Overview of the 2016-17 BLSA Mentoring Program

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions and more information about how to sign up to be a volunteer:

What is the BLSA Mentoring Program?
The Black Law Students Association (BLSA) re-launched its mentoring program in the 2014-2015 academic year. After several successful years, the BLSA executive board is proud to present the Alumni Mentoring Program for the 2016-2017 academic year. The BLSA mentoring program provides 1Ls with leadership and professional skills to help them thrive during law school and in the legal field following graduation. Incoming 1Ls are paired with African-American attorneys working in Chicago across the legal community, including law firms, government, public interest, and in-house, giving 1Ls exposure to these respective career options. Through the program, students engage with their mentors in both group and individual settings each quarter. Alumni reconnect with the Law School and share their experiences and knowledge with students beginning their legal careers.

Who participates in the program?
The BLSA Mentoring Program is open to all incoming law students, many of whom identify as African-American. Incoming 1Ls will have the unique opportunity to connect with local alumni in a variety of legal fields. Our students have expressed interest in fields ranging from law firms to public interest and government sector careers.

What is expected of me as a mentor?
The mentoring program spans the length of the academic year but is more involved during Winter and Spring quarters. Therefore, we ask that mentors commit to attending major program events such as the Kick-Off reception during January but beyond this, your level of involvement is largely left to you and your mentee. We are aware that your schedule is busy and your time is valuable. We hope that at a minimum you will:

- Meet in person with your mentee once each quarter;
- Participate in one or more group events;
- Communicate with your mentee via email or phone periodically as agreed upon by you and your mentee; and
- Provide feedback, guidance and encouragement to your mentee.

What is expected of me as a BLSA program attendee, if I am not an alumni mentor?
Perhaps your schedule doesn't allow for a mentoring relationship, but you'd like to be involved through program-sponsored events:

- Receive invitations from the Office of External Affairs to approximately 1-2 BLSA events during the academic year;
- Meet, mingle, and network with fellow alumni and 1L students at BLSA-related events.

Important Dates:
September 26 – First day of classes
November 18 – OEA will connect mentees and mentors via email, so mentees can reach out to mentors

How do I sign up?
Please visit the BLSA Mentoring Program Mentor Sign-up page at http://www.law.uchicago.edu/BLSAmentor and indicate how you would like to be involved.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions?
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