

ACS Virginia Section Younger Chemists Committee Chair Report: 01/25/2020

Saturday, January 25th, 2020 from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Temple Building (Room 3309) at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
Submitted By: Julian Bobb, Chair

Vision Statement

Younger leaders transforming the world through chemistry.

Mission Statement

Advocate for, develop, and support rising chemists to positively impact their careers, the ACS, and the future of chemistry.

Strategic Plans for 2020

- Goal 3-Strategy 1: Re-evaluate the current mentoring strategies, assess needs, expedite the mentorship program, and present a report to the ACS Virginia Section Executive Board.
- Goal 3-Strategy 2: Support/leverage at least two networking, outreach, educational, and development events at local university and business partners across the region.
- Goal (New): Seek opportunities for younger chemists to serve in the community - fostering community engagements.

See January 2020 Bulletin Article For 2019 Highlights

Budget for 2020

We are requesting **\$1200** for YCC activities this year:

- ⇒ **\$450** for the ACS Virginia Mentorship Luncheons in the Fall
- ⇒ **\$350** for the 3rd Annual Chemistry Trivia Night in the Fall
- ⇒ **\$200** for the Mentorship Program Social on February 1st, 2020
- ⇒ **\$200** for other future activities

The YCC will look into ACS Grant Opportunities

Planned and Potential YCC Events for 2020

- Mentorship Program Social: February 1st, 2020 (1:00 – 3:00 PM) at VCU
 - A fun social event for the mentors/mentees to connect, network, and participate in fun engaging activities
- WCC/YCC Kick-Off Networking Social: February 4th, 2020 (5:00 PM – 7:00 PM) at Jasper (3113 West Cary Street, Richmond, VA)
 - Foster networking and enhance local collaboration
- Tour of Evonik Corporation: February 26th, 2020 (5:30 – 7:30 PM) in Chesterfield, VA
 - An opportunity for students and local chemists to learn about the company, meet their employees, and check out their labs
- WCC/YCC Speed Networking: March 26th, 2020 at the University of Richmond
 - A means for students to connect with local chemists to learn about their careers and their educational background
 - A chance to ask pertinent questions
- ACS Virginia Mentorship Program:
 - Seeking industry/government scientists to volunteer to mentor young chemists.
 - The deadline to sign up to volunteer is April 2020.
 - In March/April 2020, the YCC will recruit young chemists/mentees
 - The ACS Virginia Mentorship Luncheons will be hosted in September of 2020 in the Metro Richmond Area
- Tour of Richmond Department of Forensic Science:
 - September/October 2020
 - To learn about the applications of biology and chemistry in the crime solving process
 - Encourage students from various Virginia schools to attend and foster local chemists' involvement
- Chemistry Trivia Night:
 - October/November 2020 at a University/College
 - A social, interactive, and engaging game event about chemistry and general science topics
 - An Interdisciplinary event to bring students and local chemists together

Report Update: ACS Virginia Mentorship Program

Executive Summary:

In the Fall of 2019, the YCC commenced the roll-out of the Mentorship Program by hosting two luncheons at Virginia Commonwealth University. The events were sponsored by an **ACS Corporation Associates Local Section Grant** that was awarded by the National ACS Board Committee on Corporation Associates. The program includes fifteen mentees (students & early-career chemists) and fourteen mentors (current local & retired chemists). At the luncheons, mentees met and socialized with their mentors, participated in fun & engaging activities, and worked on the Mentorship Work Plan.

In December 2019, I followed-up with the mentors and mentees *via* email to solicit feedback pertinent to the status of their mentoring relationships. This was done to determine strategic steps that the YCC needs to implement to enhance the mentorship experiences. About eleven mentors and eight mentees responded to the questions provided (see questions and responses below). Information was extracted and analyzed from the feedback. Based upon the feedback, mentors and mentees are setting and accomplishing mentoring goals and they have mutual respect for each other. The main challenges being faced is the lack of communication and not setting & accomplishing goals. Providing more mentoring tools and hosting social/networking events can help to mitigate these issues and foster more meaningful and sustainable mentoring relationships.

Purpose:

1. To check in on the statuses of the mentoring relationships.
2. Determine strategic goals that need to be implemented to enhance mentorship experiences.
3. Foster mentors and mentees engagement within the Virginia ACS section.

Structure:

1. Feedback was solicited by the mentors and mentees *via* email about their mentoring relationships.
2. Both the mentors and mentees were emailed 4 respective questions for response.
3. The response to the questions was recorded and evaluated.

What went well for most:

1. Communication: constant and effective communication.
2. Purpose: mentors and mentees are setting and accomplishing mentoring goals.
3. Takes initiative: mentors are giving their mentees assigned tasks.
4. Mutual respect.
5. Mentors and mentees have similar interests.
6. Mentors and mentees are becoming more confident in their roles and they are leveraging the program for their personal & professional developments.

Key issues/challenges faced by some:

1. Communication: Lack of steady communication is hindering mentoring relationships.
2. Purpose: lack of purpose/not having something to accomplish together.
3. Busy: personal, career and academic priorities can impede on relationships.
4. Distance: some mentors and mentees live in different geographical locations.
5. Motivate: Mentors have to encourage and reach out to their mentees.
6. Takes initiative: Both the mentors and mentees need to be proactive.
7. Impact: The mentoring relationships is not bearing influence to some.
8. Schedule: Not adhering to their planned meeting times.

Steps to mitigate these challenges:

1. Provide more social, networking events (in-person/virtual) to foster engagements.
2. Continue to follow-up with mentors and mentees.
3. Provide more mentoring tools for participants.
 - a. Add insightful and practical questions to the mentorship work plan.
 - b. Provide more engaging activities at the mentorship luncheons.
 - c. Encourage mentees to take initiative to reach out to their mentors.
4. Recruit mentors and mentees participants from closer geographical locations.

Questions Asked to Mentors and Mentees

Mentors:

1. What types of activities/discussions did you participate in with your mentee?
2. How has the relationship impacted you as a mentor thus far?
3. What have you gained thus far from mentoring?
4. If any, what are some challenges you are facing? Also, what is going well with your relationship?

Mentees:

1. What goals did you set with your mentor? How have you progressed with your goals?
2. What types of activities/discussions did you participate in with your mentor?
3. How has the relationship impacted you as a mentee thus far?
4. If any, what are some challenges you are facing? Also, what is going well with your relationship?