

LEWIS & CLARK LAW SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS FOR MENTORS

Be the initiator. As soon as you get information regarding your law student, you should contact them with an introductory email. Let them know a little bit about you, where you work, where you went to school (not just law school) and how long you've been practicing. Let them know immediately whether you can attend the kick-off reception and then make sure you attend. If you cannot attend, let your mentee know immediately and schedule plans to meet with them for lunch. –Kristin Sterling Hopkins '00

Get Started on the Right Foot:

- When you receive the name and contact information for your new mentee, save it somewhere (e.g., in your contacts list) and share the student's information with your assistant/anyone who might answer your phone or check your email.
- Add some reminders to your calendaring system – to check in with your mentee on a regular (e.g., monthly) basis.
- Send a quick introductory email to your new mentee even before the kick-off reception, letting them know you are looking forward to meeting them at the reception (or, if you are unable to attend, suggesting another time to meet)

Meetings:

Introduce your mentee to your lifestyle as a lawyer. Let your mentee know that there is life after law school—extend an invite to your backyard BBQ, introduce your mentee to your colleagues and friends, go out for happy hour drinks at your favorite pub. -- Jenny Morf '98

Engage your employer in the project. Tell them in advance that you plan on participating in the project. Let them know the time commitment you expect to make. Ask if it would be acceptable to have your mentee visit the office, participate in a project, and/or attend a trial, hearing, or meeting. –Sean O'Day '00

Frequency of Meetings: If possible, try to meet your student at the kick-off reception in September. If you are unable to attend, please contact the student and arrange another time for your initial meeting. Thereafter, try to meet your student at least twice during the academic year. Occasional telephone or e-mail contact is also a great option.

Location of Meetings: Meetings might take place at your office, over breakfast or lunch, or at some other predetermined setting to observe/participate in an activity (see below).

Possible Activities: The list of possible activities is limitless but to make it more likely you'll see your mentee on a regular basis, try inviting them to activities you already plan to attend. They could include:

Mentor Program Events	A visit to your office	A visit to the courthouse to observe a hearing or trial
A CLE or bar activity	Other events/speakers at the Law School	Breakfast or Lunch

Topics of Discussion:

Again, there are limitless possible discussion topics but some to consider are law school "jitters", preparing for final exams, writing assignments/projects, doing pro bono work, perspective on importance of grades, law review, and other activities, how to balance law school and personal/family time, and maintaining pre-law school friendships.

For first year student mentors, consider holding off on discussing searching for a summer job until you've established a relationship with the student – maybe during the end of 1st semester. Many first-year students want/plan to clerk

during the summer after their first year, but are very apprehensive about what to expect. They are concerned that employers will expect them to do more than their skills and knowledge will enable them to do.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Students are informed that, initially, you will contact them, but that they may also contact you. Many law students are somewhat intimidated about contacting lawyers and often fear they are "bothering" their Mentor.
- Attorneys frequently report that they "told [their] student to call when they wanted to get together." We have learned this does not necessarily work. Attorneys must show some initiative in contacting their students.
- It is absolutely crucial early on for the Mentors to show willingness to meet/talk with their students. Please try not to cancel/change the first few meetings. Once the first 2-3 contacts are made, it will be easier for students to feel comfortable emailing or calling, and they will be more understanding of last minute shifts.
- Think of interesting things that are coming up in your work schedule. Make student aware of them even if you are not able to attend, then follow up by phone to see how it went.
- Make sure your office staff recognize your student's name. If you are rarely available by phone, provide possible meeting times to your secretary and ask s/he to arrange a mutually convenient time.
- Please try to respond to their emails and phone calls. After one or two unreturned emails or phone messages or scheduling problems, students interpret this as lack of interest on your part and stop trying to reach you. (This is actually the biggest problem students report.)
- Remember that most students do not have a full picture of what legal practice entails. They may not know what to ask you or what types of knowledge you possess. Think of how little you knew when you were in law school; try to figure out what would be helpful to expose them to. Take the lead in suggesting topics or activities of interest. The dose of reality is very helpful.
- Students appreciate the support and encouragement that a successful relationship provides. It helps calm fears about law school and career choices.
- The bottom line is that the program takes a time commitment and both parties must work at maintaining contact. If you have any difficulty contacting your student, call or email Libby Davis at Lewis & Clark Law School, (503) 768-6610 or eadavis@lclark.edu.

Be sure to stay in contact with your mentee on a regular basis. Email is great for this. Don't just meet your mentee at law school functions--invite them to your office, take them on a tour of the courthouse, take them to lunch, take them out for drinks with your friends (especially if your friends are lawyers too). --Kristin Sterling Hopkins '00