



College Now

Greater Cleveland

Developing Tomorrow's Talent Today

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College Now Mentoring Program Recognizes Three Local Mentors with Its Mentor of the Year Award in Honor of National Mentoring Month

CLEVELAND, January 11, 2017 — January is National Mentoring Month, and the College Now Mentoring Program is honoring the significant commitment its mentors have made to Greater Cleveland students by awarding the Mentor of the Year Award for the fifth year. Three outstanding individuals – Adam Chandler, Sherwin-Williams; Shenaz Khan, MetroHealth; and Stacey Schroeder, NTMA – were chosen from a group of more than 1,100 local mentors and will be recognized at College Now's MentorInCLE Connect event this afternoon. MentorInCLE Connect honors College Now's mentors for their exceptional work, and connects College Now scholarship recipients with meaningful employment opportunities during the post-luncheon career fair.

When College Now mentors like these three awardees joined the mentoring program, they made a commitment to help College Now's scholarship recipients navigate the college experience and complete their degrees. And their impact is deeply felt throughout the program. During the first five years of the program, students persisted from their freshman to their sophomore year of college at a rate of 93 percent, and 69 percent of College Now scholarship recipients graduate with a degree—which is impressive when given that, nationally, only 26 percent of Pell Grant-eligible students graduate in six years ([Pell Institute and University of Pennsylvania, Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 2016 Historical Trend Report](#)).

College Now mentees and their mentors are not participating in traditional mentoring, however. College Now's technology-based mentoring program is designed to remove barriers like time and physical space from the mentoring relationship. The program makes it easy for busy students and professionals to communicate; pairs communicate several times a month over College Now's online mentoring platform, and many also choose to communicate via phone, email and/or social media. Pairs also meet in person several times per year. The time commitment is minimal, but, as evidenced by the Mentor of the Year nominations from students, the impact made by the mentor's time is anything but. To learn how you can become a mentor and impact a student's life, visit <https://www.collegenowgc.org/become-a-mentor/>.

Here are a few examples of what College Now's mentees said about their mentors in nomination letters for Mentor of the Year 2018:

- “I wasn't sure what to expect with getting a ‘mentor.’ Adam [Chandler] has taken the term ‘mentor’ and made himself more of a buddy of mine who is ready to help any way he can. It really takes some stress off when I am able to take a few minutes out of my day to talk to Adam about the sports here in Cleveland or to just have a similar personality to just talk to. Adam has made this process very beneficial and welcoming to me. Because of him, joining this program is the best decision I have made in my young college career.” – Brandon Downing, Freshman, Cleveland State University
- “Shenaz Khan has been encouraging and supportive as my mentor. She does a great job of keeping in touch and making time to meet with me when I am home in Cleveland. She always makes sure to check in with me and keep up to date with relevant news topics. Shenaz also knew that my goal was to get into med school and has been there for me every step of the way – looking at schools, writing essays, finishing my resume, and preparing for

interviews. She helped me get a shadowing position in her lab at MetroHealth and introduced me to many doctors and researchers during my time there. She made sure that I shadowed in the hospital as well, which reinforced my passion for medicine. Overall, Shenaz is a truly kind person that has been there for me whenever I needed to talk and I hope we will stay in touch after I graduate.” Anna Rothstein, Senior, Brandeis University

- “[Stacey Schroeder] introduced me to opportunities that I probably would not have explored otherwise, like eating at different restaurants and attending a lecture on Dark Matter and a play. She provides a lot of laughs, great advice, warm smiles and hugs, words of wisdom, and a sense of peace when I am with her. Most importantly for me, at least, she is open to sharing parts of her life, too. This is helping me feel more comfortable with expressing myself and engaging with others. Thank you, Stacey, for helping me become more comfortable in my own skin and being more of a sister to me than a mentor.” – LJ Stover, Senior, The Ohio State University

As evidenced by these students’ experiences, the mentor-mentee relationship works to provide the guidance and reassurance students need when navigating the challenging experiences inherent in pursuing postsecondary education. The Greater Cleveland business community’s dedication and connection to the program is evident, as well, as College Now mentors represent over 400 employers in the area.

After the MentorInCLE Connect luncheon, College Now mentees will have the opportunity to network with representatives from more than 40 local companies at the MentorInCLE Connect career fair. These career fair exhibitors demonstrate the strong connections that exist between the Mentoring Program and the higher education community, the corporate arena and the nonprofit sector.

“The Mentoring Program is one of the most critical pieces of College Now’s work,” said College Now CEO Lee Friedman. “We are continually impressed with not only the dedication of our mentors, but the commitment from the Greater Cleveland community to ensuring the success of our scholarship recipients.”

About College Now Greater Cleveland, Inc.

College Now provides Greater Cleveland students with guidance and access to funds to prepare for and graduate from college. For 50 years, our goal has been to help students pursue educational opportunities that empower them to embark on rewarding careers and strengthen our community. College Now assists more than 27,000 students each year, delivering college and career access advising, financial aid counseling, and scholarship and retention services in Greater Cleveland schools, in the College Now Resource Center and through community-based programs. For more information, visit www.collegenowgc.org.

About the College Now Mentoring Program

The College Now Mentoring Program provides College Now scholarship recipients with the guidance and support they need in a medium in which they are comfortable: the internet! Focused on increasing college retention and completion rates among scholarship recipients, the College Now Mentoring Program is designed to be easy and accommodate the busy schedules of both the student and the mentor. The time commitment is minimal. Using a web-based platform that provides communications prompts, mentors communicate with their mentees at least two times per month and meet in person at least three times per year. Each year, College Now must recruit about 400 mentors to be matched with incoming freshmen scholarship recipients. For more information on becoming a mentor, contact College Now at 216.241.5587.

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