

Report on AHLA's Networking Breakfast: "Making the Most of your Mentor Relationships"

On November 7, 2017, AHLA's Women's Leadership Council and Young Professionals Council co-sponsored the "Making the Most of your Mentor Relationship" networking breakfast, which was held on the second day of AHLA's annual Fundamentals of Health Law conference in Chicago, Illinois. The breakfast's purpose was to discuss the significance of mentors in the health law industry and how to make the most of mentor/mentee relationships.

The breakfast, which was moderated by Rachel Ludwig (Associate at Jackson Kelly PLLC and Chair of AHLA's Young Professionals Council), included comments from Cynthia Alcantara (Senior Associate University Counsel at the University of Illinois and Member of the Women's Leadership Council), Aliza Epstein (Manager of Member Onboarding & Engagement at AHLA) and Lindsay Holmes (Associate at BakerHostetler and Vice Chair of the AHLA Young Professionals Council). Among other highlighted topics, the panel discussed the most important qualities to look for in a mentor, the benefits of mentorship for the development of a career in health law, and "lessons learned" from mentorship.

Mara Smith (Associate at Montgomery McCracken Walker & Rhoads LLP and Member of AHLA's Young Professionals Council) attended the breakfast and emerged with helpful insight into mentoring. She said the panel included a great mix of panelists: the individuals had varying levels of experience, different career paths, and worked in different areas of the country. Additionally, Ms. Smith found the discussion of "mentors vs. sponsors" enlightening. According to the panel, mentors are

slightly senior to the mentee and are able to offer reflective and sometimes more personal advice, whereas sponsors are much more senior and are the lawyers at the firm who can "make the plays for you" (i.e., bring the sponsee up in career advancement conversations). Ms. Smith stated that, since the breakfast, she has become even more involved in AHLA's mentoring program and is working with an AHLA mentor who is the general counsel for a hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mentoring is an important part of AHLA's career-centered initiatives. Health lawyers of all experience levels are encouraged to become a mentor, mentee, or—even better—both. AHLA created a mentoring-specific portal for members to connect and create formal mentoring relationships. Getting started is easy: all you have to do is go to <http://communities.healthlawyers.org/mainmentor/mentoring> and click on the "Become a Mentor" or "Become a Mentee" buttons depending on your desired role.

For more information on the Young Professionals Council, the Women's Leadership Council, and how you can get involved, visit us at www.healthlawyers.org.



Alex B. Foster
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