



February, 2021

Associate Alumnae of Douglass College

Volume 5, Issue 1

Updates

Postponed

Mentoring Circle

New Date:
Wednesday,
March 24, 2021
@ 7:00 PM

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Welcome, 2021!!

Once again, the Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program is starting the year on a strong note. There are 40 mentor/mentee pairs working together, providing assistance and support.

The past year has been challenging. The key in-person events celebrating last year's successes and kicking off this year had to go virtual. We missed the chance to be on campus and be together. The marathon group meeting to match mentors and mentees couldn't happen. The regular pair meetings over coffee or lunch morphed into phone or Zoom events. But we are still here and thriving.

Matches got made — with a giant thank you to Lizethe Martinez for handling the paperwork and keeping everyone in the loop.

Connections through the Facebook groups continue to support the mentoring pairs, with regular news updates and links to thought provoking videos and articles. Most important, the mentor/mentee pairs have adapted as needed to make the program work for them.

As we move forward, we can build on some lessons learned. When we found that we couldn't count on casual contact at the coffee machine, it became important to actively work at maintaining relationships. We had to remember to reach out, to schedule the zoom meetings, to make the check in calls, to be open to finding new ways to connect.

This works for organizations as well as individuals, and the mentoring project will continue to need your input and ideas. Please continue to use the Facebook groups and consider volunteering to help us continue to find new ways to work together.

-Linda Parry '75



Peer Mentors



Jamila E.
Daniels
Class of 2018



Marina
Shimarova
Class of 2017

Mentoring is:

“to have someone to support you, help make tough decisions, and get access to useful connections.”

Mentor/Mentee Highlight

Our highlighted pair of Marina Shimarova '17 and Jamila E. Daniel '18 this time is unique. It negates the usually accepted notion that mentors are generally older and more experienced than their mentees and confirms that peers can learn something new and useful from each other.

Both are recent Douglass Residential College graduates. Marina graduated in 2017 with majors in Economics and Cognitive Science; Jamila graduated in 2018 with a major in cultural anthropology and a double minor in education and international and global studies. They have both been mentors and mentees to each other, exchanging valuable knowledge, connections and providing moral support.

As Jamila says, "I think that Marina and I offer a lot just by being ourselves." Marina brings experience in foreign affairs/government/economics and experience as a first-generation American, and first-hand knowledge of living in a developing country (Egypt)." Jamila knows a lot about international development from working on research projects concerning impoverished children in the Dominican Republic, healthcare access in rural villages in India, and small business consulting in South Africa. Jamila adds, "We are very similar and very different in a lot of ways." They both graduated from their master's programs during the global pandemic year (Marina's at the University of Chicago and Jamila's at Cornell University), which has been a tough time for job hunting.

Marina wanted to share what she had learned through the application process for government jobs and fellowships. She was interested in making a friend in the same field who comes from a similar life situation (not many people in the policy world attend public universities like Rutgers.) Jamila, in her turn, wanted to give back. She says, "Honored to have my experiences, I wanted to offer some assistance to another young person even if it was just as moral support. I rarely had mentors until recently, and I realize how helpful it is to have someone to support you, help make tough decisions, and get access to useful connections."

Both Marina and Jamila highly recommend the AADC Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program, Marina says, "It's my third time in the program, and I have gained something different and valuable from each mentoring relationship. Most of all, I have felt like a part of a supportive sisterhood every time." Her message to her sister alumnae is: "Diversity is Douglass's strength. Use it to connect with people different from you."

Up For Discussion – Mentoring Circles?

The challenges of the past year have pushed us to rethink the ways we can connect to others. We've learned to use zoom meetings, enjoy virtual happy hours, work, teach and worship from home, and search out new ways to keep in contact with family and friends. Mentors and mentees have adapted as needed. The mentor model has worked well and participants continue to report that it is a valuable and important resource. But feedback also indicates that it doesn't work for everyone. Some people aren't ready to make a year-long commitment; some are just not comfortable in either the role of mentor or mentee. Sometimes, what we need is to grab the popcorn and wine glass and hunker down to work through an issue with friends.

So, given that the coffee shop and local bar all seem currently out of reach, perhaps it is time to explore a new option. Mentor Circles have been effectively operating in businesses, alumni groups, and professional organizations for the past few years. The idea is to bring together small groups of concerned and thoughtful people (usually women...) to discuss a specific topic. There is a leader to coordinate the meeting and keep things on track, but everyone is expected to contribute questions, thoughts, and experience. Everyone has something to offer; everyone has something to learn. The circle (or Zoom screen...) provides a safe space to connect with others, share experience and questions, and address a shared concern.

This year the AADC will add mentoring circles to the Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program – not to in any way replace the ongoing mentor/mentee pair commitments, but to provide an additional option for current participants and for other alumnae who want a connection but may not be able to commit to becoming a mentor or mentee. It would build on other avenues, like the Facebook groups and group check in calls, that support participants' work.

Join us for the first mentoring circle on **Wednesday, March 24, 2021** at 7:00 pm via Zoom. Email lmartinez@douglassalumnae.org to send in your topic ideas. Suggestions and volunteers are welcome!



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AADC Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program



**Forward Together,
Better Together**

*Alumnae-created, Alumnae-led,
Alumnae-driven, Alumnae-supported.*
SINCE 1922

Our Mission

The AADC is an independent, self-supporting 501(c)(3) organization. The AADC develops and promotes connections among Douglass alumnae by providing programs, services, networks and lifelong learning opportunities that represent the interests and needs of our diverse alumnae. The AADC provides prudent stewardship of the Douglass Fund and other endowed funds held by the AADC for the benefit of Douglass; distributions from these funds contribute financial support to Douglass and her students.

Visit our website:
www.douglassalumnae.org

douglassalumnae at



AADC Upcoming Events and Programs

Monday, February 8, 2021

AADC Alumnae Reunion Weekend 2021 Planning Committee Meeting

Meeting hosted virtually from 6:00 to 7:00 pm EST. [Register](#)

Saturday, February 20, 2021

AADC Smart Talk: "Women Taking Control of Their Health: What You Should Expect from Your Patient-Clinician Interactions"

Featuring Rutgers Professor Dr. Gloria Bachman & Dr. Juana Hutchinson-Colas. 1:00 - 3:00 EST. [Register.](#)

Saturday, February 27, 2021

AADC Black Alumnae Network Virtual General Body Meeting

Join us for our first meeting of the new year, 1:00 pm EST, hosted via Zoom. [Register.](#)

Saturday, March 6, 2021

AADC Commemorates Women's History Month featuring the AADC 2021 Zagoren Lecture

Featuring AADC Society of Excellence Member Phoebe Godfrey '88, social and environmental activist, author and Associate Professor-in-Residence in Sociology at the University of Connecticut, who will talk about her work as co-founder CLICK (Commercially Licensed Co-operative Kitchen). [Register.](#)

Wednesday, March 24

AADC Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program Circle: Work-Life Balance in the Time of COVID

A new opportunity hosted by the AADC Mabel's Alumnae Mentoring Program for alumnae and friends to connect virtually, learn and share their experiences. 7:00 pm. [Register](#)

Thursday, March 25, 2021

AADC Excellence in Inclusion and Equity Initiative Workshop

Featuring Cynthia Bowman, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at Bank of America. She is the chief strategist globally focused on leading programs, initiatives and policies that actively support a diverse and inclusive workplace. More information and registration will be available soon.

Friday, June 4 and Saturday, June 5, 2021

AADC Alumnae Reunion Weekend 2021, hosted virtually

[Read more](#) about our double-celebration for milestone class years from the 0s & 5s and 1s & 6s.