

AWL/AWLF Connections

· Coordinated by the Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City and AWL Foundation ·

Program Introduction

History

In conjunction with the Association for Women Lawyers (AWL) Special Projects and the AWL Foundation (AWLF), AWL Connections was created to develop meaningful relationships among women in the law. AWL Connections seeks to take the typical mentor-mentee program to the next level. We coordinate traditional mentor-mentee pairings and add a group element to expand the reach, interest, and impact of the program. The ultimate goal is to foster relationships through a combination of social, community, and cultural group events, and one-on-one connections.

Goals

- Develop meaningful relationships among women in the law
- Alleviate the disconnect between experienced women in leadership positions and new women attorneys
- Enhance and extend each woman's professional network
- Contribute to AWL's charitable mission
- Support and encourage the success of program members
- Leadership in our communities, bar associations, and profession

Expectations

Each participant must be a current AWL member and a member of a state bar. Attorneys who provide the mentor role, have been in practice for 10 or more years, and have demonstrated success in balancing their personal lives with success in the profession and community. Mentees, have been in practice 5 years or less, have demonstrated a desire to become legal leaders, and seek to utilize the experience and knowledge of those who have traveled the path before them.

A full year commitment is expected. Participants should plan to attend all group events (odd numbered months). Mentor and Mentee pairs should meet on their own during the non-group months (even numbered months). The Mentor/Mentee pair can structure their relationship as they choose, however, it is encouraged that they reach out to each other via email or phone at least once per month.

At this time, the program does not receive operating funds from AWL, AWLF, or sponsors. In 2009, we were able to secure grants from AWLF and The Missouri Bar Young Lawyers' Section in order to host the Celebration Dinner. Future program planning includes exploring funding sources but at this time the success of the program relies on the generosity of the Mentors. Mentors are not only giving their time and energy to the success of this program, but also graciously providing the costs for their Mentor/Mentee pair.