

The Norco College Success Network is an online registry of committed mentors who are willing to help Norco College students achieve their personal, academic, and career goals.

The network mentors provide information upon request to students regarding college majors, universities attended, employers and companies, various career fields, and much more. By registering for the network you too can make a difference in the lives of students and provide the information, support, and motivation they need to succeed. If you have experiences to share and time to give, then consider becoming a member of the Norco College Success Network today!



### **What is Mentoring?**

The objective of mentoring is to develop one-on-one relationships that foster learning, promote self-discovery, and assist in the pursuit of personal and professional goals.

### **Who is a Mentor?**

A mentor is an experienced individual who supports students/mentees through occasional or regular ongoing communication. Mentors may include Norco College peer advisors, alumni, faculty advisors, professionals from the local workforce, and others who can contribute to student development. Each mentor chooses how many students they are available to connect with per month based on their other commitments. Non-employees must secure an endorsement by a current district employee in order to serve as a mentor in the network.

Mentors are positive role models that have achieved personal, academic, and/or professional success through honest hard work and determination. Mentors share information and anecdotes from their own experience in order to provide wisdom and insights that cannot otherwise be obtained through conventional resources (such as books, articles, and classroom instruction).

Common behaviors of mentors include offering motivational support, encouraging professional activities and networking, challenging students to confront and overcome obstacles, and most importantly, setting an inspirational example. The goal of the relationship is to educate students, but also to listen and respond to their questions. Mentors work with students as a coach, teacher, and friend to equip them with the knowledge needed to make important career and life planning decisions.

Mentors also demonstrate sensitivity to the diverse backgrounds of Norco College students, including academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, and ethnic differences.

### **Understanding Boundaries**

Mentors are not expected to have answers to every question, nor should they feel obligated to seek out answers or information they do not know first-hand. Rather, mentors should freely refer students to other sources of information whenever appropriate, especially Norco College resources such as the Career Center, Counseling Department, and other college personnel. Mentors may contact college personnel whenever they are unsure of appropriate activities or responses to student inquiries.

## Getting Started

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Each relationship will begin with an introduction e-mail from a potential student mentee. The student should provide basic information regarding his or her academic and career goals, an explanation of what the student is hoping to learn from the mentor, and contact information.

We ask that mentors try to respond to students within one week. Students will ask a variety of questions related to academic and career experiences, so each mentoring conversation will be different. However, starting with the very first response, it is critical that mentors are clear with their mentees regarding which topics they can provide guidance on and which topics would be better answered through other resources.

## Building the Relationship

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The network utilizes e-mail communication to initiate the connection between mentor and mentee, but the relationship may proceed with whichever communication method is preferred by both parties.

In most cases, mentors focus their time helping students in five common areas:

1. Enhancing skills and knowledge for a particular industry
2. Supporting academic goals and encouraging completion
3. Building self-confidence for the workplace
4. Establishing a professional network
5. Exploring career interests and assisting with career planning

Ideas for discussion topics and activities are available at [www.norcocollege.edu/successnetwork](http://www.norcocollege.edu/successnetwork).

### Guidelines for In-Person Contact

Mentors may also choose to invite students to their work sites or offices for tours or job shadowing activities. Work visits are a great way for mentors to share their work environment and career field with the student. For many students, this may be their first time setting foot in a professional setting. During the work visit, the mentor may invite the student to sit in on meetings and introduce the student to other staff members and colleagues. Mentors and students may also meet up at professional conferences or other career-related activities. (NOTE: Norco College assumes no liability or responsibility for mentoring activities that take place off of the Norco College campus.)

### Guidelines for Self-Disclosure

There are two types of disclosure:

- Biographical* – relates to one's history, past experiences, and present circumstances
- Personal* – concerns one's more private self, thoughts, and feelings

Biographical information is much easier to disclose, but strong mentoring relationships also balance personal disclosures. Use your judgment to determine what you are comfortable sharing with your mentees.

- Always be honest, genuine, and authentic.
- The more comfortable you are with self-disclosure, the more likely your student will be able to relate to you and actively engage in conversation.
- Try to focus on past experiences the student can relate to.



## **Moving On**

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While there is no predefined time period for the duration of Success Network relationships, interactions typically continue until one or both parties feel that the relationship has reached its maximum benefit.

When the time comes, close the relationship in a way that affirms the contributions of both parties. Both the mentor and the student should have an opportunity to assess the experience. In most cases, this will consist of an ending summary e-mail in which either member reviews the topics discussed, reiterates the information that was learned, and ends with a list of next steps or goals for the future.

NOTE: A mentor may fully withdraw from the Success Network at any time if necessary. Please notify the Norco College Career Center at (951) 372-7147 to request your withdrawal so that we may facilitate the conclusion of the mentoring relationship with your students on your behalf.

## **Terms of Use**

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By participating in the Norco College Success Network, you acknowledge that you have read the following disclaimer and agree to abide by the guidelines specified herein.

If a district employee, you participate in the network within the scope of your job description or as defined as institutional service and should do so with manager approval.

If a non-employee, you understand that your involvement as a “mentor” is on a volunteer basis, will not result in compensation of any kind, and may be terminated at any time. You will not request nor accept payment for any advice provided. You understand that you are not acting as a representative of the Riverside Community College District and will express opinions as your own when doing so.

You understand that “mentees” may consist of students, former students, alumni, or other authorized users of the **NC Connect** system. The Norco College Success Network is intended to serve as an educational information resource regarding the experiences of mentors within various career fields, majors, and universities; it is not to be used to exploit mentors in any way or to solicit any other kinds of information including, but not limited to, requests for job placement, recruitment activities, confidential information, or any other personal or professional information outside of the scope of career and academic experiences.

You agree to primarily serve as an educational resource regarding your personal experiences within the career fields, majors, and/or universities with which you are familiar. You understand that all participants of the Success Network do so at their own discretion and the information provided to mentees should not be interpreted as a substitute for the use of independent judgment. Norco College does not actively monitor the conversations that take place between mentors and mentees and is not responsible for the exchange or use of the information that takes place.

You hereby agree that in no event will you file suit or otherwise attempt to hold liable for damages, the Riverside Community College District or any mentee, participant, or user of the Norco College Success Network as a result of your participation in this program. You agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Riverside Community College District from any and all claims, suits, actions or proceedings of any kind arising out of, or in connection with, any advice or experiences you provide in relation to the Norco College Success Network.