



The American Peony Society

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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SECTION I Organizational Background

1. Overview

The American Peony Society Mentorship Program is designed to introduce APS activities, peony cultivation, hybridization, exhibition, plant evaluation and other associated topics to new or existing members through personal interaction with a member mentor. Each mentee will likely have their own questions and interests. Conversely, mentors also have their own strengths, making a good match between the two parties important. This project aims to improve the relationships and community with existing members through a personalized program which will benefit old and new. Education is a priority in this program, which should lead to greater participation in APS activities, as well as, personal enrichment.

2. About the APS

The American Peony Society has an international membership of wide ranging interests who are involved with the culture, exhibition, education and promotion of the genus *Paeonia* (peony). Activities include, cut flower production, cut flower arranging, exhibition, growing, scientific studies, gardening, hybridizing, photography, landscape, educational programming, and the general improvement of the peony for all to enjoy.

The society also acts as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for peonies, which ensures a recorded name and detailed information for each peony cultivar submitted for registration. The registration of cultivars allows gardeners, nurseries, propagators and others to find accurate information and communicate data with assurance.

- **Mission:** The American Peony Society is organized exclusively for education, scientific purposes and especially to promote, encourage and foster the development and improvement of the genus *Paeonia*.

SECTION II Program Policies

1. Target Audience

- **Current American Peony Society members.** Mentors as members of the society are important to this program for their expertise, fellowship and guidance of mentees. The APS membership will benefit from the relationship between mentor-mentee through information gained by both parties. APS in general can benefit from receiving new perspectives and ideas from mentees, which can be reported to leadership or shared with other members.
- **Potential APS members.** This program may attract potential members that are hesitant to become involved due to lack of information and inclusion. These potential members may come from a variety of contacts (social media, new gardening interest, web exposure, personal relationships, etc...). No matter what walk of life or status, potential members should be introduced to the possibility of joining the mentorship program. Potential Mentees:

- Young gardeners should be targeted as they help the society to stay vibrant and introduce existing membership to new and often innovative ideas. They are also a group which often does not get involved with organizations, making them a more challenging group to recruit.
 - Social media is commonly used today by gardeners and targeting social media users, through social media may bring on new participants
 - People with interests in hybridizing peonies
 - People with interests in photography
 - People with commercial interests (cut and growing)
 - People with interests in exhibition
 - Organizers, developer (digital especially), writers, etc... are all potential APS members
- **Educational Organizations and Institutions.** A number of teachers and organizations have shown interest in peonies. Younger children-growing seeds and plants. Universities and other groups may have interests in scientific studies and require further information from the APS. All can be considered targets for a mentorship program.
 - **Commercial businesses.** Commercial businesses interested in retailing, growing, and marketing peonies or related products may find interest in a Mentorship with veteran Mentors.
 - **The Media/Bloggers, etc.**

2. Special Concerns

- No personal material gains should be expected from/by mentees (ie: sharing of plant material, etc...
- Mentee-Mentor incompatibility. Either party may terminate the relationship for any reason with notification to the Mentorship committee.
- Public naming of mentor/mentee relationship. A publicity release is included on the MOU form.

SECTION III Procedures

1. Mentorship Program Content / Materials

Requirements for this program are primarily mentors and mentees, but include supporting materials, information, promotion.... Detailed communication of the program to possible participants will be important to keep the program organized and respected.

2. Objectives

Introduce mentees to APS culture, materials, structure and activities

Supply mentee and mentor with a compatible person match

Mentee-mentor match should address strengths of mentor and needs of mentee

Mentee should feel welcomed and encouraged through work with mentor

Supply a framework in which mentors and mentees can work without burdening either (this needs development and is important for often busy mentors)

Limit pairing to focused topic. Leave common FAQ's to other media.

Introduce appropriate communication channel options for mentor-mentee relationship

3. Management Activities

Promotional materials available to media, website, etc...

Personally contact new members within a month of joining APS to welcome and introduce committee membership opportunities

Secure new member information from Membership Committee/Secretary

Secure membership listings for purposes of identifying mentors and mentee

Develop policy for public release, detailing program and "rules"

Develop a mentor list with strengths and other important details

Develop periodic monitoring and follow-up method to assure value of program is being met

Mentor report, Mentee feedback

Coordinate pairings

Fill out MOU and route to participants for signatures

Provide a premade record sheet for mentor/mentee to record meetings and activities.

Maintain, and report periodically, active pairings

4. Invitations and Recruitment of Mentors

Create and publish topic list to current members

Solicit and interview volunteer Mentors

Publicize mentorship opportunities

5. Other Activities

Article in APS bulletin, introduction and information about the program

Convention promotion of the program (Formal Roll out announcement planned for 2019 Convention)

Publicize Testimonials of mentor-mentee relationships within the society that have taken, but not under this program

Collect reports of informal pairings to use as examples

Mentor-mentee meetings as a group? Future?

6. Items to be Determined

Mentors and mentees

Program inception/introduction for participation

Trial program with a limited number of participants?

Mentor-Mentee relationship duration?

Determined by focus of topic

Hybridizing would be expected to be longer than Exhibition

Determined by goals set and agreed at pairing

7. Assets for Leaders and Participants

Membership listing

Website

Members with experience (need to be recruited) as mentors

Convention (allows mentor-mentee to possibly meet face to face)

Leaders that understand needs of new members

Section IV. Memorandum of Understanding (MUO)



American Peony Society

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

We, the mentor, (printed name), and mentee, (printed name), are both voluntarily entering into this mentoring relationship and have mutually agreed upon the terms and conditions of our relationship as outlined below and contained in the APS Mentorship Program Policy.

Goals

This mentorship engages the mentor and mentee in a relationship whereas the mentor shares, educates and nurtures the mentee's interest in (a specific topic).

It is anticipated that subordinate goals of the mentoring relationship will develop and evolve over time. Areas of focus of this mentoring relationship may be modified as the relationship moves forward. Below are some examples of areas wherein the mentor may provide advice, assistance, and encouragement.

- Referring mentee to skill development workshops or seminars.
- Referring mentee to available literature, studies, and other documents of interest
- Offering opportunities or suggesting committee membership.
- Identifying opportunities for bulletin articles submission.
- Recommending mentee for additional mentorships.
- Vetting mentee for potential as mentor for related topics of their expertise.
- Identifying service opportunities in local, state, or national organizations.
- Networking--Linking the mentee with other members and local societies for further growth.

Accountability

Although the mentor may provide advice in many areas, it is the responsibility of the mentor and mentee to develop and achieve specific goals to maintain topical focus.

Frequency of Contact and Documentation

We will make a good faith effort to meet at least _____ times each _____. We will keep a record of the dates when meetings are held. A mentorship committee member will periodically contact both mentor and mentee to monitor the success of the relationship and gather information for mentorship committee reports.

Confidentiality

Any sensitive topics that we discuss will be held in the highest confidence. No topics will be considered mandatory to discuss.

Duration of Relationship

We have determined that our mentoring relationship will continue until the agreed upon goals have been achieved or additional subordinate goals established, not to exceed two years. There is an expectation that the mentor limit extensions in order to allow other mentorships with other interested mentees. Mentees are invited and encouraged to request mentorships on additional subjects upon successful conclusion of this mentorship.

Publicity Release

By entering into this agreement, we authorize the publication of our names and mentorship relationship on any APS media unless declined by initialing here _____.

Termination of MOU

We are committed to open and honest communication in our relationship. Upon agreed successful completion of the mentorship goals or other occasion which necessitates ending the relationship, either party may terminate the relationship with notification to the Mentorship committee.

Mentor _____ Date _____ Mentee _____ Date _____