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Reaching the Pinnacle Mentor Handbook



Reaching the Pinnacle is funded by:
National Science Foundation
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MENTOR HANDBOOK

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Purpose of this Handbook:

The purpose of the Reaching the Pinnacle mentor handbook is to serve as a map to guide you on the road to becoming a successful RTP mentor. This handbook provides comprehensive information on mentoring with tips, suggestions, and examples to aid you during your mentoring process. Whether you are a mentor-to-be who stands at the crossroads of mentoring or an experienced mentor who is miles down the road, this guide contains valuable information to assist you on your journey. It is recommended that you read all sections of the handbook at least once. Once you have read the material, be sure to review it periodically and refer to the handbook whenever necessary.

This handbook will teach you what it means to be a Reaching the Pinnacle mentor, the roles and responsibilities of a mentor, and different styles that you may adopt in order to meet the challenges faced during the mentoring process. This handbook charts the mentor-mentee relationship from beginning to end, starting with the skills needed to identify areas a mentee may need development, establishing a mentor relationship, and avoiding obstacles that may detour this relationship. This handbook also outlines the positive effects of mentoring and the experiences and relationships that are shared by the mentor, mentee, and Reaching the Pinnacle.

The RTP Mentorship Program:

The flagship program of Reaching the Pinnacle, the Mentor Program provides mentorship funding to qualified college students throughout the RTP region. To qualify, a student must be studying in a STEM related and NSF-approved degree program, hold a minimum 2.0 GPA and have an identified disability. Mentors are the heart of the RTP project, exemplifying the essence of the mission statement to increase the advancement of people with disabilities in STEM careers. To date, RTP has graduated 60 mentors in STEM areas. Many of these students participated in past years at RTP sponsored summer programs or in mentor-run projects. These individuals are the future engineers, scientists and mathematicians with identified disabilities pursuing their dreams. By working hard on their coursework and still finding time to mentor younger students, these dedicated individuals represent the finest efforts of our upcoming professionals while encouraging the next generation to follow in their footsteps.



The Reaching the Pinnacle (RTP) mentorship program was designed to increase awareness for students with disabilities to pursue educational opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The goal of the mentorship program is to identify, motivate, educate, and provide support to students with disabilities to ensure enrollment and completion of two and four year colleges. The Reaching the Pinnacle mentorship program is funded by the National Science Foundation under grant #HRD-0622930 and located on the New Mexico State University campus in the Foreman Engineering Complex, Room 306.

Mentorship Eligibility:

The Reaching the Pinnacle mentorship program was created to financially assist students with disabilities in their educational endeavors. Through the RTP program, awards are made to students who are enrolled in STEM fields of study. Awards as high as \$1,000 per year, can be earned through activities organized by RTP's regional center. To qualify for mentorships or stipends students must:

- Be enrolled full-time at a partner institution
- Declare a major in a STEM field
- Maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher
- Be a student with a certifiable disability
- Be a U.S. citizen



Program Goals:

- Provide a support network to address academic and personal needs for RTP students
- Advance learning through responsible study habits and organizational skills
- Promote career and educational awareness in the STEM fields
- Explore internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Improve retention and graduation rates for people with disabilities
- Provide information students may need concerning academia or student life
- Involve RTP students in campus life & activities
- Increase awareness and usage of available campus resources
- Encourage and promote student communication with faculty and peers
- Provide information and support on career opportunities and development
- Increase knowledge and a sense of belonging to the RTP program
- Assist RTP students in seeking and obtaining employment in STEM fields
- Encourage punctual attendance habits
- Instill a positive attitude toward education
- Introduce RTP students to faculty and professionals in STEM fields

Mentors:

Mentors are in a unique position to make a difference in the lives of the high school and college students with whom they work and are the key element in the success of RTP. Mentors can make a positive impact that will ultimately motivate students to change their educational values and strive for a successful college education. In this handbook, you will find ways to communicate with your student(s). It is the goal of the mentorship program for you to build a positive relationship with the students and serve as a role model for students with disabilities pursuing science, technology, engineering, and or mathematics (STEM) opportunities.

The reality is that there are few positive role models in many students' lives so you are in a unique position to make a huge difference. The biggest difference you can make in your student's life is to provide

encouragement, show students that you believe in them and hold them accountable for their educational performance.

Every student participating in the RTP mentorship program is encouraged to mentor high school students transitioning to college, provide motivation and direction, and assist in any challenges that may arise. The mentors are people who believe in the RTP program and want to help other students with disabilities to succeed.

Mentor Responsibilities:

- Contact students via email or text message once a week
- Contact students via phone once every two weeks
- Meet with students once a month
- Encourage & motivate students to study
- Assist students with academic work and aid them in the college preparation and application process
- Attend a mentor meeting with RTP director and fellow mentors twice per year
- Complete one RTP Mentor Log Sheet per semester



The best method for mentors to maintain a good rapport with their mentees is by communicating with them regularly. Promptly returning phone calls and emails, arriving to meetings and activities on time, and talking with them about the challenges of academic work are positive habits in maintaining strong communication with mentees. The most effective methods of maintaining communication with your students are face to face, phone, text messaging, and email. Please be aware that students may not have access to computers, internet access, cell phones, or transportation on a regular basis. If you find it difficult to contact a student, please contact our office at: (575) 646-2994 or by email: rlarry@nmsu.edu

Benefits of Mentoring:

Though the goals of the mentoring program seem to be aimed only at the mentees in the RTP program, there are many benefits to being a mentor as well. Mentors earn stipends to assist in paying tuition and gain valuable experience and support. Below are some of the benefits to becoming a mentor:

- Receiving the guidance and support of an experienced RTP mentor
- Receiving assistance with academic endeavors
- Experiencing greater self-esteem and motivation to succeed
- Receiving encouragement to stay in school and graduate
- Improving interpersonal relationships with teachers and family
- Receiving assistance in choosing a STEM career path
- Increasing their involvement in the community
- Helping mentees realize they can make a difference
- Developing new relationships
- Gaining new experience and knowledge about youth and the school system
- Participating in professional and developmental activities such as conferences and research projects

Key to Being a Successful Mentor

- Take the first step in developing the mentor connection (invite your mentee to meet and discuss topics related to RTP and university life)
- Be clear about your own needs and limits
- Set a tone and boundaries from the beginning
- Respect your mentee's time as much as your own
- Provide feedback in a manner suitable to the mentee
- Discuss the impact of both positive and negative feedback (this is critical in mentoring others)
- Know your own limitations (no one can fulfill all expectations)
- Learn about resources available, people, and the RTP program to better assist your mentee
- Lead by example (show, do not tell your mentee how to navigate a situation or obtain information)
- Encourage your mentee to move toward their goals, not your goals
- Recognize and appreciate your mentee when he/she provides support for others or shows initiative.
- Encourage discussion about differences with mentee (work through conflicts with care and respect)
- Maintain a professional demeanor throughout the mentoring connection
- Build and support confidence in your mentee
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentee to others
- If you disagree with your mentee's values, attitudes, or behavior, Discuss your perceptions with your mentee
- Continually self-reflect during the mentoring process (how well you are meeting your goals and expectations)
- Offer the opportunity for continued communication after the mentorship is over (allow them seek advice in the future)

Contact Information:



Reaching the Pinnacle

Civil Engineering, MSC 3CE
New Mexico State University
P.O. Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001

Main: 575-646-6051 Fax: 575-646-3367
Toll-Free: 1-888-646-6051
e-mail: rtp@nmsu.edu

<http://rtp.nmsu.edu>

RTP Mentor Log Sheet:

The Mentor Log Sheet is a fast and simple form that is completed by each mentor at the end of every semester. Log sheets help RTP mentors record and keep track of their mentoring hours, mentoring activities, and accomplishments during each semester. The following is detailed instructions on how to complete it along with a blank mentor log sheet.

Instructions for RTP Mentor Log Sheet

The Mentor Log Sheet is a fast and simple form that Reaching the Pinnacle implemented in order to help RTP mentors record and maintain track of their mentoring hours, mentor activities, and accomplishments for each semester. RTP mentors are encouraged to provide a minimum of ten hours of mentoring/tutoring and participate in two mentor activities per semester. This information should be recorded in the RTP Mentor Log Sheet.

Mentoring Hours/Mentor Activities

- Identifying mentoring hours and activities
 - Example of mentoring hours: Mentoring/tutoring/assisting other students.
 - Example of mentor activities: Assisting at RTP recruitment/informative activities at your institution or establishing/assisting mentor projects in your local area.
- Information that should be provided for mentoring/tutoring hours:
 - Date of mentoring/tutoring
 - Brief description of your activities and accomplishments.
 - Outcome of mentoring/ tutoring
 - Total hours
- Information that should be provided for mentor activities:
 - Date of mentoring activity
 - Brief description of work completed
 - Name of school, program, or project you assisted.
 - What did you do at the mentor activity/project?
 - Location of mentor activity/project
 - Total hours
 - Outcomes of mentor activities

Mentor Accomplishments

It is important that each mentor record his/her academic and career accomplishments in the RTP Mentor Log Sheet each semester. Examples include: receiving internships/scholarships, academic awards, employment, graduation, and presenting projects in competitions.

- Information that should be provided for accomplishments (hours not needed):
 - **Graduated**
 - Date (semester is sufficient)

- Program of study
 - Type of degree (associates, bachelors, masters, etc.)
 - Major (biology, electrical engineering, statistics, computer science, etc.)
 - Plans for immediate future (pursue associates, bachelors, masters, etc. in STEM/ Pursue non-STEM degree/ enter workforce)
 - Outcome (if any)
- **Internship/Fieldwork Experience**
 - Date (start/end date)
 - Scope of work
 - Institution/company/program name
 - City/state
 - Brief description of work
 - Outcome
- **Scholarships/Awards**
 - Date scholarship/award was received (semester is sufficient)
 - Scope
 - Company/program/department name
 - Brief description of scholarship
 - Outcome
- **Employment**
 - Date (start/end date)
 - Summary of work
 - Company/program name
 - City/state
 - Brief description of work
 - Outcome

The mentor log sheet provides vital feedback to the program allowing RTP to evaluate and make improvements to the mentorship program. The mentor log sheet serves as a record of a mentor's efforts and accomplishments. This information is then evaluated and used in RTP's newsletters, final reports, and highlights. The mentor log sheet must be sent to the RTP office at the end of each semester.

We appreciate your help and support of the Reaching the Pinnacle program, and we applaud your efforts.

Thank you for your service.



Reaching the Pinnacle Mentor Activity Log Sheet



Name of Mentor: _____

Institution: _____ Fall 20 _____ Spring 20 _____

| Mentor Hours and Mentor Activities | | | |
|---|---|----------|-------------|
| <i>Minimum of 10 hours of Mentoring Hours/ Minimum of 2 Mentor Activities</i> | | | |
| Date | Summary of Work (must be filled out) | Outcomes | Total Hours |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Use additional sheet if necessary | | | |
| Accomplishments | | | |
| <i>Graduated, Internships, Scholarships, Awards,</i> | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Mentor Signature: _____ Date: _____



Mentoring/Tutoring



Did you serve as a mentor or tutor?

Yes No

If yes, who did you mentor?

- High School students
- Community College student
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty/ Staff
- Industry/ Business
- Other: _____

If yes, who did you Tutor?

- High School students
- Community College student
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty/ Staff
- Industry/ Business
- Other: _____

Approximately how many mentoring sessions did you conduct in the last year? _____

Of those, how many were:

- Face to Face
- Phone
- Virtual

Approximately how many tutoring sessions did you conduct in the last year? _____

Did you receive any mentoring or tutoring?

Yes No

If yes, who mentored you?

- High School students
- Community College student
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty/ Staff
- Industry/ Business
- Other: _____

If yes, who did you receive tutoring from?

- High School students
- Community College student
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty/ Staff
- Industry/ Business
- Other: _____

Approximately how many mentoring sessions did you attend as a mentee in the last year?

Of those, how many were:

- Face to Face
- Phone
- Virtual

Approximately how many tutoring sessions did you receive in the last year?

Of those, how many were:

- Face to Face
- Phone
- Virtual

Mentor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____