist you in setting mentor program goals.

### **What if I feel I am not qualified or comfortable fielding a mentee's question?**

At the heart of the Bennie Mentor Program is the acknowledgement that mentors are not expected to be authorities on all matters. As specific situations arise, mentors should feel comfortable being (and are expected to be) upfront with mentees when they cannot provide mentorship in the requested area. Mentors can direct their mentee to other resources to help answer their questions (e.g. online resources, appropriate people in their network). Mentors should feel comfortable asking the CSB Alumnae Connections Committee for assistance via [csbalumnae@csbsju.edu](mailto:csbalumnae@csbsju.edu) or by emailing your volunteer liaison.

### **What if I don't feel like a compatible match was made?**

While we strive to make great matches, we realize that sometimes connections just don't work out. If at first it appears that you and your mentor/ee are not a good match-we encourage you to have at least 3 meetings and give it your best effort to find common ground before you make that decision. If after several meetings you still don't feel like it is a good match, we encourage open, honest communication with each other.

Successful mentoring relationships aren't always built on chemistry, but rather compatibility. Compatibility is the agreement to work together towards common goals. If you feel you are both committed to the relationship and make progress towards the determined goals, but aren't "best friends," it can still be a successful relationship.

However, if you feel that you don't have compatibility, let your mentor/ee know you feel like there may be a better fit out there and then let the Alumnae Connections Committee know. While we will may not be able to provide a new match for you in the current program year, we may have other suggestions for you and will also encourage you to apply again next year for a new match.

**Can I offer my mentor/mentee an employment or volunteer opportunity?**

Of course you can! That said, the focus of the Bennie Mentor Program is on networking, professional and personal development rather than specific employment opportunities.

**What is the purpose of the Mentoring Tracks? Am I required to use them?** (see "Mentoring Tracks")

The Mentoring Tracks were developed to provide a guide for your mentoring experience - to keep you "on track."

They are not required but are offered as a suggested way for establishing goals and purpose for your mentorship.

You can select one track for the year or explore several tracks based on your personal and professional needs.

Each track has different subtopics to discuss for each month after the first introductory/get-to-know-you meeting.

**Additional Resources:**

**College of Saint Benedict Alumnae**

<http://www.csbsju.edu/csb-alumnae>

**Peer, Mentor and Coach Resources**

<http://www.peer.ca>

# **Mentoring Tracks**

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## **1) Obtaining Advanced Degrees**

- Application Process
- Setting Timelines
- Preparing for the Entrance Exam
- Letters of Recommendation
- Finding the Right Program

## **2) Volunteering**

- Choosing an Organization
- Consider the Skills you have to Offer
- Learn Something New
- Managing your Schedule
- Family, Individual and Group Projects
- Benefits of Volunteering
- Volunteering at School

## **3) Parenting & Family Management**

- Putting your Marriage first
- Developing a Support Network
- Activities and Fun
- Timesavers
- Raising Teenagers
- Cyber Bullying
- Raising Kids with Special Needs
- Family Vacations
- Dividing Household Responsibilities
- Caring for Aging Parents

## **4) Work/Life Balance**

- How to say "No"
- Building in Downtime in your Schedule
- Work/life balance Calculator
- Parkinson's Law
- Relaxation Techniques
- Making time for you
- Stress Management

## **5) Financial Planning**

- Developing and Managing a Budget
- Retirement Planning Calculator
- Investment Vehicles

- Expenses that can be negotiated
- Credit Scores
- Credit Cards
- Managing Debt
- Identity Theft
- Recovering from Bad Financial Decisions
- Financial Giving
- Taxes

## **6) Career Development Planning**

- Salary Negotiations
- Job Interview Tips
- Job Search Tips
- Resume/ Cover Letter Writing
- Networking
- Developing a Career Focus
- Exploring Career Options
- Promotions
- Career Changes
- Career/ Interest Tests
- Re-entering the workforce

## **7) Spiritual Guidance**

- Meditation
- Grounding Spirituality in Everyday Living
- Finding the Authentic Self
- Finding Life Purpose
- Journaling
- Raise your Level of Consciousness

## **8) Health & Wellness**

- Boosting your energy
- Weight Management
- Getting in Shape
- Meal Planning
- Stress Management
- Ditching Unhealthy habits
- Pregnancy
- Living with a Health Condition
- Baby Health

## **Defining Your Goals**

Utilize the table below to specify short-term and long-term goals so that conversations can be focused on steps necessary to achieve the goals listed. List your goals and check the box to which it corresponds.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Short-term</b>	<b>Long-term</b>	<b>Next year</b>	<b>Within 5 years</b>	<b>Within lifetime</b>

# **Key ingredients of Mentoring Relationships**

## **1. Purpose**

You and your match are clear on why you're together and the reasons you're meeting. You've discussed and agreed upon what you'll work on, and you'll recognize when you've met your purpose. You feel good about the focus of your relationship and what you're doing in it. From time to time you check to see if you should change your purpose or focus in some way.

## **2. Communication**

You communicate in ways (in person, phone, Skype, etc.) you both prefer. You get back to your match in the timeframe you've agreed upon. You're an effective listener and you remember what your match tells you. You ask appropriate questions and your match responds. You share information about yourself and monitor your nonverbal language to be sure it is conveying what you want it to. Mentees invite mentors to give suggestions for how they can communicate better and try these out in a timely manner. Mentors when appropriate, offer suggestions for improvements.

## **3. Trust**

The trust between you is growing. You welcome and keep in confidence the information shared with you. You know you can count on your match to be honest and to follow through on their promises. You avoid any trust-breaking behaviors such as canceling appointments without compelling reasons, talking negatively about others or making excuses for why you can't follow through on commitments. You don't unfairly criticize your match and you are increasingly sharing more of yourself and are becoming less guarded.

## **4. Process**

Your meetings and other interactions are moving at the right pace. You meet often enough to suit you both and the sessions are usually the right length. You enjoy the time spent and follow through on agreement between mentoring sessions. You like how you operate as a mentoring pair and check in with each other to see if you're both satisfied.

## **5. Progress**

Mentors help mentees identify personal and professional goals and build competencies to reach those goals. At first, mentors take the lead on identifying learning resources and process the results with the mentee. As the relationship progresses, mentees take the lead on identifying interesting learning experiences and report the results of these to their mentor. Mentees will make significant progress towards identified goals since the first meeting and are making notable progress in their ability to be mentored. Mentors are making significant progress in their ability to mentor.

## **6. Feedback**

You both have shared how you want positive and corrective feedback.

Mentees: When you receive positive feedback you express your thanks and use the information to reinforce your efforts. When you receive corrective feedback you're non-defensive and take immediate steps to apply it. You remember to give your mentor positive feedback about her mentoring and other things she has shared. If agreed upon, you give your mentor suggestions for improvement.

Mentors: You do your best to give feedback in an honest and tactful manner and as frequently as agreed upon. You give your mentee more positive reinforcement than you give correction. When you give your mentee feedback you observe how she applies it and if necessary mention the points again. You have invited her to give you positive and corrective feedback on how you're doing as a mentor. When you receive feedback, you're non-defensive and take immediate steps to apply it.



## Mentoring Relationship Model (Stages)



### Stage 1: Creating

- Both want to build a connection.
- Both present their “best sides.”
- Both are exploring how they will communicate.
- Partners negotiate ground rules.
- Mentor is perceived as the teacher.
- Mentee is perceived as the learner.

Pairs will spend the majority of their time in Stages 2 and 3. As goals are accomplished and new ones created pairs will fluctuate between these two stages.

### Stage 2: Building

- Partners begin to work on goals.
- Confidence builds to allow for progress to take place.
- Both partners become aware of each other’s abilities and limitations.
- Mentee begins to exert her own ideas and thoughts.

### Stage 3: Achieving

- Mentee is developing expertise in goal areas.
- Both partners are more collaborative in the development process.
- The relationship may feel more like a peer relationship.
- Mentor serves more as a sounding board.
- Mentee exhibits confidence.

### Stage 4: Moving On

- Mentee is more directly in control and assume more independence.
- Mentee may feel she has outgrown the relationship
- Mentor may feel she has done everything possible for the mentee.
- Mentee and mentor discuss how or if they would like to continue their relationship after the program ends.

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### Mentors’ Boundaries

- Create a safe learning environment.
- Deliver on what is promised.
- Respect the uniqueness of the mentee.
- Conduct yourself professionally at all times.

### Mentees’ Boundaries

- Respect the mentor’s time.
- Take responsibility for actions and learning.
- Deliver on what is promised.
- Respect the uniqueness of the mentor.
- Conduct yourself professionally at all times.

**Thank you for being part of the  
Bennie Mentor Program!**

**We hope you have a truly wonderful experience. Please let us know if  
there is anything we can do to better your experience.**

Sincerely,

Bennie Mentor Program Workgroup Members (Mary Cherrico '74, Haley  
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