



NCPH Conference Mentoring Network

NCPH's mentoring program pairs students, new professionals, and other new conference attendees with experienced public historians. (We are looking for both mentors and mentees.) If you are interested in participating, please let us know by checking the box on the annual meeting registration form or sending an email to takoenig@iupui.edu (subject: MENTORING MILWAUKEE). We will send you a short survey form and do our best to place you by the end of March. (Please note that our ability to place mentors and mentees is based on the number of people who choose to participate. Therefore, we can not guarantee a match, but we will make every effort to place everyone.) Please send questions to takoenig@iupui.edu or call the Executive Office at (317)274-2716.

The conference mentor program was fantastic! As a first-time conference-goer, it was great to be matched up with a young professional a little further along in her career. We had a lot of common interests and enjoyed attending sessions and the Thursday evening reception and plenary address together!

(From 2009 conference evaluations)

Mentor/Mentee Expectations:

1. Mentors and mentees contact each other by email prior to the conference and tell the other a little about themselves. It is appropriate for either the mentor or the mentee to initiate the email exchange.
2. Please agree on a place and time to meet in person early in the conference. This year, we suggest mentors and mentees, if possible, arrange to meet each other at the Opening Reception (6:00 pm-7:30 pm) on Thursday, April 19th or at another, mutually agreeable, time.

Other good places to meet include the Dine Arounds (7:00 pm-9:30 pm) on Friday, April 20, the NCPH New Members and First-Time Attendees Breakfast (8:00 am-10:00 am) on Friday, April 20, or the conference registration area.

I could not imagine being paired with a better mentor! She had so much advice to give, knew so many people, and was more than willing to sit down and talk to me.

(From 2010 conference evaluations)

It is advisable to arrange at least a second meeting place and time during the conference. We will have a message board to help attendees stay in touch, but making specific plans to meet over coffee, lunch, or the break between sessions is a good idea. Sometimes it is difficult to find people in the rush and flux of the conference.

3. Mentors will share lessons about their own career path and try to introduce mentees to other public history practitioners. The point is to build networks and share information. Mentors might give advice about how best to absorb the full benefits of a conference. What sessions on the program look particularly good this year? Is there a strategy to visiting the exhibit hall, making the rounds in a reception or the Poster Session, or picking tours or workshops that complement sessions? How do you use this or any conference as a source of professional development, new projects, or new ideas?
4. Mentees might prepare a few questions for their mentor about resumes, areas of interest, or networking.
5. Some mentors and mentees stay in contact after the conference, but this is not an expectation. Each year, the mentoring program is focused on the annual meeting with which it is associated.