



The Rhone-Brackett American Inn of Court

Mentoring is Foundational: A Three-Pronged Approach

The Rhone-Brackett Inn started its mentoring program in 2013. They now have three different types and styles of mentoring paths.

- "Bar Exam Survival" mentoring program
- The Virtual Mentoring Program
- The Full (CAMP Sponsored) Mentoring Program

"Bar Exam Survival" mentoring program

This is a unique program because it is entirely mentor-driven; the Inn assigns mentors with good student rapport with new graduates studying for the bar. The mentors reach out weekly or bi-weekly and make sure the new graduates know that there is support for them to pass the bar and to offer them advice and stress management techniques.

For the two full-year programs, mentoring pairs or "match-ups" are made; each match-up then selects the program that works the best for them as individuals.

The Full Mentoring Program (CAMP Sponsored)

The [Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program \(CAMP\)](#) was established by the Colorado Supreme Court in February of 2013 to provide mentoring programs in all of the 22 Judicial Districts in Colorado. The CAMP programming is implemented through bar associations, Inns of Court, law firms, agencies, and other legal organizations throughout the state. This mentoring program allows pairs to get up to 15 CLE credits (including 2 ethics credits) for following the full curriculum.

The Full Mentoring Program is designed for mentor/mentee match-ups that want a structured program. It requires eight face-to-face meetings and ~13-16 hours of contact between September 1 and August 1; the CAMP program has 8 in person meetings that can be arranged as the group prefers. Non-CAMP Full Mentoring Program Match-Ups are encouraged to design their own plan for meeting and discussion topics using a template provided by the Inn.

The Virtual Mentoring Program

This program runs from September 1 – May 1 and requires in-person meetings in addition to monthly "virtual" contact via phone or video conferencing (such as Skype, FaceTime, etc.). The program has evolved from requiring two face-to-face meetings annually and an additional monthly in-person or virtual contact to requiring three face-to-face meetings annually and an additional monthly virtual contact.

How it works:

The Inn uses Google Drive as a way to have mentors and mentees update their information, interests, etc. This is then put into a monitored spreadsheet that is used to make the match-ups (July – August of each year). Participation ranges from 45-75 members each year. The difference depends on how many active students and associate barristers (ABs) in their first three years of practice are members, as these are the groups automatically assigned a mentor. ABs in their 4th or 5th year of practice and Barristers experiencing a change can be assigned a mentor upon request.

The Inn's active participating membership is generally around 80 members, give or take each year. This number is not just the dues-paying membership, but are the members who attend the majority of the Inn's meetings, and includes Emeritus members as well. Participation in our mentoring programs is always above 50%, and usually is around 70-80% of the active membership.

Bonus!

With their mentoring database continually updated via Google Docs, the result is that the Inn is able to also provide referrals and "one-time" mentoring match-ups - these are situations where requests are made for a situational mentoring need, a particular problem or for someone with a specific area of expertise. The spreadsheet makes these match-ups a breeze, which are much more informal, usually lunch or coffee or even a phone call. In fact, everyone in the Inn is open and willing to mentor on this basis, so it's a win-win, for sure!

It's personal.

One of the keys to success is the personal nature of the matching program. The Mentoring Committee, who is charged with monitoring and shepherding the mentoring program strive to know all the people who are being matched. While it's not a perfect system, knowing the people makes for a much more "go with your gut" type of matching and it usually works out for the best. And when it doesn't – due to moves, a change in practice, personal life events – a pairing can usually be reworked and switched up.

They're a little obsessed with mentoring, and that really comes through to the membership. It's one of the foundations of the Inn, and the Executive Committee is behind it 100%.

Find out more here:* <https://rhonebrackett.org/mentoring/>

** Note: Please do not complete the live form from the Rhone-Brackett Mentoring Program website unless you are an active member of the Inn.*