

Success in Law School Mentoring Program

Mentoring Tool Kit: Individual Mentoring Principles

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) is excited to launch another round of its Success in Law School Mentoring Program. The primary objective of this mentoring program is to ensure that minority students who are accepted into law school receive the mentoring and preparation they need to maximize their potential in law school and through bar passage. The following Individual Mentoring Principles have been developed as guidelines to frame the relationships between LCLD Mentors and Mentees. Naturally, each mentoring relationship will look and feel different given the individuals who are in that relationship, but the principles listed below will allow for a consistent standard of mentoring for all law students who are engaged in this program.

- 1. Long-Term Investment:** The Mentor-Mentee relationships may begin at the beginning of, or midway through, a student's first year in law school or in the summer following the first year of law school. Ideally, Mentors and Mentees will have a relationship that grows throughout the student's entire law school career, including the summer after graduation, as the student prepares for and takes the Bar Exam. However, in practice, all relationships will be for one year unless there is a specific request by either the Mentor or the Mentee to change the relationship.
- 2. Individual Mentors, Collective Success:** Mentors will complete periodic LCLD surveys in order to share successes and challenges so that LCLD may continually work to improve the program. Mentors may also attend LCLD teleconferences to learn from other Mentors and to continuously improve their individual mentoring relationships as well as the overall mentoring program.
- 3. Trust as a Key Priority in the Relationship:** Both the Mentor and Mentee will commit to a relationship that is confidential, candid, mutually respectful, productive, and in the best interests of the Mentee. Both the Mentor and the Mentee will work to make the relationship a priority.
- 4. Consistent Communication and Contact:** All Mentors will make every effort to meet with their Mentees at least three times per semester. One meeting per semester should occur in person while the others may be via phone or email. All Mentors will attempt to attend group mentoring events each semester in order to better understand the full range of needs and concerns faced by diverse law students in law school today.
- 5. Inclusive Communication:** Mentors and Mentees will commit to asking questions of each other and avoiding assumptions, stereotypes, and other barriers to building solid mentoring relationships.
- 6. A Plan for Success:** The first meeting between Mentors and Mentees will be a **planning meeting** to help the pair determine what the student would like to get out of the relationship, the meeting structure/frequency, and communication preference that will work effectively for their specific schedules.
- 7. Supportive Relationships:** Mentors will guide their Mentees to achieve the goals that the Mentees set for themselves and not criticize the goals as unattainable or unrealistic.
- 8. LCLD Standards:** Mentors and Mentees will follow the substantive outline of topics established for the mentoring program and use the Tool Kit materials developed on each topic by LCLD as resources. Mentors and Mentees will also implement LCLD's candid and confidential evaluation process to measure the overall success of the program.