



## Sparks Mentorship Program

⚡ Be the Spark. Make a Difference. Change a Life. ⚡



Our mission is to empower students through personalized mentorship that fosters personal growth, enhances academic success, and builds the skills needed for a successful transition into fulfilling careers and long-term happiness.

- **Proud Father:** Two adult children including a life-long cancer survivor.
- **Gratitude and Passion:** Deeply grateful for life and dedicated to helping others live intentionally and maximize their potential through mentoring and guidance.
- **Early Career:** Began a career in IT during college, managing a consulting business while pursuing studies.
- **Career Transition:** Transitioned to a long-term career in management consulting with expertise in supply chain management, working with brands like Hershey Foods, Miller Brewing, and Coca-Cola.
- **SetFire Founding:** Established SetFire in November 2023, inspired by a passion for giving back and creating purpose in retirement.
- **Advisory Board and Sparks Program:** Created the SetFire Advisory Board and launched the Sparks Mentorship Program in January 2024.
- **Retirement Commitment:** Retired in April 2024, dedicating significant time to expanding The Sparks Mentorship Program into a robust, commercial-grade mentorship platform.



- **Guidance & Expertise:** Our Advisory Board consists of experienced professionals, both retired and active, from diverse business backgrounds, including a current Sparks Student actively engaged in mentorship.

Board of Directors



**Ted Bozarth**  
Founder, Chairman & Mentor  
Since: January 1, 2024  
Ted, a native of Michigan and an alumnus of Michigan State University, takes great pride in ...  
[Read more](#)




**Sonja Kurcz**  
Board Director & Advisor  
Since: January 1, 2025  
Sonja's passion for people and culture drives her interest in developing diverse, inclusive network...  
[Read more](#)




**Steve Westphal**  
Board Director, Advisor & Mentor  
Since: January 1, 2024  
With over 30 years in the consumer products industry, largely within the soft drink sector at ...  
[Read more](#)


Advisory Board




**Diana Barnett**  
Advisor & Mentor  
Since: Jan 1, 2025  
Diana is currently a multi-industry consultant whose leadership skills include Corporate ...  
[Read more](#)




**James Best**  
Advisor  
Since: Jan 1, 2024  
James is a dedicated leader who earned his Political Science degree from the University of ...  
[Read more](#)




**Don Finley**  
Advisor & Technology and AI  
Since: Jan 1, 2024  
As the founder of FINdustries, Don's journey has been about enabling individuals and ...  
[Read more](#)




**Chris Koch**  
Advisor & Marketing  
Since: May 13, 2025  
Chris is a veteran marketing executive and entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience i...  
[Read more](#)




**Sonja Kurcz**  
Board Director & Advisor  
Since: Jan 1, 2025  
Sonja's passion for people and culture drives her interest in developing diverse, inclusive network...  
[Read more](#)




**Todd McLean**  
Advisor, Workplace Partnerships & Mentor  
Since: Apr 1, 2024  
Todd is a dynamic leader with a passion for understanding and enhancing human ...  
[Read more](#)



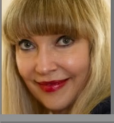
**Lisa O'Dell**  
Advisor, Mentor Recruiting & Mentor  
Since: May 5, 2025  
Lisa spent 32 years with Ingersoll Rand in the industrial manufacturing industry. There she ...  
[Read more](#)




**Nhi Pham**  
Advisor & Student Perspectives  
Since: Aug 1, 2024  
Nhi is an international undergraduate student from Vietnam, currently majoring in Supply Chain ...  
[Read more](#)



**Dena Schweitzer**  
Advisor  
Since: Jan 1, 2025  
Dena is an experienced educator and licensed Speech/Language Pathologist with a 30-year ...  
[Read more](#)



**Dr. Shawnee Vickery**  
Advisor & College Partnerships  
Since: Jan 23, 2025  
Dr. Shawnee K. Vickery is the Demmer Legacy Professor of Business Administration, Professor ...  
[Read more](#)



**Steve Westphal**  
Board Director, Advisor & Mentor  
Since: Jan 1, 2024  
With over 30 years in the consumer products industry, largely within the soft drink sector at ...  
[Read more](#)

**Open**  
Advisor & Fundraising + Grant Writing  
Since:  
We are actively seeking an individual with fundraising and grant writing experience to join ...  
[Read more](#)

**Open**  
Advisor & Student Recruiting  
Since:  
We are actively seeking a candidate for an Advisory Board position as Advisor and Director ...  
[Read more](#)



## Benefits for Students:

- **Practical Insights:** Gain valuable knowledge and experience in real-world industries and careers.
- **Personalized Guidance:** Receive tailored support for academic and professional development.
- **Valuable Connections:** Build strong networks through meaningful networking opportunities.
- **Skill Development:** Develop abilities that promote both personal and professional growth.

## Benefits for Mentors:

- **Meaningful Impact:** Experience the fulfillment of making a significant difference in a student's future.
- **Fresh Perspectives:** Gain new insights and innovative ideas from the next generation of talent.
- **Professional Opportunities:** Build connections that may lead to future career opportunities, including access to a pipeline of emerging talent.
- **Joy of Giving Back:** Find personal satisfaction and purpose in sharing your knowledge and experiences to inspire and uplift others.



**For just 60-90 minutes per month over a year, you have the power to change a student's life!**

- **SetFire Launch:** November 2023
- **Sparks Mentorship Program Launch:** February 2024



45

STUDENTS

Our thriving student community grows weekly, expanding our meaningful impact.

+1025% 12mo growth



38

MENTORS

Our growing mentor network drives our ability to create meaningful impact.

+443% 12mo growth



170

SESSIONS

Each mentoring session is focused on helping our students achieve their goals.

+900% 12mo growth



25

COLLEGES

The number of colleges where we mentor students is increasing weekly.

+733% 12mo growth

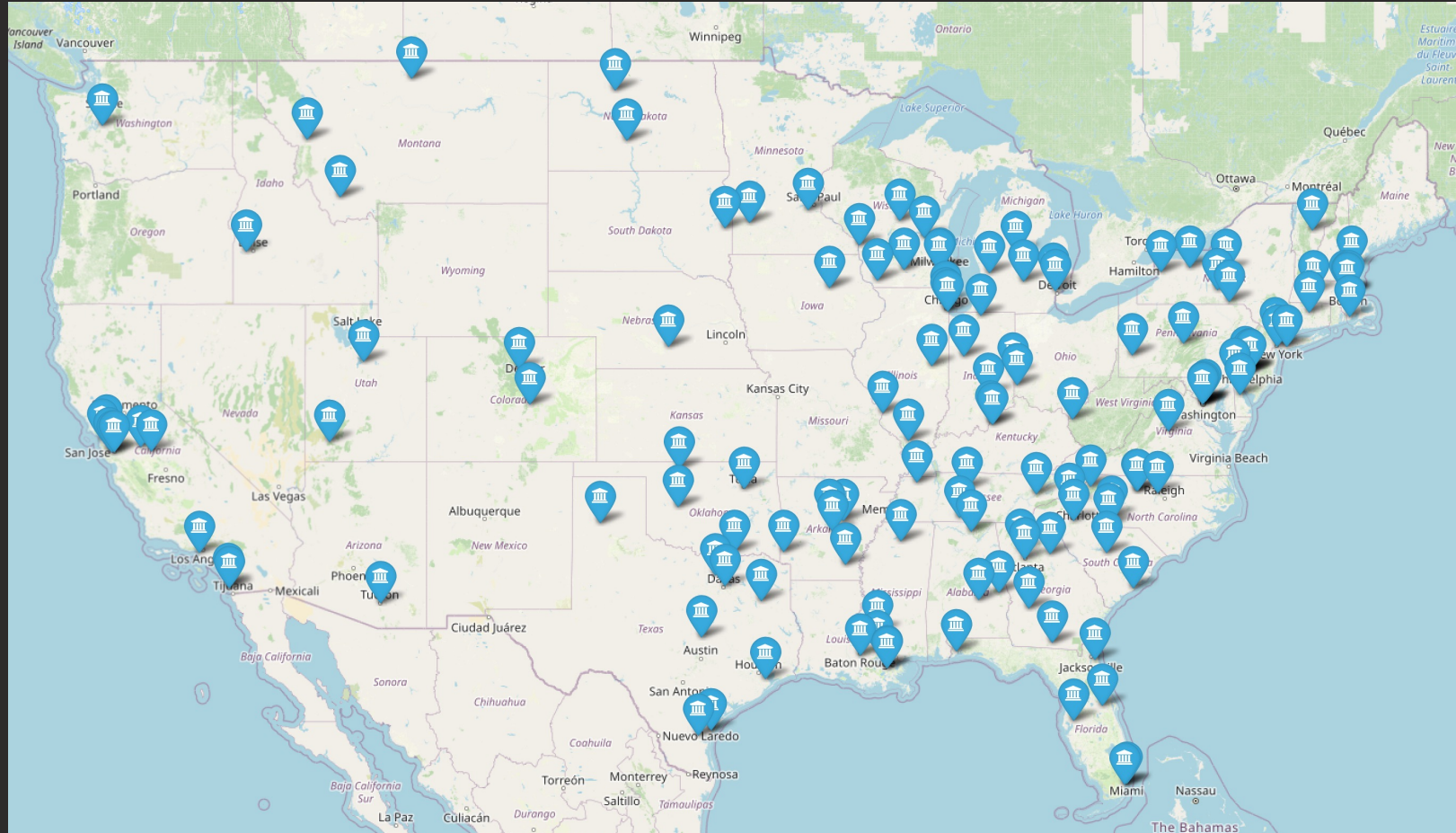
 University of Georgia Since: Jun 20, 2025	 University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Since: Jun 17, 2025	 Lemoyne-Owen College Since: Jun 15, 2025
 Davidson College Since: Jun 15, 2025	 The University of Alabama Since: Jun 14, 2025	 San Jose State University Since: Jun 14, 2025
 University of North Carolina-Charlotte Since: Jun 11, 2025	 University of Virginia Since: Jun 11, 2025	 University of Texas at San Antonio Since: May 21, 2025
 Boston College Since: May 18, 2025	 Georgia State University Since: May 14, 2025	 University of South Florida Since: May 9, 2025
 Virginia Tech Since: Apr 29, 2025	 Louisiana State University Since: Apr 25, 2025	 Villanova University Since: Apr 21, 2025
 Kennesaw State University Since: Apr 14, 2025	 Syracuse University Since: Mar 28, 2025	 University of Pennsylvania Since: Mar 24, 2025
 College of Charleston Since: Feb 11, 2025	 Penn State Since: Nov 27, 2024	 North Greenville University Since: Nov 20, 2024
 The University of Tennessee-Knoxville Since: Jul 18, 2024	 University of South Carolina Since: Apr 8, 2024	 Central Michigan University Since: Feb 24, 2024
 Michigan State University Since: Aug 1, 2023		

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Sparks Mentorship Program: Mentor Info Session v2.66

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- **Nationwide:** The Sparks Mentorship Program is now visible to students at 130+ colleges nationwide via the Handshake platform. **H**





# Mentoring The Whole Person

In the Sparks Mentorship Program, we are committed to mentoring the whole person.

- **The Individual:** Supporting their personal growth, values, and self-awareness.
- **The Student:** Guiding their academic success and learning journey.
- **The Future Professional:** Preparing them for career readiness and professional development.



We are a "spiritually agnostic"  
mentoring program.

# Sparks Mentorship Program Objectives

- **Developmental Experiences:** Provide guidance on internships and other developmental experiences in their college years
- **Academic Support:** Provide guidance on course selection, study habits, and time management to improve academic performance.
- **Career Guidance:** Assist students in exploring career options, building professional networks, and preparing for the job market.
- **Skill Development:** Focus on developing soft skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Coach on strategies to balance academic responsibilities with personal life.
- **Financial Literacy:** Educate about budgeting and financial planning
- **Personal Growth:** Encourage self-awareness, confidence-building, and personal goal setting.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Facilitate connections with professionals, alumni, and peers for career and academic advancement.



- **Undergraduate Students:** We mentor college undergraduates, from rising freshmen to graduating seniors, across all majors and fields of study.
- **Current Focus on Business:** While we welcome students from any discipline, our current partnerships with business schools mean there's a strong need for mentors with business expertise.
- **Beyond Business:** We accept and encourage applications from students outside the business field and will work to find mentors who match their academic and career interests.
- **High-Impact Mentorship:** Our primary goal is to provide a valuable and personalized mentorship experience that helps students achieve their academic, personal, and professional aspirations.





- **Goal Setting:** Help your student define clear mentorship goals, with them taking the lead in setting the direction.
- **Collaborative Meetings:** Work together to create meeting agendas and topics based on the student's goals and progress from prior sessions.
- **Monitor and Adjust:** Regularly review the student's development and adjust as needed to ensure they stay on track.
- **Career & Academic Guidance:** Support students in aligning their academic choices with career goals, offering advice on relevant courses, internships, and skill-building for long-term success.
- **Personal Coaching:** Support the student in growing as a person in areas such as personal finances or other life skills where needed or requested.
- **Provide Constructive Feedback:** Continuously seek feedback from your student to improve the mentorship experience and adapt to their evolving needs.
- **Reporting:** Complete a brief two-question survey after each session to monitor mentorship progress and status, ensuring the program provides ongoing support for both student and mentor.

- **Professional Experience:** Minimum of 5+ years in a professional setting, with 5+ years in a management or leadership role, OR extensive experience developing others.
- **Diverse Backgrounds Welcome:** We seek both retired and active professionals from a variety of industries, ensuring a wide range of expertise for our students.
- **Passion for Mentorship:** A genuine desire to teach, share knowledge, and help guide college students through their academic and career journey.
- **Educational Foundation:** A four-year college degree or significant college experience providing the ability to relate to the college experience and offer relevant guidance.
- **Commitment:** Willingness to invest 1 hour per month over a 12-month period (not including preparation time) to support a student's growth and development.
- **Flexible Guidelines:** While these are our general guidelines, we recognize exceptions on a case-by-case basis to accommodate a variety of mentoring experiences and backgrounds.

- **Tailored Matching:** Students are matched with mentors based on their major, goals, and specific preferences outlined in their application.
- **Network-Driven Support:** If a student's application doesn't align with a currently available Sparks Mentor, we actively seek a mentor within the network of the founder, Advisory Board, or existing mentors to find and onboard a suitable match.
- **Proposed Matches:** When a potential match is identified, the student's profile is presented to the mentor for approval before moving forward.
- **Mentorship Start:** Once the mentor accepts the match, both the student and mentor receive an acceptance notification. The student's preferred start date, as indicated in their application, will be confirmed to initiate the mentorship.



- **Student-Driven Goals:** The mentorship is centered around the goals that each student outlines in their application. These goals are further refined during the first two meetings to ensure alignment with their aspirations.
- **Standardized Framework:** The program uses a set of 40+ Mentorship Standards that act as a guideline. Mentors and students review these standards together to decide which are most relevant and valuable for their specific mentorship journey.
- **Customized Approach:** While we provide a structured foundation, the mentorship is flexible, allowing each student-mentor pair to focus on the areas that matter most to the student's personal and professional growth.



- A list of important areas that we discuss with every student for their consideration for inclusion in their mentorship focus:

## Professional Marketing

- LinkedIn Profile
- Interviewing skills
- Resume & cover letter writing
- Evaluating job offers & benefits
- Personal brand building
- Professional character & behavior
- Networking & relationship building

## Internships

- Finding & applying for internships
- Internship goal planning
- Internship counseling

## Productivity Tools

- MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel & Teams
- MS Project
- MS Access (if applicable)
- Chat GPT / LLMs

## Personal Finances

- Budgeting, Cash Flow & Bill Payment
- Intro to Investing
- Credit Management
- Foundations of Money

## Personal Growth

- Personality Type
- Oral & Written Communication
- Active Listening
- The Four Agreements

## Credential Building

- Professional Associations & Certifications

## Organizational Dynamics

- Strategy, Tactics & Operations
- Business Process Management
- Project Management
- Organizational Change Management
- Corporate Finance

## Career Planning

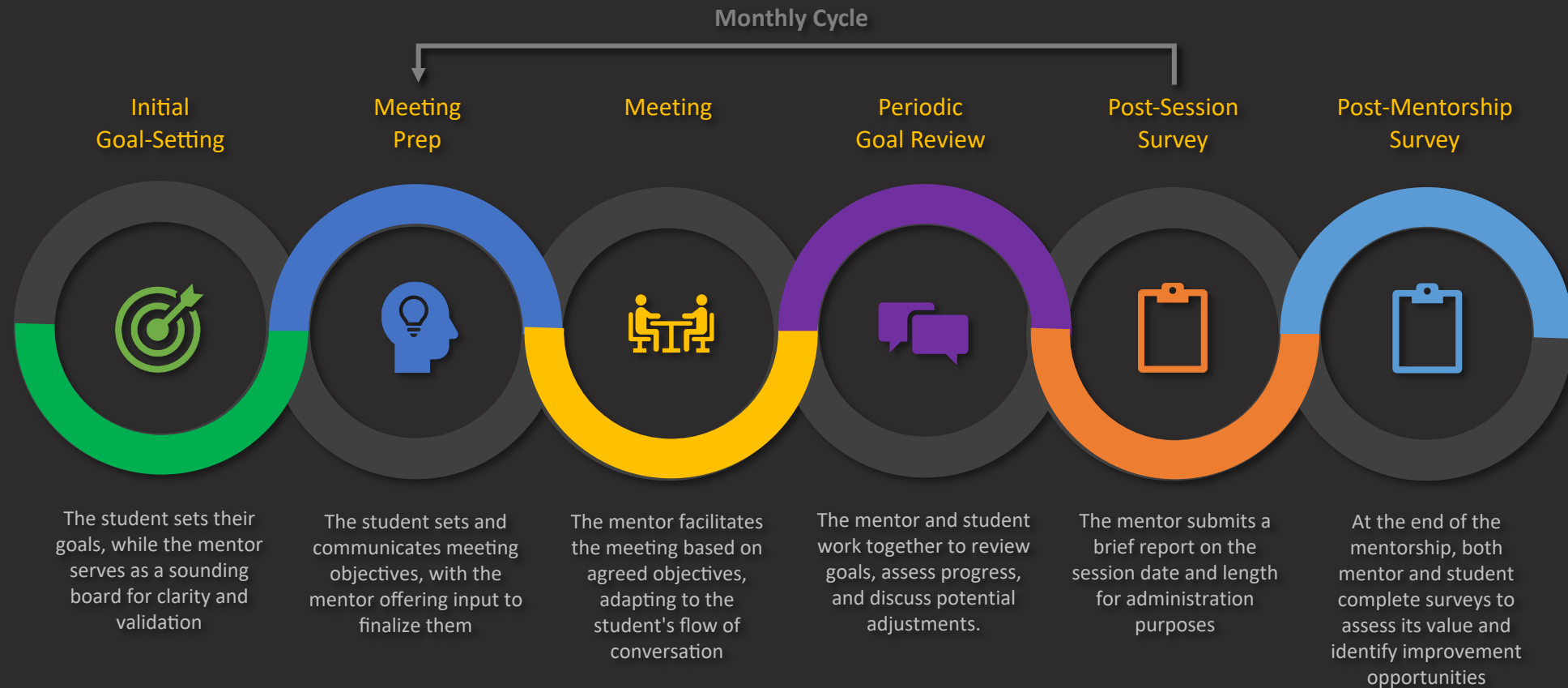
- Identification of interests & passions
- Skills assessment
- College advisor utilization
- Career path discussion
- Major selection
- Advanced degree discussion

## College Assistance

- Course selection & workload management
- Study habits, time management & prioritization
- Navigating campus resources
- Cultural adaption (if applicable)

# The Mentorship Process

- **Roles:** The student drives the mentorship process by setting goals, while the mentor offers perspective, knowledge, and resources to help them achieve those goals.
- **Duration:** The mentorship includes a monthly 60min mentoring session over the course of one year.





The student has many resources to take advantage of – you can utilize these as a mentor to help your student.:

- **Blog Posts:** Weekly articles and podcasts on student-related topics released every Saturday morning.
- **Student Events:** Calendar of workshops and networking opportunities for program participants.
- **Recommended Reading:** Curated list of 30+ books across 10 "life areas" for personal development.
- **Foundations of Money™:** AI assistant teaching financial literacy through personalized learning modules.
- **The Interviewer™:** Mock interview simulator providing customized practice & the ability to upload actual job details.
- **Career Explorer™:** AI tool identifying career paths given your values, business function & industry.
- **Merlin™:** Personalized AI assistant that provides personalized guidance between mentor meetings.
- **Student Directory:** Make yourself visible to people who may help you find an internship or full-time employment.
- **Forums:** Discussion boards connecting you with peers from your college and across institutions.
- **Lumen™:** Collaborative platform for tracking goals, action items, and progress with your mentor.
- **Suggestion Box:** Provide input and feedback anytime.



Student Events



Forums



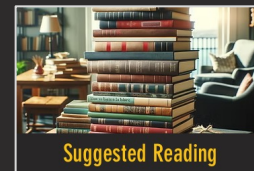
The Interviewer



Weekly Blog Posts



Foundations of Money



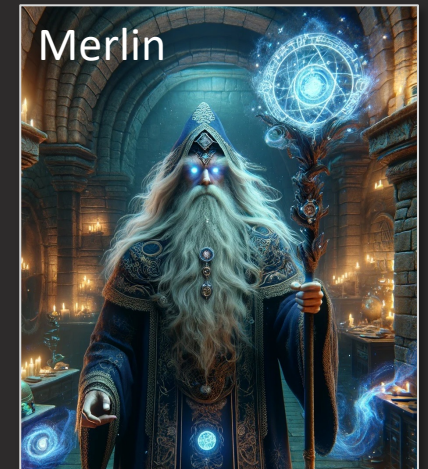
Suggested Reading



Student Directory



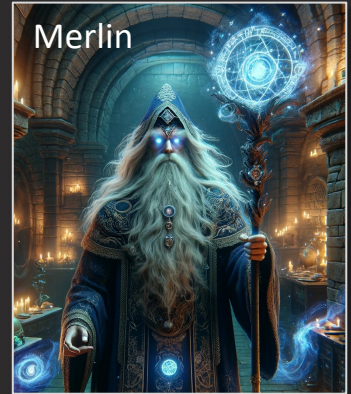
Suggestion Box



Merlin

We have a strong platform with many resources to help you as a mentor:

- **Meeting Update:** Tools for logging meetings and session notes and next meeting date.
- **Lumen™:** Mentorship manager for tracking goals, action items, and progress with your student(s).
- **Lumen Goals Review:** Evaluates goals against student application and other frameworks to provide mentor guidance.
- **Mentor Events:** Calendar events and monthly optional community gatherings for mentors.
- **Event Materials & News:** Resources from prior Mentor Events as well links to prior Mentor Newsletters.
- **Forums:** Discussion boards connecting you with fellow mentors to share experiences and best practices.
- **Mentor Directory:** Network of program mentors with profiles and contact information to facilitate networking.
- **Suggestion Box:** Provide input and feedback anytime to help improve the mentoring program.
- **Merlin™:** Advanced AI wizard providing personalized guidance to enhance your mentoring effectiveness.
- **Mentor Guide:** A comprehensive guide on how to use all mentor resources.
- **Sparky Mentor Helper:** AI assistant offering real-time support and resources relating to our platform.



Meeting Update



Mentor Events



Event Materials & News



Forums



Lumen Goals Review



Mentor Directory



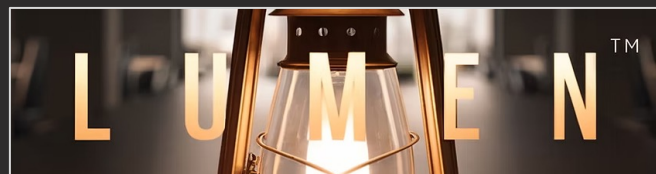
Suggestion Box



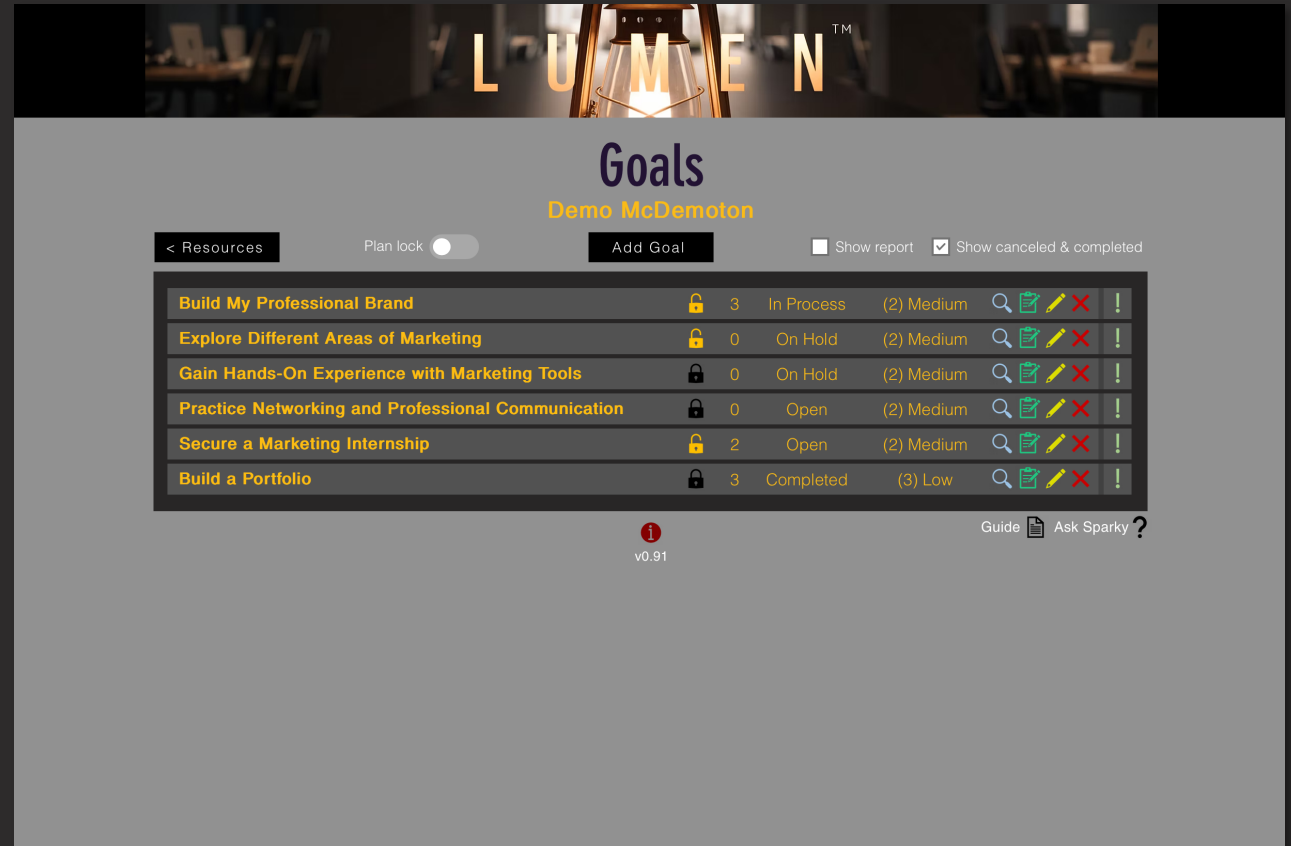
Mentor Guide



Sparky: Mentor Helper

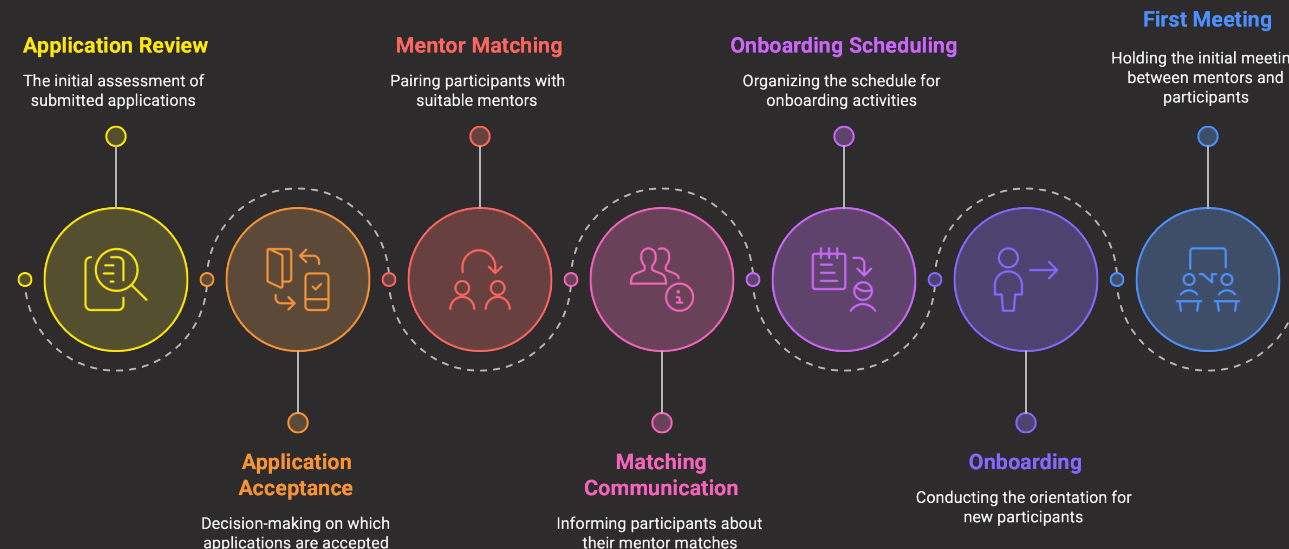


- **Single Sheet of Music:** Lumen is where mentors and students work together and stay on the same page to manage mentorship activities.
- **Goals and Actions Tracking:** Helps create and track both big-picture goals and the specific actions needed to achieve them.
- **Step-by-Step Process:** Guides users through setting goals, planning actions, and tracking completion.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Students can add their own goals and actions while mentors provide guidance.
- **Control Options:** Lets mentors decide when students can edit goals/actions and when they can only view them.
- **Easy Communication:** Provides areas for private notes and shared feedback on both goals and actions.
- **Progress Reports:** Shows how far students have come on both goals and specific action items.
- **Helpful Assistant:** Includes Sparky, a chatbot that answers questions about using Lumen.



# What Happens Next?

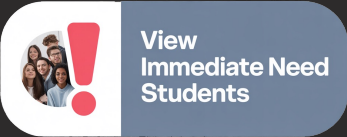
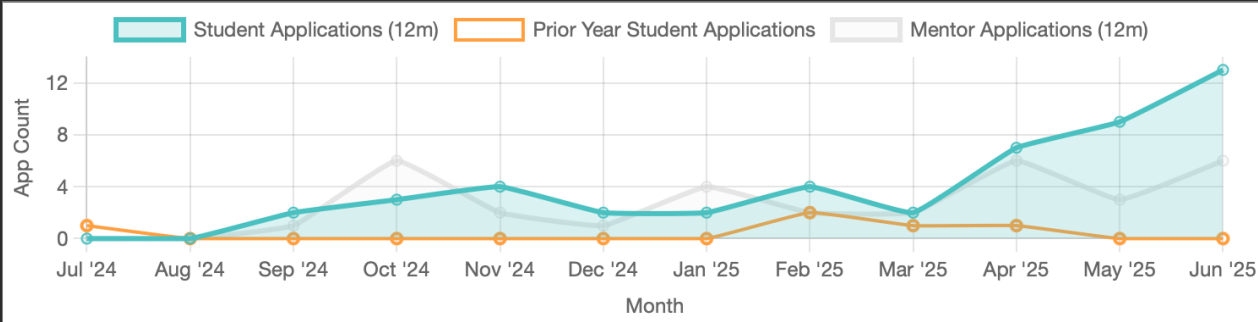
- **Application Review:** Each application is carefully reviewed.
- **Application Acceptance:** Qualified applications are approved and moved forward to the next stage of the process.
- **Matching:** Once we identify a recommended match, the student profile is sent to the mentor for agreement.
- **Matching Communication:** Students receive notification about their match (cc: to mentor).
- **Onboarding Scheduling:** Agreement is reached on date for onboarding for student and mentor (sessions 2x month).
- **Onboarding:** Students and new mentors learn more about program and available resources.
- **First Meeting:** Mentors schedule first meeting with student to refine goals and begin their mentorship journey.





# Immediate Need Students

- **Mentoring Capacity:** We have finally reached a point where the pace of student applications is exceeding mentor applications.
- **Student Waiting List:** Please review the Immediate Need Students list. Invite qualified people in your network to join as mentors!



Filter by Field:

Show All (7 students)

Showing 5 fields with 7 students

BUSINESS ANALYTICS (2 STUDENTS)

	ID#	COLLEGE	MAJOR	YEAR	WAITING	PREF START	MENTOR NOTE
<a href="#">View</a>	57397	San Jose State University	Business Administration, Business Analytics concentration	Senior	11 days	06/15/25	Seeking business analytics mentor
<a href="#">View</a>	57400	Davidson College	Computer Science	Senior	10 days	07/20/25	Seeking business analytics mentor

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING (2 STUDENTS)

	ID#	COLLEGE	MAJOR	YEAR	WAITING	PREF START	MENTOR NOTE
<a href="#">View</a>	57392	University of Texas at San Antonio	Finance	Senior	35 days	06/01/25	Seeking general finance mentor with experience or access to real estate

Student Profile

ID# 57400 • Davidson College • Computer Science

Save Profile

APPLICATION DATE

June 14, 2025

PREFERRED START

July 20, 2025

EXPECTED GRADUATION

May 16, 2026

STATUS

Immediate Need

Mentor Note

Seeking business analytics mentor

Personal Statement

I'm Frank Howden—a student-athlete at Davidson College majoring in Computer Science, with a mindset built on discipline, adaptability, and communication. I first got into broadcasting in high school during covid. All I wanted to do was get in the gym to watch my high school basketball team play in-person—but what started as a workaround quickly grew into a passion for storytelling, production, and connecting with athletes and others for broadcasts. That passion eventually led me to FOX Sports, where I interned with their promos group and contributed to commercial making, highlight selection shots and creating an

Close

- **Site:** Visit ***www.setfire.com***
- **Select Application:** Choose ***Application*** from the Mentor menu
- **Create Site Account:** Fill out the site membership ***Create Account*** form (or chose ***Log In*** if you have an account already). You will receive a confirmation code via email (check your junk folder). If you have an account and are already logged-in, you will be taken straight to application.
- **Apply:** You will be transferred to the application for completion once you have created your account and provided the confirmation code.

1

Home

Student

Mentor

College

Workplace

Partners

Overview

Application

Sparks Mentor Events

Sparks Mentor Resources

Join the team - get the sparks Mentorship

2

SET FIRE

Create Account

The page you are trying to access requires a free site membership. If you are intending to complete a mentorship application you are in the right place! You will be transferred to the application after completing this site membership!

Be sure to respond to the verification email after sign-up.

Note to students - we highly recommend you use a non-college / permanent email address when signing up!

First name

Last name

Email

Password

Where did you hear?

Referred by

College (Students Only)

Terms of Service & Privacy Policy

☐ Accept Terms & Privacy Policy

Submit

Already have an account? [Log In](#)

[Forgot password](#)

3

Personal

College & Career

Mentorship

Photo

Submission

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Address \*

Address Line 2

City \*

State / Province \*

Zip \*

Date of Birth \*

E-Mail \*

Phone \*



# Next Steps & Questions

- **Make a Difference:** Transform a student's life with just 60-90 minutes of your time each month.
- **Join Us:** Apply now at [www.setfire.com/mentor](http://www.setfire.com/mentor) to start your mentorship journey.
- **What to Expect:** While we strive to match mentors quickly, please allow a few weeks for pairing as we maintain capacity ahead of demand.
- **Questions?** We're here to help. Let us know if you have any remaining questions!



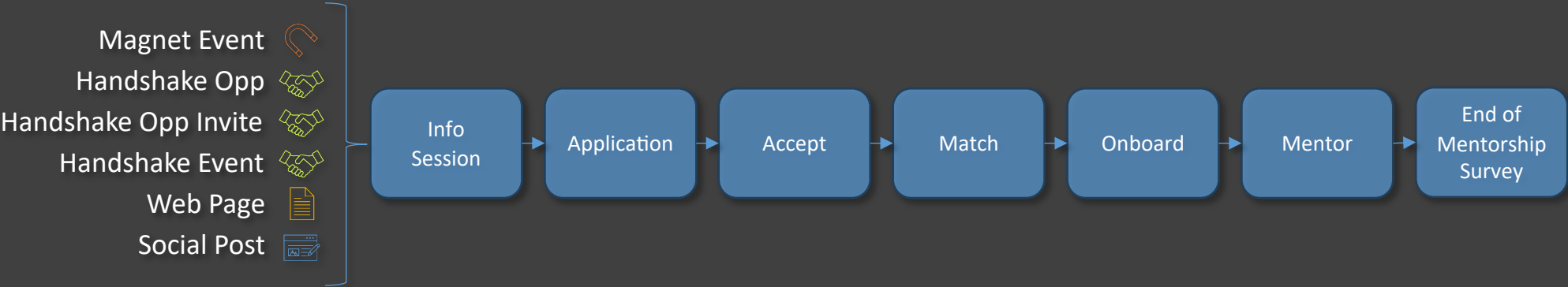


*Let us help you build your future...today!*

Please visit our web site for additional information  
[www.setfire.com](http://www.setfire.com)



## Student Lifecycle



## Mentorship Lifecycle

