

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

CENTENNIAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR MENTORS

In the AIA Code of Ethics, members are encouraged to “nurture their fellow professionals as they progress through stages of their career, beginning with professional education in the academy, progressing through internship, and continuing throughout their career.” The National Society Professional Engineers echoes this statement with their encouragement to members to provide career guidance for youth. The Oklahoma State University School of Architecture, with its professional oriented degrees, is well positioned to offer the Centennial Mentorship Program. This program is specifically designed to facilitate mentorship opportunities between graduates and students in professional school.

Benefits

The benefits to the student mentee are obvious – having access to a voice outside academia is of invaluable advantage. The mentor is able to provide input regarding elements of the profession not readily visible to the student still in the throes of completing their education. For the mentor, there are also benefits to participation – the satisfaction of lending a hand to those on the path just behind oneself, and to be able to share lessons learned along the way. In addition, the mentor will gain exposure to the thoughts and ideas of the next generation of architects and architectural engineers.

Expectations of the Mentor

Generally speaking, a mentor is someone who provides insights, instruction, and advice in a variety of settings. A mentor has the responsibility of:

- Modeling professional behavior, and dealing with the mentee in a collegial manner;
- Communicating frankly, tactfully, and frequently;
- Being a patient and attentive listener, maintaining all information as confidential;
- Providing encouragement, recognition, and support;
- Providing accurate, up-to-date information about opportunities and options;
- Assisting in the development of career related knowledge and skills;
- Possessing vision, integrity, and follow-through.

Suitable topics/areas of assistance for the mentee could include:

- Development of career goals, and setting realistic timetables for their achievement;
- Information related to the job search process;
- Insight into firm culture and operations;
- Current information related to the licensure process;
- The trials and exhilarations of transitioning from Academia to the Profession!



The expectations of the mentoring relationship include contact at least twice a month – email, Facebook messaging, or via other unobtrusive methods, and an in-person exchange once per semester such as a visit/tour of the mentor’s firm, or a visit to the School of Architecture (tailgate, homecoming, project jury, etc). If an in-person meeting is not possible, Skype or Google chat could substitute. Finally, under no circumstances shall this Centennial Mentorship Program be viewed as a platform to recruit potential employees for a firm, or for a student to develop expectations regarding future employment. The relationship is expected to remain in force until the mentee’s graduation.

If any problems arise, please contact the School of Architecture (405-744-6043) or Professor Bilbeisi via email (suzanne.bilbeisi@okstate.edu). We want to ensure a successful program for all involved!