Mentoring/Coaching Program Overview

Beginning in the 2013 Winter Semester, BYU Law Alumni Association and Law Career Services launched a new mentoring/coaching program designed to assist BYU law students in finding attractive employment, preparing for success in the workplace, and more fully appreciating the BYU Law School experience.

The program features a structured approach to mentoring and coaching, including some initial training for mentors/coaches and students, followed by four optional coaching sessions. Following the four sessions, participants will evaluate their experience with the program in order to further refine and improve it.

*Informational or Networking Interviews: Regardless of whether the formal curriculum is followed, Alumni mentors/coaches are asked to set up 2-3 networking or informational interviews specifically for their student. This can be as simple as taking your student to lunch several times and inviting additional attorneys to come along to meet the student.

Recommended Mentoring/Coaching Curriculum.

It is expected that each mentoring/coaching session will take approximately 20-30 minutes of preparation and 30-45 minutes of direct interaction.

The four sessions will cover the following subjects:

1. Introduction, Exploring Employment Options, and Enjoying the Law School Experience
2. Resume Review, Interviewing Skills, and Employment Targets
3. Networking, Ethics and Professionalism, and Employment Follow Up
4. Success in the Workplace, Life Balance, and Employment Follow Up

Mentor Selection.

Students can select mentors from an online database. Because sessions can be by telephone, an online chat program (such as Skype), or in person, mentors do not need to be located in Utah. Therefore, students can select mentors from a broad and diverse group of BYU Law School Alumni located throughout the world based on any reason they choose, including practice area, geography, or personal background.

Training.

Mentors and students can view recorded training materials online. Additionally, there will be a conference call on June 5th at 9:00 a.m. Mountain Time to answer specific questions about the program.

Reporting.

At the end of the summer the mentor and student will complete a brief questionnaire about their experience and the performance of their counterpart.

Written Materials.

For each session, a statement of objectives and a list of the discussion topics is provided. There will be 3-4 articles on the subject matter to be read in advance and discussed in each session. If the student already has accepted an employment offer for the subsequent summer (or a permanent offer), the student and mentor will modify the objectives and discussion topics to be appropriate for the circumstances.
Mentoring/Coaching Sessions – Objectives, Topics/Questions, and Information

Session 1: Introduction, Exploring Employment Options, & Enjoying the Law School Experience

Objectives -- At the end of this session:

- The student will understand the mentor’s background and legal practice.
- The mentor and student will have had an initial discussion about the student’s employment goals, qualifications, and reasonable employment objectives.
- Both the mentor and student will have shared insights into what it means to be a student/graduate of the J. Reuben Clark Law School.

Pre-Session Work

Student should review the mentor’s bio/resume (provided by mentor in advance).
Student and mentor should read articles for Session 1:

- Marion G. Romney, "Why the J. Reuben Clark Law School"
- Kevin Worthen, "Religiously Affiliated Law Schools: An Added Dimension"
- BYU Law School's "Guide to Professional Development" (Sections 1-7)
- BYU Law School's "Guide to Alternative Careers" (Optional)

Located online at: [http://www.law2.byu.edu/careers/Mentoring/curriculum.php](http://www.law2.byu.edu/careers/Mentoring/curriculum.php)

Discussion Topics/Questions

**Introduction.**

- What does the mentor do?
- What does the mentor like or not like about his/her current position?
- What career path has the mentor followed to get to that current position?
- What help can the mentor offer in achieving the student’s employment objectives?

**Exploring Employment Options.**

- What are the student’s career objectives (and why)?
- What are the student’s qualifications and background to achieve those objectives?
- What types of jobs are available to law school graduates generally and to this student specifically?
- What types of employment opportunities are optimal and realistic given the student’s qualifications?
- Does the student have geographic preferences?
- What are the best geographic areas for employment in the areas desired by the student?
- Does the student have specific practice area preferences?
- What are some preferable practice areas given the student’s career objectives?
- What ideas for employment did you get from reading the “Guide to Professional Development”?

**Enjoying the BYU Law School Experience.**

- Why does BYU Law School exist?
- What does it mean to graduate from our Law School?
- Do the answers to the previous two questions affect employment objectives, and if so, how?
- What is “the BYU Law School Experience?”
- How has attending BYU Law School impacted the student’s and the mentor’s lives?
- What did you learn from President Romney’s and Dean Worthen’s articles about the BYU Law School? Did these articles change the way you view the law school and if so, how?
Session 2: Resume Review, Interviewing Skills, and Employment Targets

Objectives: Following this session:

- The student will have a resume that is accurate, attractive, and persuasive to targeted potential employers.
- The mentor will have sufficient information about the student’s qualifications, desires, and employment objectives to set up three relevant informational interviews for the student.
- The mentor and student will have discussed how to prepare for an employment interview generally, as well as how to prepare for the three specific interviews to be set up by the mentor.
- The student is prepared for interviews with potential employers.
- In addition to the three interviews to be set up by the mentor, the student and the mentor will identify additional employment targets that are attractive and realistic for the student.

Pre-Work

Student should prepare resume and send it to his/her mentor before the session.

Student and mentor should read articles for Session 2:

- Joel A. Holt, "Cover Letters: 7 Steps to Creating a Great True First Impression"
- Lisa Abrams, "Ten Ways Students Can Be More Persuasive in Interviews"
- Amanda DiPolvere and Gwen Tolbert, "Behavioral Interviews — Preparing Students to Tell Their Stories"

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Discussion Topics

Resume Review.

- What makes a good resume?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of student’s resume?
- How can the student’s resume be improved?
- How should the resume be changed, if at all, for other potential employers?
- What did you learn from Joel Holt’s article about cover letters?
- How can you apply what you learned in improving the written materials you use to seek employment?

Interviewing Skills.

- Based on the article by Lisa Abrams, what can the student do to be more persuasive in interviews?
- What makes a good employment interview?
- What did the student learn from the article by Amanda DiPolvere and Gwen Tolbert about how to tell their story in an interview?
- What does the student need to do to be prepared for employment interviews?

Employment Targets.

- What are potential employment options for the Student?
- Once those targets have been identified, what is a strategy to get a job offer from those targets?
Session 3: Networking, Ethics and Professionalism, and Employment Follow Up

Objectives: Following this session:

- The student understands both what networking is and how to do it, particularly with respect to the potential employers targeted during session two.
- The student understands the practical and moral importance of behaving ethically and professionally as a lawyer.
- The student understands the particular ethical and moral obligations of a J. Reuben Clark Law School graduate.
- The Mentor and student continue to work together on securing satisfactory employment for the student.

Pre-Work: Read articles for Session 3:

- Stephanie Mitchell, “Using Informational Interviews to Build Your Network”
- Lori L. Lorenzo, “Out of the Box Networking Tips”

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Discussion Topics

Networking.

- What is the importance of networking in obtaining employment?
- What networking resources are available to the student right now to obtain targeted employment?
- What networking resources are available to BYU students that may be unique?
- How can the student use those resources to obtain targeted employment?
- How is networking important even after obtaining employment?
- What did you learn about networking from Stephanie Mitchell’s article? Did that article give you any new ideas on how you can network?
- Who are the students' networking targets?
- What networking tips recommended in the Lori Lorenzo article could most help the student in networking to find employment?

Ethics and Professionalism.

- What are the written and unwritten rules that govern lawyers’ behavior?
- What is the difference between acting ethically and acting professionally?
- What is the difference between ethical rules and morals?
- What are moral reasons to behave ethically as a lawyer?
- What are practical reasons to behave ethically as a lawyer?
- What are moral reasons to behave professionally as a lawyer?
- What are the practical reasons to behave professionally as a lawyer?
- How has the mentor handled a difficult ethical dilemma?
- What is the best way to handle an ethical dilemma?
- Based on Elder Faust’s article, what special obligations do BYU Law School graduates have to behave ethically and professionally? What else did you learn from that article?
- Is it a privilege or a right to be a lawyer? What is pro bono work and why is it important?

Employment Follow Up.

- How did the networking or informational meetings go that were set up by the mentor?
- Has the student secured an employment position (and, if not, what can be done to obtain employment)?

Session 4: Success in the Workplace, Life Balance, and Employment Follow Up
Objectives: Following this session the student:

- Understands the practical aspects of being part of a law firm or other office (business generation, practice management skills, and being a good partner/colleague).
- Understands the important differences between the law school experience and legal practice.
- Understands the role and importance of the state bar and other professional associations.
- Understands the importance of life’s priorities and the options and tools available to balance career, family, and church and/or civic responsibilities.
- Is prepared to turn a summer employment opportunity into a permanent offer of employment (or to succeed in already accepted permanent employment).
- Has made progress toward securing satisfactory employment.

Pre-Work: Read articles for Session 4:

- Robert L. Backman, “Balance”
- Hon. Deanell Reece Tacha, “Packing Your Briefcase”
- Marina S. Feehan, “E-Guides for Professionalism: Minding Your Manners and Maintaining Your Reputation”

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Discussion Topics

Success in the Workplace.

- What are the differences in the lives of a student and a practicing lawyer?
- What are the mentor’s priorities as a member of a firm (or other office)?
- What are the mentor’s obligations as a member of a firm (or other office)?
- What are some “Do’s and Don’ts” of maintaining good client relations (returning telephone calls, keeping clients informed etc.)?
- What lessons did you learn from Marina Feehan’s article on “Minding Your Manners?”
- When should you not take a case?
- What role do professional associations have in developing a successful career?
- What professional associations has the mentor joined and why?
- What are potential professional associations for the student to target during law school and upon graduation?
- What is the best way to avoid making enemies in the legal community?
- What are some ways to build relationships with others in the legal community?

Life Balance.

- What are the mentor’s priorities in life and the most satisfying parts of the mentor’s career?
- What are the student’s priorities in life?
- What is life balance and why is it important?
- How does the mentor balance the demands of career, family, and church and/or civic responsibilities?
- What types of sacrifices has the mentor made for his/her career?
- How can the student be prepared to achieve balance in life? What are the student’s goals in areas other than the practice of law? How do those goals impact the student’s career path? Discuss what you learned from the articles on life balance by Elder Backman and Judge Tacha.

Employment Follow Up.

- Has the student secured satisfactory employment?
- If not, what else can be done to help him/her obtain employment?