POINT’S MENTORING PROGRAM

Welcome to one of Point Foundation’s most exciting programs—the Mentoring Program!

Point’s mentoring program is a unique component of our scholarship award—one that brings dimension and insight that an LGBTQ student may not have been previously exposed to in their family or community. Point Mentors are positive role models who are dynamic, successful and caring professionals. Just like our scholars, they share diversity in their backgrounds, their hometowns, their interests and their passions.

Each Point Scholar is paired with a mentor within their first few months of joining the Point family. The mentor/scholar relationship grows from an initial meeting, throughout one’s time as a Point Scholar, and hopefully beyond graduation.

Successful mentoring relationships come in all shapes and sizes. Our mentor/scholar pairs may share the same profession, the same gender identity, the same geographic location, etc.—and they may not. Many hours are spent by Point staff and our Mentoring Committee to review each scholar and each mentor candidate to identify the most ideal match.

Mentors provide emotional as well as practical support. They are there to help with all that going off to college or graduate school can create—being nervous, excited, apprehensive, overwhelmed, and thrilled! Usually a mentor has experienced all in previous years.

In terms of practical support, a primary component of mentor assistance is with the Community Service Project (CSP). As you may know, each Point Scholar must complete a CSP annually and they are asked to involve their mentor in the planning and execution of the project. Mentors may assist in the selection of the subject matter, the planning, the implementation and the completion of the project.

In order to get the absolute most from your mentor/scholar relationship, read on to see guidelines for Point Mentors as well as for Point Scholars.

PROGRAM GOALS

- To build a mentorship that enriches the life of each scholar (and the mentor, as well.)
- To match scholars with mentors who are committed to advancing our students’ academic, professional, and personal opportunities for growth.
- To have a sustainable program that enhances the overall quality of Point Foundation.
- To build a clearinghouse of mentor candidates who are suitable to a diverse set of emerging LGBTQ leaders.
- To prepare Point Scholars to serve as future LGBTQ mentors and community leaders.
“My mentor Billy has been a critical component in my transition from high school to college as a first-generation low-income student. He has provided a myriad of advice and support throughout my academic career at UC Berkeley. Billy and I work together and learn from each other to provide and receive knowledge and support. We avoid using a hierarchical model for our mentor-scholar relationship. As a result of my mentorship, I have gained support, resources, tools, insights, and knowledge about how to best navigate UC Berkeley life and achieve my academic goals. Billy and I continue to grow and learn from each other, which has made our mentor relationship very valuable.”

Ana is someone I can go to talk to about anything, whether it be school-related or a personal issue. She really encourages me to do well in all of my classes and research endeavors. And she checks in to make sure that I’m not overwhelming myself, a bad habit of mine. At the same time, she asks about my personal relationships with my family and friends. She is really invested in my well being, and that means a lot to me. I know that I can go to her to talk about anything and she will do her best to help me. The very open, personable relationship we have developed over the past few years is truly rewarding.

Kyle Vey
2011 Point Scholar
North Carolina State University
FOR OUR SCHOLARS

Point’s national network of scholars, alumni, board members and staff is often affectionately referred to as the “Point Family,” and mentors are undoubtedly part of that family. Mentors are seen as one of Point’s key volunteers and we hope you, as a Point Scholar, will be excited to develop a relationship with a caring professional—a relationship that usually lasts far beyond graduation, based on feedback from Point Alumni.

As a scholar, you may look to your mentor for emotional support, to build a rewarding personal relationship and see a much needed role model. Your mentor is there to assist with the design and execution of your annual Community Service Project (CSP).

Your mentor may be able to provide assistance on professional and career decisions, including the pursuit of graduate studies, internship placements and possible job opportunities after graduation.

Point places special emphasis on providing our scholars with mentors who are deeply committed to supporting Point and our mission as we endeavor to serve the needs of a substantial and ever growing population of LGBTQ student leaders in higher education. We believe that great mentors change lives.

ENTERING THE MENTORING PROGRAM

Your mentor has made a commitment to Point’s mission and to you. Similarly to board members and staff, each mentor has completed an application, received committee approval, and completed a background check with references.

Point will introduce you to your mentor by way of e-mail and encourage the two of you to set up a time to meet. To better prepare you and your mentor for your first meeting, we ask you to complete an online Mentee Introduction Form that outlines your academic and professional goals, as well as your initial goals for the Mentoring Program. We’ve developed this form to assist both you and your mentor in understanding what might be most helpful in developing your relationship. (Typically undergrads are looking for support and grads for a network.) You may provide as much or as little information as you would like.

MENTEE INTRODUCTION FORM

Below is an example of the type of information included on the Mentee Introduction Form.

Introduce yourself through a cover letter.

Dear Mentor:

Thank you for volunteering your time to get to know me and for accepting me as your mentee; I feel very fortunate to have you as a mentor! The opportunity to work with a mentor was a key reason I applied to be a Point Scholar and I hope to make the most of our mentoring relationship.

I am currently a third year medical student at Point University and I am actively involved in research and am interested in medical education. However, I am most passionate about community service work and especially advancing healthcare for the LGBTQ community.

Outside of my academic and community pursuits, I enjoy the beach and spending time with my dog. I am very excited to get to know more about you and learn about your work. It is my hope that this relationship will provide a positive, professional, educational and personal support system as I progress through my medical/graduate education. Any advice you have about preparing for my professional career and continuing my work in the non-profit sector would be amazing.

Thank you again for agreeing to be my mentor!

Let your mentor know what you would like to do for a Community Service Project:

I have several opportunities for a CSP in mind but I would love to discuss this with you more.

(Actual example to come)

List three areas in which you would like support or assistance over the course of the next year.

1. Career guidance and support in choosing the best Master’s degree pathway
2. Plan and implement a successful CSP with the goal of creating sustainable initiatives that are beneficial to the community over time.
3. General mentoring on a life in medicine, research and personal-professional life balance
FOR OUR MENTORS

All Mentors—just like all Point Staff and Board Members—go through a thorough vetting process (e.g. application, background check and references) because they are official representatives of the organization. Each mentor-scholar pair is reviewed and approved by Point’s Mentoring Committee, comprised of board members, former mentors, former scholars and Point staff. When matching mentors with scholars, Point places a high priority in finding a common field of interest and geographic proximity.

INTRODUCTION

Once the administrative protocols are complete, Point will introduce you to your scholar by way of e-mail. Additionally, your scholar will be asked to complete a Mentee Introduction Form that provides you with your scholar’s academic/professional background as well as some initial goals for the mentorship.

- As a mentor, you provide emotional support, build a rewarding personal relationship and serve as a much needed role model.
- You assist with the design and execution of a Community Service Project (CSP) that is required annually of each Point Scholar.
- You may also assist with professional and career decisions, including the pursuit of graduate studies, internship placements and possible job opportunities after graduation.

Special emphasis is placed on providing our scholars with mentors who are deeply committed to supporting Point and our mission as we endeavor to serve the needs of a substantial and ever growing population of LGBTQ student leaders in higher education. We believe that great mentors change lives.

RESOURCES

Mentors are welcome to contact Point staff with questions, concerns and suggestions at any time. Additionally, the following resources and programs have been established to help our mentors stay informed, connected and supported.

Open Forum for Mentors: Held biannually in the fall and spring of each academic year, open forums are held through conference calls that are exclusive for Point Mentors across the nation. Common challenges and best practices are shared, along with an open discussion about the expectations placed on Point’s scholars and mentors.

Mentoring Messenger: Point’s Mentoring Messenger is a news bulletin sent by e-mail to all mentors and scholars biannually. The newsletter usually includes important dates, reminders and highlights from an actual mentor-scholar pair.

Regional Leadership Forums (RLFs): RLFs are annual programs, coordinated by Point Trustees, in cities that have a high population of Point Scholars and Mentors. The program usually consists of a speaker, panel session or activity and a shared meal. Scholar attendance is required, while board members, alumni, mentors and staff are encouraged to attend.

Mid-Year Check-in: At the beginning of the calendar year, Point contacts each mentor to gauge the progress of the scholar’s Community Service Project and to further discuss the development of the mentoring partnership.

Online Directory: We have created a private online directory for mentors on Point’s website. To view/edit your profile or to connect with other mentors around the US, please click on the Member Login button located on the top right hand corner of Point’s website. After you have logged in, our database will recognize you as a mentor and the directory will appear under the tabs for “Program” and “Mentoring”.
HEAR FROM SOME OF POINT’S MENTORS

Oraia is a pick yourself up by the bootstraps type of person who never says never – she’s so inspirational. As her mentor, I’ve been reminded of the importance of being honest, straightforward and present. At the end of the day, I feel that my support as a sounding board has been of value to her. If I could offer any advice to other mentors, it would be to realize that nobody is born a mentor. You can’t get enough of seeing other examples and perspectives, so make it a priority to learn from other mentors.

Pat Pilkonis
Executive Director
Regional Head of Advertising, Americas
UBS AG
New York, NY
Mentee: Oraia Reid

Ved is probably one of the most motivated people I’ve met in my professional career. He’s managed to accomplish more as a student than I think many people do in their entire careers. He is incredibly passionate about his research and seems genuinely excited about the work. I would also describe him as very brave. He has been given, or perhaps “earned” is a better word, some very challenging opportunities in this educational career, such as his studies in Russia. He seems to have jump into them with little hesitation and dedicated himself fully to meeting the challenge—which it did.

Thomas Squire
Deputy Chief, Thermal Protection Materials Branch
NASA Ames Research Center
Moffett Field, CA
Mentee: Ved Chirayath
We both want our first meeting to be relaxed and comfortable. Is it acceptable to conduct our first meeting in the mentor’s home?

The objective of meeting in a relaxed and comfortable environment is great. However, unless a scholar is older and more experienced, it is likely that the mentor’s home (or office) is not the best place to meet early in your partnership. It is recommended that you find a more neutral place if possible; you may even find it advantageous to venture into the neighborhood of your scholar’s campus. Perhaps there is a coffee shop, restaurant, or park.

We are not close geographically. While we may be able to get together once in a while, we don’t want to wait until we can meet face-to-face to start defining our partnership. What do you suggest?

Early on, the closer you can get to “in-person,” the stronger the foundation you will build. Today, options such as Skype, FaceTime, Viber, etc. provide an inexpensive way of making both an audio and a visual connection. If none of these options are available, then the fallback is certainly the telephone. It is important to lay the groundwork in real time; you should not attempt to do so by text, email, etc.

How much should a mentor or scholar open up about themselves?

While there are no clear-cut rules in this regard, there are some guidelines. First and foremost, is to apply good judgment. There are certainly parts of each of our lives that do not belong in the middle of a mentoring partnership. Let scholars be the guide; s/he may be very open and willing to share their story. Trust is critical to every successful partnership. By opening up, each of you are laying the foundation by saying you trust her/him, thereby fostering trust in you as well.

How often should we plan on meeting?

We highly recommend meeting once a month, if not more often. Regardless of the frequency of meetings, we also recommend establishing your preferred means of communication between meetings (e.g. e-mail, text, phone, etc.) and responding to each other within a reasonable amount of time.

Are there guidelines in place for mentors and scholars connecting with each other through social media?

Connecting through any social media platform should be mutually agreed upon by the mentor and the scholar.

Are we allowed to exchange gifts on birthdays, holidays or other special occasions?

Unsolicited gifts to scholars are the exception, not the norm. Scholar solicitation of money or gifts from mentors is not permitted. Modest birthday or holiday gifts, care packages, or “just because” gifts are fine. Mentors should spend no more than $500 per year in gifts, meals, ticketed events, etc.

Are mentors and scholars expected to continue meeting regularly during the summertime?

During the summer months, mentor-scholar meetings tend to take place less frequently and oftentimes the meetings may cease. This usually happens when a scholar relocates, assumes a fulltime job, studies abroad, etc. It is important that the scholar and the mentor discuss the need to take a break beforehand and set a date to resume regular frequent meetings once the scholar returns to school.
FOR EVERYONE—EVOLVING THE MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

Just like any relationship evolves over time—so does the mentoring partnership. And just like any other relationship, it takes work to maintain a successful relationship.

Neither of you know how the mentoring partnership will evolve over time, how expectations may shift over time, or how scholar’s needs may change. For example, a weekly in-person get together might be appropriate for a freshman as the scholar settles into campus life and builds a peer network, but in subsequent years the scholar may find that getting together once a week is no longer necessary.

For this reason, it is important that you do a periodic check-in on the status of the mentoring partnership. Here are three questions that might help you to guide that conversation. Note that the questions are listed in this order for a reason; asking them in this sequence will help both the mentor and the scholar maintain a balanced perspective on strengthening the partnership.

1. What do you most like about the mentoring partnership as it is now? What is working for you?
2. What would you like to change?
3. What are your suggestions about making the partnership more meaningful as we move forward?

ENDING THE MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

Just like in life where not all relationships can be enduring—so it is for the Mentor Partnership. Generally, there are four reasons to end a formal Point mentoring partnership.

The Partnership is Not Working

Sometimes, despite everyone’s best efforts, a mentoring partnership comes to an early conclusion. Common reasons for this may include major life changes (health concerns, major school or career shifts) that make continuing impossible or unreasonable.

If either of you truly feel it would be best to end the relationship, please contact Point’s Program Director so we can ensure the partnership ends on a positive note for everyone.

The Scholar Loses Their Scholarship.

As part of receiving a Point Scholarship, each scholar signs a Contract of Excellence, which requires the scholar to meet certain standards: maintain a GPA of 3.3 or higher, complete a Community Service Project annually, attend leadership programs, and participate in the Mentoring Program. If the scholar becomes unable to meet the standards outlined in the Contract of Excellence, Point staff will work with them for a maximum of three semesters, during which they are required to show improvement. If no improvement is seen, the scholar is no longer eligible to receive Point’s support. The mentor will be kept apprised throughout the entire duration of the process. And if the scholar is released, the mentorship will conclude and an exit call will take place between Point staff and the scholar as well as the Point staff and mentor.

The Scholar Graduates

When the scholar graduates, the formal mentoring relationship will conclude. A majority of mentor-scholar pairs continue to stay connected as friends and colleagues, although they no longer receive oversight from Point. It is up to each person to decide the extent of their involvement with their mentor-scholar after graduation. In order to gather candid feedback about their experience with Point’s Mentoring Program, Point will conduct an exit interview with both scholar and mentor.
CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of Point’s Mentoring Program Code of Conduct is to outline the basic rules and expectations for all participants of Point Foundation’s Mentor Program. Each Point Foundation Mentor and Scholar is required to review and sign a copy of the following code. This document does not supplant any other contracts or codes that Point Trustees, Directors, Mentors, staff, and Scholars sign.

Violations of any of Point’s Mentor Program Code of Conduct will be viewed seriously. Depending on the severity of the violation, legal repercussions may result. It is imperative that the Foundation avoid any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

Point Foundation reviews its sexual harassment policy annually with each scholar. Mentors may obtain a copy of this policy by contacting Point Foundation’s headquarter office. Sections of the policy that relate to mentoring to follow.

Point Foundation’s sexual harassment policy forbids any employee, scholar, board member, mentor, donor, or third party doing business with the Point Foundation from harassing any Point employee, scholar, applicant, board member, mentor, or donor of Point on the basis of sex. Harassment based on sex includes harassment based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, regardless of whether the offensive conduct is sexual in nature. Any unwelcome conduct based on gender is also forbidden by this policy regardless of whether the individual engaged in harassment and the individual being harassed are of the same or are of different genders.

This policy forbids harassment based on gender regardless of whether it rises to the level of a legal violation. Examples of gender-based harassment forbidden by this policy include (1) offensive sex-oriented verbal kidding, teasing or jokes; (2) repeated unwanted sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; (3) verbal abuse of a sexual nature; (4) graphic or degrading comments about an individual’s appearance or sexual activity; (5) offensive visual conduct, including leering, making sexual gestures, the display of offensive sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters; (6) unwelcome pressure for sexual activity; (7) offensively suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations; or (8) offensive physical contact such as patting, grabbing, pinching, or brushing against another’s body.

If you feel that you are being harassed, or if you have witnessed harassment or other conduct in violation of this policy, Point Foundation urges you to report the facts of the incident. Scholars should report the incident to a Program Director. Mentors should report the incident to the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director. If you do not feel comfortable discussing the matter with your respective program director, you may report the incident to Point’s Chief of Staff or Point’s Executive Director.

All reported complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and all information disclosed during the course of the investigation will remain confidential, except to the extent reasonably necessary to conduct the investigation and take any remedial actions. Point Foundation may put certain interim measures in place, such as a leave of absence or a transfer, while the investigation proceeds. Point will take further appropriate action once the report has been thoroughly investigated. That action may be a conclusion that a violation occurred, as explained immediately below. Point might also conclude, depending on the circumstances, either that no violation of policy occurred or that Point cannot conclude whether or not a violation occurred.

If an investigation reveals that a violation of this policy or other inappropriate conduct has occurred, then Point will take corrective action, including discipline up to and including unpaid suspension or dismissal (if appropriate), or termination from the program, as is appropriate under the circumstances, regardless of the job positions or relationship to Point of the parties involved. Point may discipline an employee for any inappropriate conduct discovered.
in investigating reports made under this policy, regardless of whether the conduct amounts to a violation of law or even a violation of this policy. If the person who engaged in harassment is not employed by Point, then Point will take whatever corrective action is reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances.

Point Foundation forbids employees, scholars, board members, mentors, donors and volunteers from treating any person associated with Point adversely for reporting harassment, for assisting another in making a report, for cooperating in a harassment investigation, or for filing an administrative claim with the EEOC or a state governmental agency. Any person associated with Point who experiences or witnesses any conduct he/she believes to be retaliatory should immediately follow the reporting procedures stated above.

EXPLOITIVE RELATIONSHIPS
No mentor shall have any, or pursue in any way, any sexual/romantic relationship or encounter with any Point Scholar. Each mentor shall avoid all situations where there might be the appearance of a sexual/romantic relationship or where an allegation of a sexual/romantic relationship or encounter could be made and not readily refuted.

MENTOR SCREENING PROCESS
Each Point Foundation mentor must undergo a comprehensive screening process. The screening process includes completion of an application, personal interview, reference checks and a background check.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
(21+) If a Point Foundation Scholar is 21 years of age or older, it is permissible for the mentor and the Scholar to drink alcoholic beverages over dinner or at other appropriate occasions. However, neither the mentor nor the particular Point Scholar should drink to excess or to the point of inebriation, and it is the affirmative responsibility of the mentor to insure that such excessive drinking not occur during any such occasion.

(21-) Drinking alcoholic beverages by individuals younger than 21 years of age is strictly prohibited, regardless of whether such drinking occurs during a formal Point Foundation or mentoring event or during unstructured time between any affiliated members of the Foundation. This includes mentors, board members, foundation staff, and/or other scholars.

Underage solicitation of alcohol by Point Scholars is strictly prohibited during any Foundation function as well as unstructured time between any affiliates of the Foundation.

ILLEGAL DRUGS
There shall be no illegal drug use by any mentor or scholar during or in connection with any activity undertaken by any mentor and any scholar at any time. Board members, mentors, foundation staff, donors, scholars, and any other associates of the Foundation have an obligation to be familiar with these rules and should recognize individual responsibility for their enforcement.

MONETARY GIFTS
Gifts of money to Point Scholars (not earmarked for a specific purchase) is prohibited.

OVERNIGHT STAYS
Overnight stays are allowed only if the scholar is 18 or over and where a private bedroom (other than the mentor’s bedroom) is provided for the scholar. Otherwise, local hotels or other accommodations are required.

• For hotel stays, separate, non-adjoining rooms are required.
• Overnight stays are never permitted in the scholar’s home.
• Transportation away from the location of the overnight stay must be provided in advance (in the case of airline tickets) or on request.
• Mentors may not permit the scholar to engage in sexual activity in the mentor’s home.
• Prior to an overnight stay, the mentor is required to notify Point Foundation’s Program Director.
of the intent to host the scholar. In turn, Point’s Program Director will ensure the mentor and the scholar have reviewed and signed the Code of Conduct.

- During the stay, the mentor and scholar will treat each other with respect.

MEETING LOCATIONS
Mentors should not meet scholars in places where alcohol consumption is the primary purpose, i.e. bars, dance clubs, etc., even if they are of legal age, unless it is an establishment that also serves food and dinner is part of the plan. The appearance of “dating” is to be avoided. Mentors should avoid taking scholars to events where there is excessive drinking or promiscuity. Mentors should never take scholars to events were illegal drug use is, or may be likely to be, taking place. Mentors are always expected to respect a scholar’s wishes about not attending an event, leaving early or other requests that may indicate discomfort—regardless of the reason—on the scholar’s part.

COMMUNICATIONS
Mentors and scholars should always be responsive to each other’s e-mails, phone calls, and other attempts at contact. Consistent communication and follow-through is expected of each mentor and scholar. The Foundation expects Point Scholars to respond within three (3) business days to all written and verbal requests and other communications from staff, board members, directors, mentors, and other Point Scholars. Failure to do so will be seen as uncooperative and unprofessional and could result in the loss of funding as determined by the Foundation.

MENTOR–SCHOLAR PAIRS
Any mentor-scholar pair can be discontinued at any time at the request of either the mentor or the scholar, in order to preserve the voluntary nature of the relationship. Point Foundation’s Mentoring Program Director and Scholar & Alumni Director will conduct periodic separate check-ins with each Scholar and mentor on the development of the pairing. During the check-in calls, scholars and mentors will be asked whether they wish to continue their respective mentor pairing.

TRAINING
Point Foundation will provide mentors and scholars with an annual mandatory training program that includes harassment prevention training, as well as training on the rules applicable to the mentor-scholar relationship.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS
It is the general policy of the Foundation to provide an open door and receptive/positive attitude for discussion of any Point Scholar or mentor concerns. If you wish to use Point’s grievance process, you should raise your complaint or concern within a reasonable time after the incident or issue has occurred (usually within 1-5 days). Complaints or concerns must be issued in writing, with the nature of the grievance clearly outlined in detail and providing all relevant facts. An open discussion between you and the Program Director is the first step of the process. If you are uncomfortable contacting the Program Director, other individuals may include Point Foundation’s Chief of Staff and Executive Director. With input from the Chief of Staff and Executive Director, the person receiving the grievance will investigate the complaint or concern and notify you, in writing, of the decision within three business days.

If the complaint or concern is not resolved by the Program Director within a reasonable time frame, or if you are dissatisfied with the Program Director’s solution, you may appeal the issue directly to Point’s Chief of Staff for consideration and resolution. If you continue to be dissatisfied after appeal to the Chief of Staff, you may make a request for review to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may, in his or her sole discretion, forward the request for review to the Board of Director Chair for discussion and resolution. The decision of the Executive Director and/or Board of Director Chair, as applicable, is final. Should the complaint require additional documentation and investigation, the time frame for
resolving the complaint should not exceed forty-five days. Documentation from the complaint and investigation may become part of the Point Scholar’s file.

Professional and respectful communications must take place between all involved parties at all times. Under no circumstances will you circumvent the above process and attempt to communicate directly with the Board of Directors, board members, Point Scholars, or staff members not directly involved with the complaint or concern.

Please sign and send the last page of this document to Point at (fax 323 933 3232) or email to erin@pointfoundation.org

I hereby represent and warrant that I have carefully read Point Foundation’s Mentoring Program Code of Conduct, and understand its contents.

Date

Printed Name of Mentor/Scholar

Signature of Mentor/Scholar