

DNA Mentorship Program

Upon election or appointment of new board members, the DNA President with the Executive Director will determine and carefully select experienced board members to serve as mentors to the new board members.

Upon placement on a committee, the DNA President and Committee Chair will determine and carefully select experienced committee members to serve as mentors to new committee members.

The design of the DNA mentorship program is to be a proactive professional development process for helping new members develop and improve their leadership skills. A successful relationship is more significant when individuals involved like each other, understand their responsibilities, have a mutual desire to build a relationship, and realize they both have something to offer and learn from each other.

Successful mentoring relationships must be built on trust, openness, affirmation, and willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.

Terms

Mentee: New member who engages as a learner.

Mentor: Knowledgeable member who helps the new member learn the roles and responsibilities of their volunteer position and the culture of the organization.

Mentoring or Mentorship: The process in which an experienced member inspires, advises, coaches, facilitates learning, and oversees the development of a new member.

Mentorship Program: A program that provides new members with an organized mechanism to gain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Mentorship Relationship: The relationship between the mentee and mentor that is created and nurtured throughout the mentorship process.

Phases of the Mentorship Relationship

Beginning: Mentors and mentees concentrate on interpersonal relationship building through establishing trust, nonjudgmental acceptance, articulating expectations of the relationship to each other, engaging in meaningful dialogue, and initiating relevant self-disclosure. Mentees tend to emulate mentor behaviors. Mentors feel rewarded by the mentor role and value and nurture the development of the mentees. Both may discuss reasons for being in the volunteer position and exchange resumes/CVs and past experiences.

Middle: A safe and positive environment is established and nurtured. Mentors request detailed information from the mentees and offer specific suggestions about current plans and progress in achieving their goals. Mentees feel enhanced self-esteem due to the progress made, and develop and confirm new skills. There is a high degree of interaction and intellectual exchange. Mentors progressively suggest new avenues for learning, move toward tactics for solving new and more complex situations and problems. As the relationship builds, feedback (positive, but especially negative) is given and taken in a more comfortable and growth-producing way. Mentors encourage less reliance and the mentees become more autonomous in their roles.

Ending: Mentors encourage the mentees to reflect critically on their goals and future plans. Mentors motivate mentees to take risks, make decisions without certainty of the results, overcome difficulties in the journey to reach their career goals, and become independent adult learners. Mentees achieve greater autonomy and become empowered. Mentors remain interested and stay in touch with the mentees to provide continuing support and a safety net if needed. The relationship may transform into a friendship in which both individuals take turns mentoring throughout their lives.

Mentee Role

The mentee must be willing to assume responsibility for their own professional development. They need to seek challenges and responsibilities in their new role. They also need to be receptive to feedback as well as willing to give constructive feedback.

Mentor Role

The mentor must be willing and committed to assist in the professional developmental growth of the mentee. This involves a reasonable amount of time and personal investment over an extended period of time. Their primary purpose is to help the mentee learn their role & responsibilities, and the culture of the organization. They create a warm and accepting environment that allows the mentees to control the relationship, and also permits the mentee to be themselves and voice relevant concerns and needs. They must be personable, approachable, reasonable, and competent individuals who are committed to helping mentees achieve the success of which they are capable.

Ideal mentor qualifications include:

- Commitment to the mission and goals of the organization
- Knowledge of the organization
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Exemplary leadership skills
- Willingness to assist in another's professional growth
- Willingness to learn from the mentee
- Personal power and charisma
- Ability to share credit and successes
- Ability to help the mentee learn from mistakes
- Patience and risk-taking
- Accountability
- Personable, approachable, and constructive
- Respectful and considerate for the mentee

Benefits of a Mentor Program

- Leadership training: helps volunteers develop their leadership abilities
- On-Boarding: teaches new volunteers about the organization and the expectations
- Skill development: meeting career goals by honing new capabilities

- Succession planning: seasoned volunteers can impart knowledge and wisdom to those who will take over when they leave their roles
- Enhancing relationships among colleagues: building friendships and productive relationships among organizational volunteers can lead to a healthier organization culture
- Volunteer retention: volunteers who perceive that the organization cares about them and their professional development, as well as their future, are more likely to stay involved with the organization

Provides opportunities for mentees to...

- Explore the world through interaction with knowledgeable professionals
- Gain an experienced mentor's perspective
- Familiarize themselves with DNA protocols and culture
- Identify long-term professional development needs
- Realize the value of networking
- Develop a meaningful professional relationship

Provides opportunities for mentors to...

- Contribute to the professional development of the future of the organization
- Identify potential future leaders for their organization
- Assist mentees in becoming successful volunteers
- Give something back to the profession and organization

Mentorship Meeting Components

When scheduling meetings between the mentor/mentee, it is important to *plan the meeting with the following information:*

- Purpose of meeting
- Meeting date/time
- Each other's telephone numbers and who will initiate call
- Agenda
- Action Items coming from your call
- The next meeting date/time
- Complete a summary of the meeting together and submit to the chair of your committee or the President of the Board, whichever applies to your role.

Topics of Mentor/Mentee meetings:

- Review of Mentor/Mentee relationship
- Review of volunteer job description and expectations
- Meeting schedule between Mentor/Mentee
- Volunteer role: how it fits into the bigger picture
- DNA Bylaws
- DNA Strategic Plan
- Other pertinent topics agreed upon between Mentor/Mentee

Tips for Meetings:

- Prepare for the meeting. Read the agenda for the meeting and other information distributed for the meeting. Jot down any questions you have regarding the topic(s) to be discussed, or items you need to clarify.
- Model professionalism by being prompt.
- Use the meeting as an opportunity for your professional development including your image and interpersonal skills by participating in a collaborative environment and developing leadership skills.
- Listen actively.
- Take notes.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Ask for clarification or an explanation if you don't understand something.
- Tell yourself you are going to get at least one good idea from the meeting.
- Carry out actions agreed upon during the meeting.

Source: Reprinted/adapted with permission from Mentoring the Stars: A Program for Volunteer Board Leaders (1998).

Guidelines for Mentorship Program

- **Mentor** must make initial contact with mentee within one week of assignment
- **Mentor** must communicate with mentee at least once monthly
- **Mentor** must complete the Mentor Checklist
- **Mentor** must complete the Mentor Self-Assessment
- **Mentor** must complete the Mentor Program Evaluation upon completion
- **Mentee** must complete the Mentee Checklist
- **Mentee** must complete the Mentee Self-Assessment
- **Mentee** must keep a mentor program journal
- **Mentee** must complete the Mentee Program Evaluation upon completion
- **Mentor** and **Mentee** must create and complete their Mentorship Program Plan

First Meeting: Introductions

Mentee:

- Discuss your perceptions and expectations of the mentor/mentee relationship.
- Talk about your professional background and current situation, and clearly state your desired focus for future conversations.
- Provide context to help your mentor understand you. Share your professional goals and, as relevant, your life situation. Although your mentor doesn't need to know everything about you, openly share your hopes and fears.
- Ask direct questions to learn more about your mentor's experiences.
- Establish a mutually agreed upon plan for future meetings.

Mentor:

- Discuss your current job responsibilities.
- Explain how you got into the profession.
- Discuss the necessary preparation needed for your volunteer role.
- Share your feelings on the importance of networking and continued professional development.

Subsequent Meetings:

- Create agendas as outlined under "Topics for Mentor/Mentee Meetings"
- Include brief updates on your progress from last meeting.

After each meeting, lay the groundwork for the future:

- Follow up within 24 hours if you need to clarify the next steps you agreed on.
- If you committed to an action as a result of the meeting, make sure you follow through.

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentee Checklist to the DNA Mentorship Program

The following are steps for the new DNA volunteer to progress successfully through the DNA Mentorship Program. Place the date of completion in the left-hand column once you have completed each step.

✓ Date when completed	Activities
	1) Schedule time to begin the mentorship relationship with your mentor. Exchange resumes/CVs and discuss significant life experiences. Get to know each other's areas of expertise.
	2) Begin to develop the Mentorship Program Plan. Read the components of this plan and begin to prepare your responses in preparation for joint development of the program with your mentor.
	3) Complete the Mentee Self-Assessment tool.
	4) Jointly develop the Mentorship Program Plan with your mentor.
	5) Begin reading the Volunteer/Mentorship Manual.
	6) Communicate, communicate, communicate with your mentor! Combined with the information in the Volunteer/Mentorship Manual, this is the best chance you have of becoming a successful DNA volunteer.
	7) Remember to periodically check the progress of the relationship in the mentorship plan.
	8) Communicate the progress of your mentorship program to the Chair of your committee.
	9) When the formal part of the mentorship program has concluded, complete the Mentor Program Evaluation and submit to the Executive Director. Also, go back to your self-assessment and complete the post-mentorship column to determine your progress in the mentorship program.
	10) Celebrate the success of your partnership and your accomplishments!

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentee Self-Assessment

The purpose of this tool is to provide a self-assessment of your knowledge and the skills necessary to be an effective DNA volunteer. Read each of the objectives and assess your degree of knowledge or skill in that area. Circle the degree to which you are able to meet each objective using the scale below. To get the most out of the assessment tool, complete the tool now before you assume your role as a new volunteer. Then, when you have completed your mentorship program, complete this tool again to determine your progress.

Scale: 4= Have the knowledge and skills to meet the objective

3=Have some knowledge and skills in this area, but need to review.

2=Not sure of my knowledge and skills in this area.

1=Have little or no knowledge or skills to meet the objective.

Objectives	Pre-Mentorship Ability to meet the objectives <i>prior to this program</i>	Post-Mentorship Ability to meet the objectives <i>after completing this program</i>
1) Define the terms mentee, mentor, mentoring, mentorship program, and mentorship relationship	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
2) Discuss the characteristics of successful mentorships	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
3) Explain the stages of the mentorship relationship	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
4) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
5) Develop a Mentorship Program Plan collaboratively with the mentor	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
6) State the reason for why organizations exist	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
7) Discuss the value of individual member's contributions to an organization	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
8) Explain the importance of a position description	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
9) List the characteristics of an effective leader	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1

10) Develop a plan to enhance one's leadership skills.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
11) Define mission, vision, and culture.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
12) Describe how bylaws, organizational chart, policies, and position descriptions provide guidelines for governing an organization.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
13) Describe the roles of officers and committees in assisting the board in governing the organization.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
14) Define decision making/problem solving.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
15) Explain the value and consequences of taking risks and making mistakes.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
16) Describe the techniques of brainstorming.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
17) Define the terms team, teamwork, and team development/team building.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
18) Describe the advantages of working together in a team.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
19) Describe the roles of team leader and team member.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
20) Evaluate one's skills as a team member.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
21) Discuss the importance of a partnership relationship between chairs and staff liaisons.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
22) Describe the role of the chair.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
23) Describe the role of the Executive Director.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
24) Describe the role of the Board liaison.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1

25) Describe the role of the Staff liaison.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
26) Define Strategic planning.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
27) Identify the stakeholders who have an investment in the organizations' future.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
28) Discuss how to implement the Strategic plan.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
29) State the reasons for holding a meeting.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
30) Discuss the purpose and value of an agenda.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
31) List the responsibilities of the chairperson of a meeting.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
32) Discuss ways to deal with challenging situations and behaviors that may arise during meetings.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
33) Explain the participant's role in contributing to an effective meeting.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
34) Describe the process of consensus decision making.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
35) Discuss ways to prepare for and conduct effective conference calls.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
36) Describe effective ways to conclude meetings.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1
37) List ways to evaluate and improve meetings and meeting skills.	4 3 2 1	4 3 2 1

For any objective you rated items 1 or 2 on this self-assessment, include these items collaboratively with your mentor to develop the Mentorship Program Plan. If you rated items 3, discuss them with your mentor to determine if they too need to be included on the Mentorship Program Plan.

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentee Program Evaluation

DIRECTIONS: The purpose of this form is for the mentee to evaluate the mentorship program. Circle your responses to the items using the scale below. Answer the open-ended questions by writing your response. Return this form to the Executive Director.

Thank you and good luck in your role!

SCALE: 5=strongly agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

- 1) The mentorship program was well organized.....5 4 3 2 1
- 2) The content in the manual was understandable.....5 4 3 2 1
- 3) The design of the manual prompted easy readability.....5 4 3 2 1
- 4) The content of the manual assisted me in learning my role.....5 4 3 2 1
- 5) The content of the manual helped me to structure my discussions
with my mentor.....5 4 3 2 1
- 6) My mentor provided the guidance I needed to progress effectively
throughout this program.....5 4 3 2 1
- 7) The mentorship program was effective in helping to achieve the following program goals:
 - 7.1) Provide an organized method to assist new volunteers in assuming
Responsibility for their learning and becoming competent in their
role.....5 4 3 2 1
 - 7.2) Suggest new ways for volunteers to partner with experienced
Volunteers to learn the culture of the organization and their role
responsibilities.....5 4 3 2 1
 - 7.3) Provide experienced volunteers with a systematic and comprehensive
way to help new volunteers transition to their volunteer positions...5 4 3 2 1
 - 7.4) Assist the organization in providing an efficient and
Effective method to develop new volunteers.....5 4 3 2 1
- 8) Overall, the mentorship program was a valuable way to prepare myself
for my role as a DNA volunteer.....5 4 3 2 1
- 9) Identify the strengths of this mentorship program.

- 10) List suggestions for improving this mentorship program.

- 11) Other comments? Thoughts?

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentorship Program Plan

Date: _____

Mentee _____ Mentor _____

The purpose of this plan is to set and provide continued direction for the progress of this mentorship program. The plan is developed collaboratively by the mentor and mentee. The mentee's self-assessment results should be used as baseline data to determine the mentee's learning needs. This tool serves as a guide to develop goals and expectations, a method of communication, and a timetable for completion of the program. Complete your responses of the Mentorship Program Plan.

1) **GOALS:** What do you both want to achieve with this mentorship program? What do you want your outcomes to be?

2) **EXPECTATIONS:** What are your expectations of each other?
I expect my mentor to...

I expect my mentee to...

3) **COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT:** By what method(s) and how often will you communicate with each other?

4) **TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETION OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAM:** Use the mentee's self-assessment to determine what the goals will be in a prioritized list with a target date of completion, and a target date for mentee and mentor to discuss. (Create/attach another sheet if more goals are identified).

GOALS (Prioritize #1 most important)	TARGET DATE OF COMPLETION	DATE FOR DISCUSSION
1)		

2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		

5) EVALUATION 1: Determine periodic points at which you will discuss the progress of the mentorship program and the relationship. Develop future actions and renegotiate this plan as needed.

6) EVALUATION 2: Upon completion of the formal mentorship program, the mentee will complete the third column of the Mentee Self-Assessment tool. The mentor and mentee will then discuss the strengths of the program and determine future direction. Each will complete the Mentorship Program Evaluation tools and submit to the Executive Director.

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentor Checklist to the DNA Mentorship Program

The following steps are suggested for assisting your DNA volunteer mentee to progress successfully through the mentorship program. Place a check in the column once you have completed each step.

✓ Check when completed	Activities
	1) Customize the new mentee's mentorship program to their specific needs.
	2) Schedule time to begin the mentorship relationship with your mentee. Exchange resumes/CVs and discuss significant life experiences. Get to know each other's areas of expertise.
	3) Review the Mentorship Program Plan. Begin thinking of ways you can assist your mentee in developing this plan. List some expectations you have of your mentee.
	4) Complete the Mentor Self-Assessment tool. This assessment will help to determine your mentoring strengths and areas for improvement.
	5) Review the objectives on the Mentee Self-Assessment tool. These objectives will give you an idea of what the mentee will be learning and the intended outcomes.
	6) Jointly develop the Mentorship Program Plan with your mentee. Use the results of the Mentee's Self-Assessment to guide in the development of the plan. Remember mentees will learn best when they can readily apply their learning to an actual situation.
	7) Communicate, communicate, communicate with your mentee! Your support, guidance, and progress checks will strengthen the ultimate success of this new volunteer.
	8) Remember to periodically check the progress of the relationship and the mentorship plan.
	9) Communicate the progress of the mentorship program to the Executive Director.
	10) When this formal part of the mentorship program is concluded, complete the Mentor Mentorship Program Evaluation and submit to the Executive Director.
	11) Celebrate the success of your partnership!

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentor Self-Assessment

The purpose of this tool is to provide a self-assessment of the mentor's skills. It is to be completed and used by the mentor to evaluate strengths and areas for improving mentor effectiveness. Read each mentor behavior and, using the scale below, circle your assessment of your skills in each area. After scoring your behaviors, look at those areas in which you circled "S" or "L". These are your areas for improvement. Begin developing your personal development plan to increase your mentoring effectiveness.

Note: if you have functioned as a mentor before, base your responses on past experiences. If you have not previously functioned as a mentor, your responses should be based on how you have helped others learn and how you would most likely interact with a mentee.

Scale: **E**= Well Experienced **S**=Could Use Some Improvement **L**=Little to No Experience and Need to Learn

- 1) I encourage mentees to express their honest feelings about their experiences. I maintain a non-judgmental, but supportive attitude.....E S L
- 2) I encourage mentees who are upset or discouraged about a mistake, failure, or negative experience to identify what went wrong, determine reasons why and what could be done differently next time, to learn from the experience.....E S L
- 3) I initiate periodic progress reports to determine mentee's perceptions of their learning and progress toward goal achievement..... E S L
- 4) I refer mentees to other volunteer members or individuals who may offer information and guidance in areas that I may not have expertise.....E S L
- 5) I share my life experiences, especially as a volunteer, to help mentees learn from practical experience.....E S L
- 6) I arrange meetings (face-to-face or phone) with mentees at times when I will not be interrupted..... E S L
- 7) I encourage mentees to gather all the facts and define the problem before attempting to solve a problem..... E S L
- 8) I ask probing questions and encourage mentees to reach their own conclusions and solve problems while providing helpful support. I try not to solve problems For them.....E S L
- 9) I link mentees with learning resources (human and material) to expand their knowledge and skills.....E S L
- 10)I encourage mentees to challenge the ways things have always been done and "think outside the box"..... E S L
- 11)I point out inconsistencies in mentee's rationale for their actions and assist them in clearly thinking about their behaviors.....E S L
- 12)I provide negative feedback privately and at times when I think mentees are ready or able to constructively receive this information.....E S L
- 13)I try to stimulate mentees to critically think about the long range implications of their actions and goals.....E S L
- 14)I assist mentees in viewing and managing change as a positive opportunity for growth..... E S L

- 15) When mentees are in a position to institute change, I encourage them to involve all individuals who will be affected by the change and attempt to obtain their "buy-in" prior to instituting the change.....E S L
- 16) I encourage mentees to continually assess their learning needs and provide guidance in meeting those needs.....E S L
- 17) I provide step-by-step guidance and direction to mentees when they are performing a task they have never done before. I provide feedback on their performance afterwards.....E S L
- 18) I provide negative feedback to mentees by a) making a positive comment, b) stating the undesired behavior/action, c) ending on a positive note of affirmation of the mentee's skills and abilities.....E S L
- 19) I look for situations, projects, or advancement opportunities for mentees to gain experience and demonstrate their expertise.....E S L
- 20) I guide mentee's actions in a way that is politically correct within the organization.....E S L
- 21) I assist mentees to identify and make appropriate decisions about situations that pose ethical dilemmas.....E S L
- 22) I communicate my concerns when mentees verbal and nonverbal behavior is not in agreement.....E S L
- 23) I share my personal examples of difficulties and how I overcame them, either in my personal life or in my experiences within the organization, as a method to provide insight and learning for mentees.....E S L
- 24) I express my personal confidence in mentee's abilities to succeed and their competence as adult learners.....E S L
- 25) I confront mentees with the reality of potential consequences in a direct, but supportive manner if they are avoiding dealing with problems or not demonstrating accountability in fulfilling their volunteer responsibilities.....E S L
- 26) I encourage mentees to use me as a sounding board when handling difficulties, I listen and allow mentees to ventilate their feelings and frustrations. I then help mentees in exploring ways to deal effectively with their difficulties.....E S L
- 27) I am proud of my mentees' successes and publicly praise them for their accomplishments.....E S L
- 28) I discuss with mentees the importance of their roles as role models and leaders of the organization. I encourage mentees to display positive attitude and a confident manner when interacting with fellow volunteers and the organization's members.....E S L
- 29) I encourage mentees to actively participate in meetings, assist in making effective decisions through consensus, and support the decisions of their committee and/or board.....E S L
- 30) I discuss the importance of maintaining confidentiality within the mentorship relationship.....E S L
- 31) I encourage my mentees to provide me feedback about how I am doing as a mentor and how I am contributing, or not contributing, to their learning.....E S L
- 32) I confront inappropriate behavior mentees may display in a concerned and helpful manner.....E S L
- 33) I ask probing, open-ended questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" response.....E S L

- 34) I establish with mentees expectations or ground rules for our relationship. I periodically review these expectations with mentees to determine how well we are meeting those expectations.....E S L
- 35) I discuss and clarify my role as a mentor as often as needed.....E S L
- 36) I encourage mentees to become progressively independent but remain available as a coach and facilitator of their continued learning.....E S L
- 37) I recognize and value the expertise that mentees bring to the relationship. I am open to learning from my mentees.....E S L
- 38) I suggest to mentees that we establish a regular schedule of communicating.....E S L
- 39) I discuss with mentees potential problems or critical issues that may be addressed prior to meetings so mentees can begin to think about their reactions and responses during these discussions.....E S L
- 40) When faced with making decisions for the organization, I encourage mentees to critically think about what is best for the membership and the future of the organization.....E S L

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Guidelines for Mentorship Program

Mentor Program Evaluation

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SCALE: 5=strongly agree 4=Agree 3=Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

- 1) The mentorship program was well organized.....5 4 3 2 1
- 2) The content in the manual was understandable.....5 4 3 2 1
- 3) The design of the manual prompted easy readability.....5 4 3 2 1
- 4) The content of the manual assisted me to learn/clairfy my mentor
role.....5 4 3 2 1
- 5) The content of the mentorship program helped the new mentee to structure their
discussions.....5 4 3 2 1
- 6) I feel that I was able to assist/guide my mentee effectively throughout the
mentorship program.....5 4 3 2 1
- 7) The mentorship program was effective in helping to achieve the following program goals:
 - 7.1) Provide an organized method for their learning and becoming competent in
their role.....5 4 3 2 1
 - 7.2) Suggest ways for new volunteers to partner with experienced volunteers to
learn the culture of the organization and their role responsibilities...5 4 3 2 1
 - 7.3) Provide experienced volunteers with a systematic and comprehensive way
to help new volunteers transition into their positions.....5 4 3 2 1
- 8) Overall, the mentorship program was a valuable way to prepare the
Mentee for their role as a DNA volunteer.....5 4 3 2 1
- 9) Identify the strengths of this mentorship program.

- 10) List suggestions for improving this mentorship program.

- 11) Other comments? Thoughts?

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