



ACMLA Mentoring Program

Introduction

Mentoring is a cooperative and nurturing relationship between a more experienced librarian and a new librarian which brings benefits to both participants. The ACMLA Mentoring Program has been developed to provide a mechanism for encouraging and supporting new members in their professional growth and development and welcoming them into the profession and Association.

Mission

To facilitate the creation, development and maintenance of mutually satisfactory mentoring relationships between new members of the Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives and their experienced colleagues.

Definitions

Mentee: A librarian or technician new to a map/GIS library who would like guidance and support in his/her professional career.

Mentor: Experienced ACMLA member who willingly offers his/her expertise and experience to help members achieve success in their new position or profession.

Mentoring Program Components

1. *First Time Conference Mentor*

This component pairs experienced members with members attending the ACMLA conference for the first time. At the time of registration, a new member requests a mentor pairing and completes the mentee request form.

The mentor assigned to the first time conference attendee will initiate contact by email or telephone prior to the conference to arrange an initial meeting at the beginning of the conference, e.g. a meeting prior to the ice-breaker reception. Activities during the conference mentoring experience may include: introducing the new member to other ACMLA conference participants during social events and sessions, suggesting useful conference sessions, providing context and background on AGM issues, and discussing presentations. The mentor would be expected to touch base with the mentee throughout the conference.

After the conference, the mentee and mentor can decide whether they wish to continue the relationship for career mentoring.

2. Career Mentor

The Career Mentor Component is designed to help new members become successful practitioners by providing help and guidance on various aspects of the profession and the Association. This phase lasts a minimum of one year with the option of renewing with the agreement of both parties.

A mentor/mentee relationship may be established during the conference or may be initiated as soon as an individual joins the Association.

The mentor will initiate the first contact with the mentee usually via telephone. If the mentor and mentee are in geographic proximity, the first meeting may take place in person. It is expected however, that most communication will take place via email and the telephone. Communication between the mentor and mentee should occur at least once per quarter.

Each relationship will be unique and will depend on the interests of the mentee. Suggested activities might include:

- Explaining the Association goals and objectives and how the member might become involved through committee participation;
- Providing the background on various Association initiatives/projects;
- Discussing professional conferences and how the mentee could contribute;
- Helping to identify professional training opportunities such as workshops, seminars or online tutorials;
- Providing guidance on a professional project;
- Suggesting research topics and facilitating research by identifying sources of information, reading outlines and drafts; consideration could even be given to co-presenting at a conference;
- Suggesting background articles that could be discussed at future meetings.

Guidelines

1. Participation in the program is entirely voluntary. Not all new members are required to participate in the mentoring program.
2. All communication between the mentor and mentee is strictly confidential.
3. The mentor and mentee should be honest and professional in all interactions.
4. The mentor or mentee may opt-out of the program at anytime if the relationship is not satisfactory.
5. Communication between the mentor and mentee should occur at least one per quarter. Meetings/communication may take place outside of work hours if both parties are in agreement.
6. A mentee will have only one mentor but a mentor could choose to mentor several individuals at the same time.
7. Mentees will not be matched with mentors from the same institution.

Benefits of Mentoring

For Mentees

- Advice and guidance on career goals and professional development
- Opportunities to discuss issues and ideas with an experienced professional
- Encouragement to take on new projects and responsibilities
- Improved understanding of the Association and its organizational dynamics
- Assistance in identifying and building professional networks

For Mentors

- Personal satisfaction from sharing knowledge and experience
- Exposure to new ideas and approaches
- Opportunity to practice problem solving and listening skills
- Opportunity to promote the Association and its objectives

Administration

The Mentoring Program is administered through the 1st VP of the Association. He/she receives application forms from mentors and mentees, matches members given their identified interests, and prepares an annual report for the membership on the program.

Evaluation

At the end of the first year the mentor and mentee will be required to complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback on their experience. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the 1st VP will issue to the mentor and mentee a certificate of participation in the ACMLA mentoring program.

Sept/08