

Minnesota Environmental Health Association Professional–Student Mentor Program, 2020

Description: The MEHA Student Committee is looking for volunteers to serve in a mentor program connecting environmental and public health students from participating institutions (UW – Eau Claire, UW – Stout, University of Minnesota, St. Catherine’s University and Hamline University) with working professionals. Mentors will commit to a year of contact with their student, responding to questions about work in environmental and public health, career options and opportunities, education paths, etc. The goal of the program is to increase student membership in MEHA and provide a networking opportunity for students studying environmental and public health. Pairing of mentors and mentees will occur during lunch at the 2020 MEHA winter conference. Anyone interested in becoming a mentor must attend the winter conference. Mentees will shadow their mentors after lunch to meet and network with other working professionals.

Commitments:

- Anyone interested in becoming a mentor must attend the MEHA winter conference January 30, 2020.
 - Mentors must provide their email and phone numbers to mentee.
 - Minimum time commitment of 7 hours (see time commitment details below).
 - After the year-long commitment (at the following MEHA winter conference), mentors can choose to participate in the program again and be assigned a new mentee, or can opt out of participating.
- **Time Commitment:**
- At the MEHA winter conference, mentors will meet students for one hour over lunch and for the remainder of the conference mentors are expected to help their mentees network by introducing them to other professionals at the conference. ***Total time commitment: 3-4 hours.**
 - After the winter conference, the professional-student pair will receive an email every three months from one of the MEHA Student Committee co-chairs. Emails will include a question or set of questions to initiate dialogue between the mentor and mentee. Example questions may be “how should students prepare for the REHS exam?” or “what is the best way to prepare for interviewing with a health department?” Mentors are expected to discuss the question(s) with their mentee either by email, telephone, or in person and respond to any follow-up questions the mentee may have ***Total time commitment: 3 hours (0.5 hours every other month for 12 months).**
 - In addition to the requirements above, it is strongly recommended that mentors meet with their student at least once throughout the year to talk in person. If the student is able to travel, this could be a good job shadowing opportunity.

Comments from past participants:

- *“I enjoyed getting to meet an interested student that became a good intern for our department.”*
- *“It was ‘fun’ to meet students in the program and to see how they think, what their interests area, what they are studying”*
- *“I think the mentor program was great, overall. Definitely a program that is beneficial to both students and mentors.”*

Please email Laura Suppes at suppeslm@uwec.edu by **January 10, 2020** if you are interested in serving as a mentor this year.