

Junior Mentor Program

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Junior Mentorship Program is to connect enthusiastic, experienced and caring Juniors with Juniors that are interested in learning more about the sport and/or improving their skills. The program seeks to provide Juniors a mentor and friend who will help them on their journey to become an accomplished Junior.

How do Junior Mentors Help?

Studies show that children that have a mentor are more likely to have higher self-esteem and confidence.¹ Although we do not have definitive data, we know that some Juniors leave the sport before advancing through the ranks. Junior Mentors offer peer support and encouragement that may encourage new Juniors to stay in the sport.

Program Goals

- Provide new Juniors with a positive role model.
- Provide experienced Juniors the opportunity to sharpen their skills.
- Encourage Juniors to remain in the support.

Matching Mentors and Mentees

AKC will match Mentors and Mentees through an application process. Mentors and Mentees will each fill out an application that will highlight their skills, breed(s), and areas of strength and weakness.

Requirements for Mentors

- Must be in an “Intermediate” or “Senior” class.
- Must have at least one year in “Open.”
- If mentoring in another sport other than showmanship, must have at least one year experience in the sport and/or achieved an advanced level title in said sport.
- Must be recommended by someone who is not a family member or friend (i.e. teacher, coach, club officer, etc.). Please email publiced@akc.org with the name and email address of the person completing the recommendation.
- Must have a 3.0 GPA or better (or equivalent). Proof must be emailed to publiced@akc.org.

Mentors Expectations

- Mentors must communicate with their mentee *at least* once per week.
- Mentors must update their log weekly.

¹ <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring/benefits-mentoring-young-people>

- Mentors must be supportive and kind.
- Mentors will be asked to step down if they engage in bullying of any kind.
- A mentor listens, advises and supports. Mentors will provide guidance for mentees in topics such as:
 - Handling
 - Grooming
 - Proper Dress and Behavior
 - Sportsmanship
 - More...

The mentor will file a log once per month with AKC. They will share information about what they discussed with their mentee that week, as well as things that are working well and areas they may need help with.

The Mentor/Mentee will work together for one year. At the end of the year, each will decide if they would like to continue the relationship. If the Mentee would still like a Mentor and their current Mentor is no longer available, they will be re-matched with a new Mentor.

Why Be a Mentor

Mentoring provides the opportunity to build a wonderful friendship, sharpen your skills and help another. Being a Junior Mentor also helps qualify you to be a Junior Ambassador. Finally, being a Mentor is a wonderful qualification to put on a college or job application.