BUILDING PATHWAYS OF COMMUNITY BETWEEN STUDENTS AND ALUMNI OF COLOR
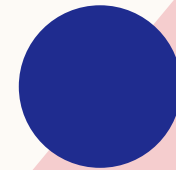
Ebehitale Imobhio (she/her)
Rose Thomas (she/they)

AGENDA

- Collective Agreements

- Learning Objectives

- Background

- The SPHHP Envision Mentoring

  Program

- Areas of Focus

- Program Timeline

- Areas of Improvement

- Summary

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

- This is a safe space to express openly!

- Keep in mind that intent does not negate impact*

- Feel free to ask questions anytime because we want to make this space an opportunity for growth

- Suggestions?

MEET OUR TEAM

EBEHITALE IMOBHIO (SHE/HER)

Founder

ROSE THOMAS (SHE/THEY)

Founder

MARY GLENN (SHE/HER)

Assistant Dean of Community Engagement

ADRIANA ZIEBA ROSA (SHE/HER)

Student Assistant

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1) Understanding the intersectionality of minority experiences in higher education
2) Recognizing the role of mentoring as a tool to address the disparities in higher education
3) Applying mentoring practices to populations you work in your prospective roles

BACKGROUND

- Minoritized students in higher education have reported **increased rates of depression, loneliness, anxiety,** and other emotional difficulties
- **Retention rates and academic performance of minority students drop significantly** due to the pressures and hardships they face in higher education especially in predominantly white institutions
- Even with loneliness, minority students face **hypervisibility amongst their white peers;** having extra pressure to be experts of their racial background
- In order to **combat these intersectional issues**, many initiatives focused on building student groups, having diverse programming, peer mentorship

BACKGROUND

- While these are good initial efforts, there is only a **limited amount of connection and perspective** these interventions could offer the students

- A neglected area of intervention is including perspectives and opportunity to connect with those who have been through the **same experiences personally, academically and now continuing their professional journey**

WHY ALUMNI MENTORS?

- Provide a different kind of perspective to mentees than a fellow student can
- Real life representation in the careers or paths mentees are interested in pursing
- Can potentially offer them with access to a network that is outside
- Guidance on professional and academic development
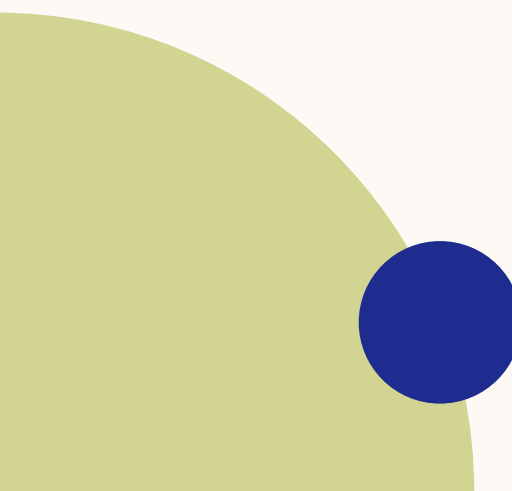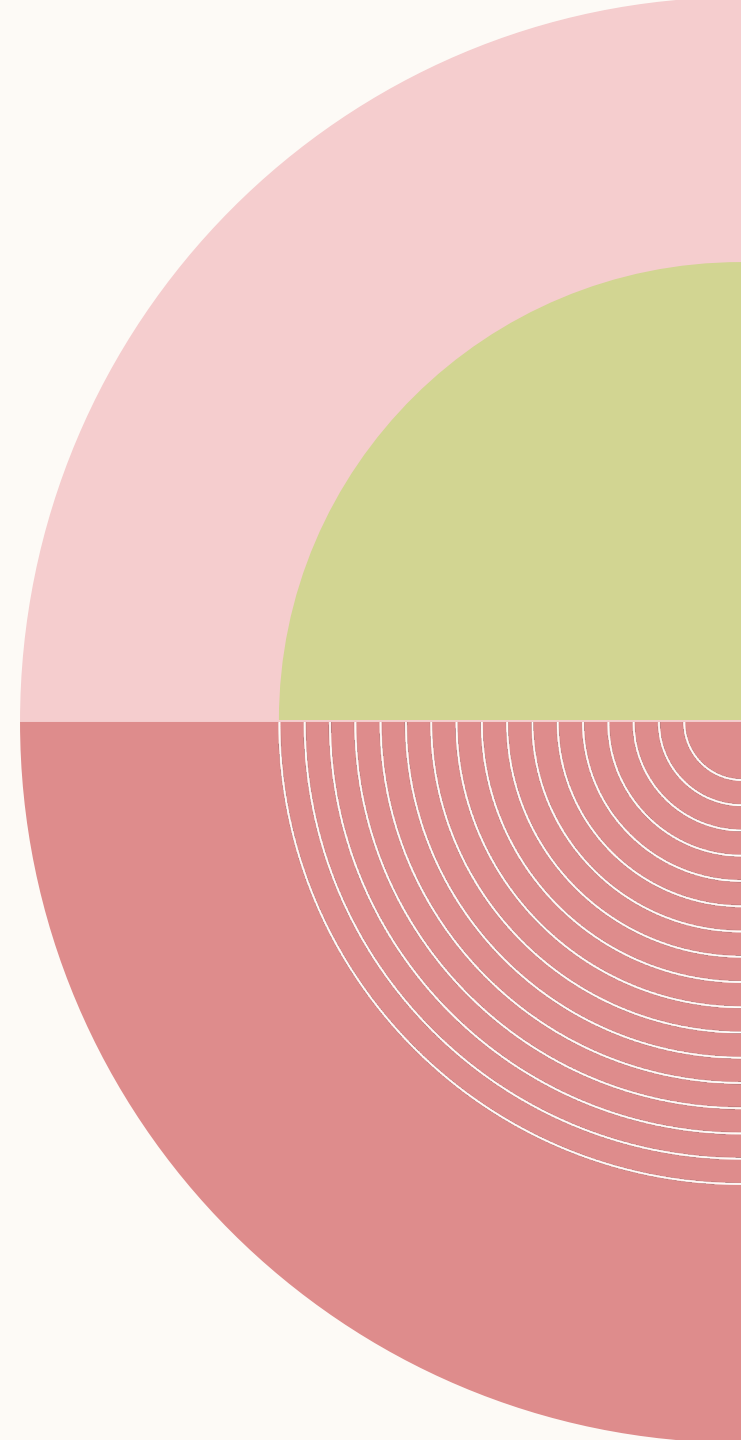
SPHHP ENVISION MENTORING PROGRAM:
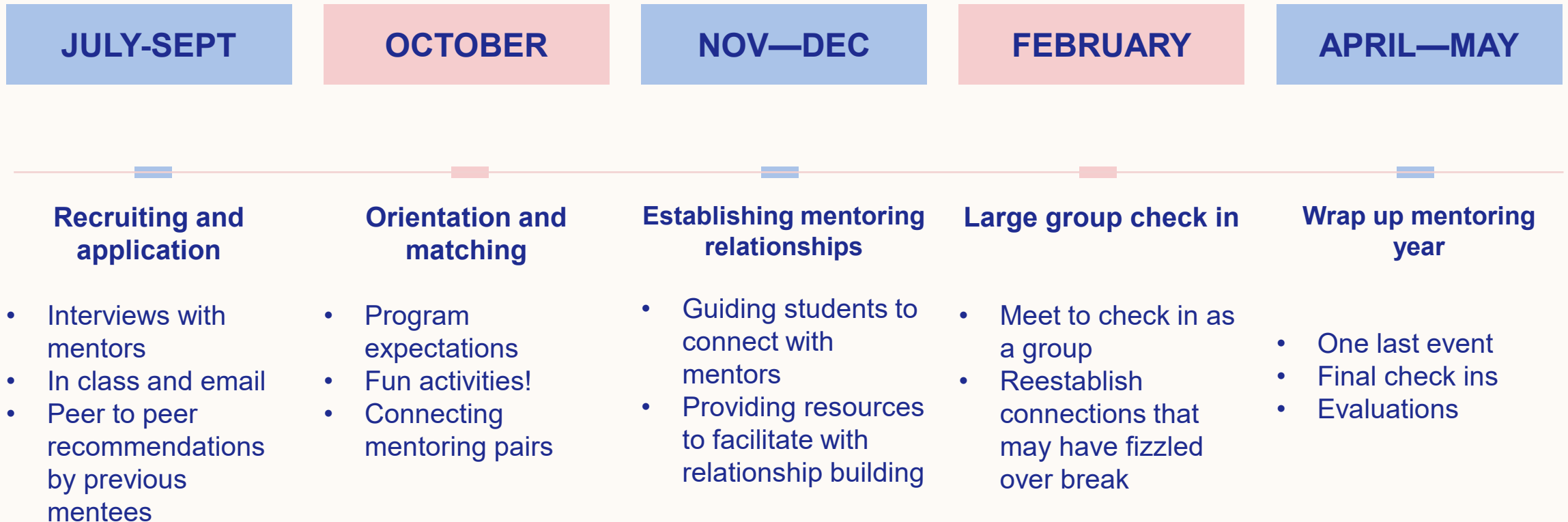## BRIDGING THE GAPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND OPPORTUNITY

- **Established in 2021** from personal experiences being in higher education as people of color
  - **Rose:** Switched majors as an undergraduate student; had difficulty adjusting to new major and building connections
  - **Ebehitale:** Transfer student and transitioned from a different undergraduate program into Public Health graduate program
- Some students of color in the School of Public Health and Health Professions were **experiencing similar feelings of loneliness** and lack of meaningful engagement
- We connected with the Assistant Dean of Community Engagement, Mary Glenn to **access to a vast network of alumni**
  - We hoped that students of coloring mentoring will provide them with an **opportunity for meaningful engagement** and professional networking

AREAS OF FOCUS

- **Provide a safe space for them to be authentically themselves**
- **Create a stress-free mentoring program**
  - Mentees and mentors choose what areas they are comfortable discussing and how they can focus their meetings on that*
- **Provide opportunities for students**
  - Professional, academic, and inter-personal growth
  - Sharing opportunities with them that are shared with us
- **Empower students to be proactive in the mentoring relationship**
  - Initial introduction
  - Goal identifying and setting
  - Establishing methods of clear and frequent communication with mentors

*Will be elaborated on in the section on application and matching

PROGRAM TIMELINE

| JULY-SEPT	OCTOBER	NOV—DEC	FEBRUARY	APRIL—MAY
Recruiting and application	**Orientation and matching**	**Establishing mentoring relationships**	**Large group check in**	**Wrap up mentoring year**
• Interviews with mentors • In class and email • Peer to peer recommendations by previous mentees	• Program expectations • Fun activities! • Connecting mentoring pairs	• Guiding students to connect with mentors • Providing resources to facilitate with relationship building	• Meet to check in as a group • Reestablish connections that may have fizzled over break	• One last event • Final check ins • Evaluations

THE ORIENTING PROCESS

- **Themes of Application Questions**
  - What do you hope to gain out of the mentoring program?
  - Are there any characteristics that would be important to consider in your match with a mentor/ mentee?
- **The Matching Process**
  - Meet with mentors throughout the summer
  - Answers on application

Building Pathways of Community
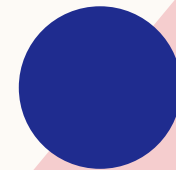
THE ORIENTING PROCESS (CONT.)

- **Orientation**

  - Instruction about expectations from the program and introduce the mentees to each other

  - Provides the mentees with the opportunity to share how the staff can best support them and introduce them to the group chat

  - Precursor to the mentor and mentee establishing their relationship and getting the resource guide

COHORT GROWTH OVER THE YEARS

|	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Fall 2022
Mentors	14.0	14.0	20.0
Mentees	14.0	16.0	23.0

■ Mentors   ■ Mentees
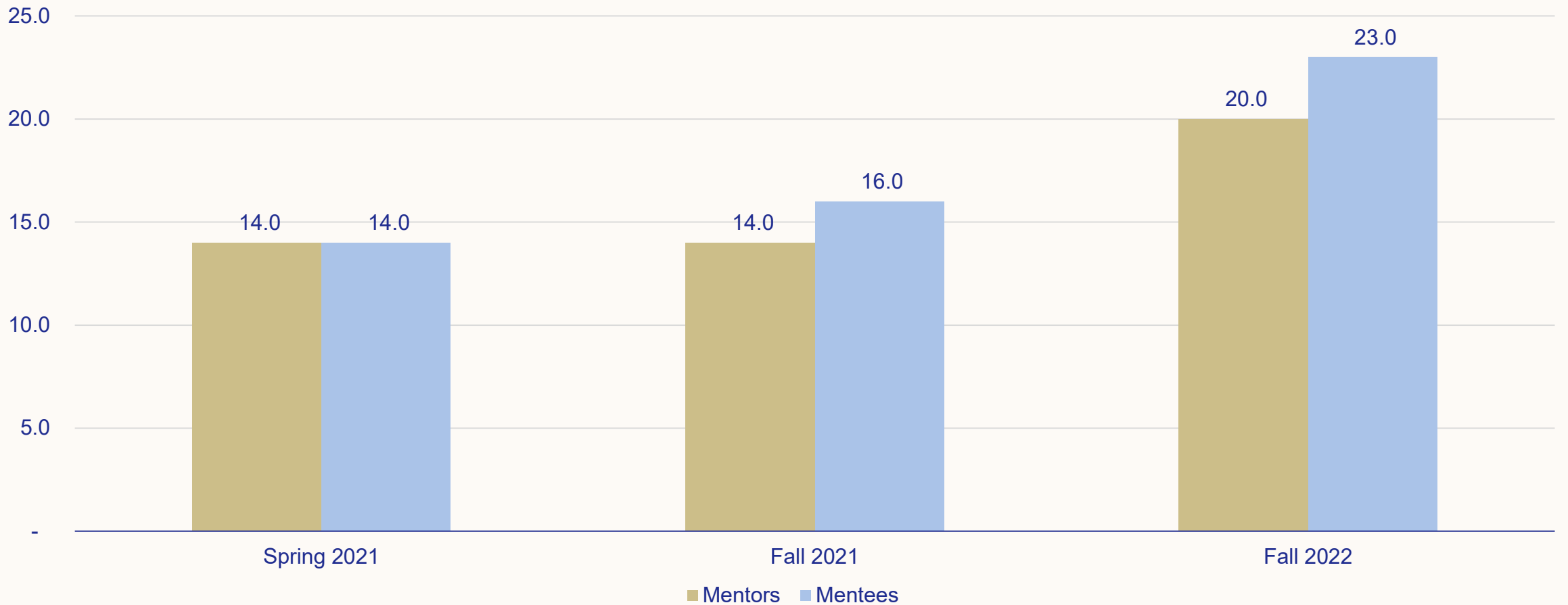
PROGRAMMING

- Pizza Night

- Holiday Party

- Speed Mentoring

- Graduate School Panel

- Game Night

- End of Year Party (tonight in SU 240!)
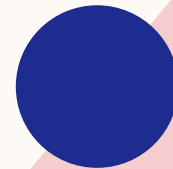
EVALUATION

- **Overall Themes**

  - Experience with their mentor/mentee

  - Overall experience with the program

  - What they gained from the program

  - What we can do to improve in the following year

- **How it is Used:**

  - To improve the types of program and events we offer

  - To adjust the support that we provide
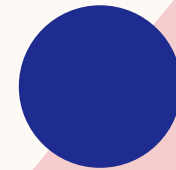
EXPERIENCES FROM OUR MENTEES AND MENTORS

- **Thoughts from Mentors and Mentees from**
  - "I wish I had this program when I was a student." --Previous and current mentors in the program
  - "What I am hoping to gain, and what I believe I will gain from this experience is one and the same; Belief. What my mentor has given me is belief in myself and belief that my dreams and goals are achievable. Hailing from a Rural background, to have the goals that I have can sometime feel like a journey of 1,000 miles that is full of twists and turns all while not having a map. What I believe a good mentor does is provide the map and the belief that you are on the right path. That is what my mentor …has done for me and that is what I have gained from this experience."—Mentee from the 2021 cohort

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT FOR NEW COHORT

RECRUITMENT

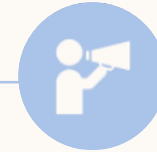Recruiting more mentors would be helpful in expanding our program to more students

BALANCE

Finding a way to balance the needs of staff, program participants through capacity building
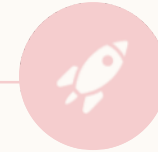
PROGRAMMING

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More programming during the school year to foster relationships among mentees and mentors
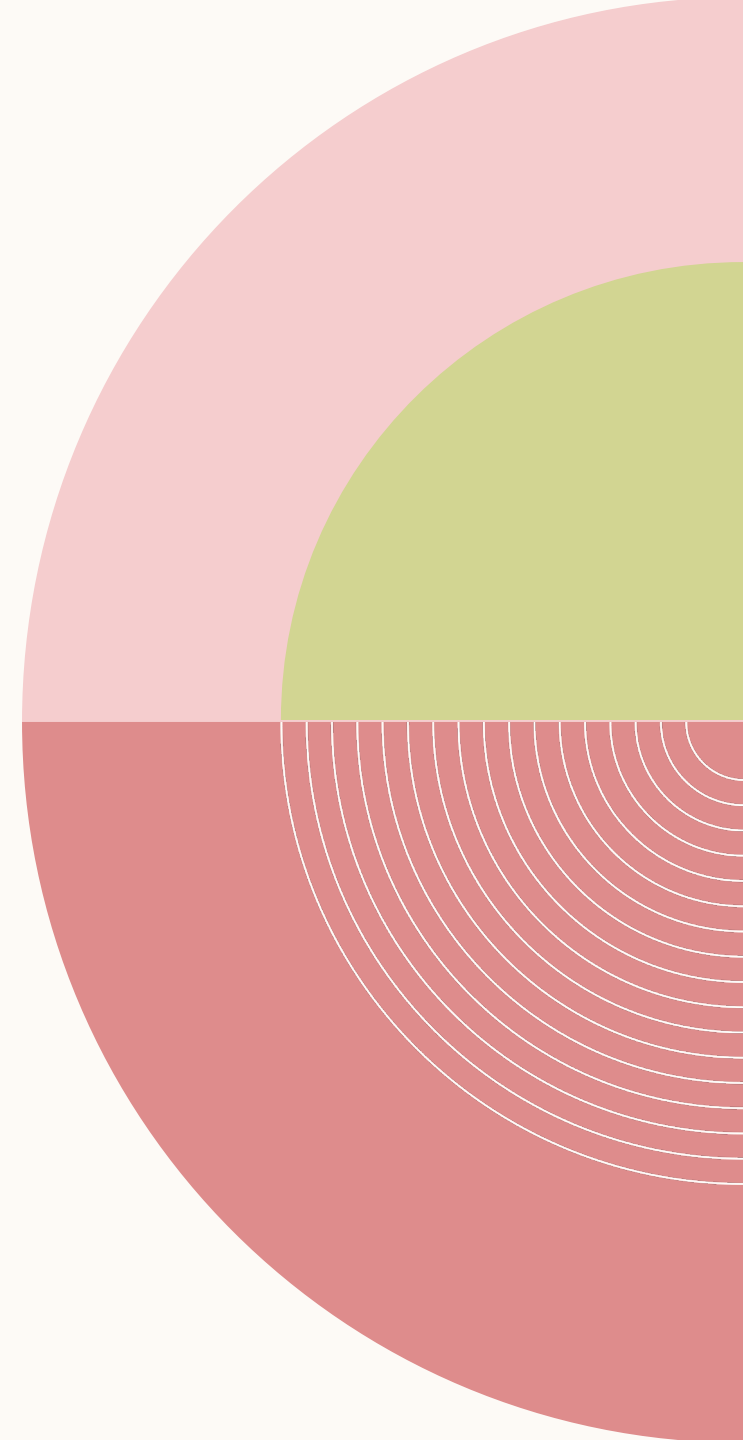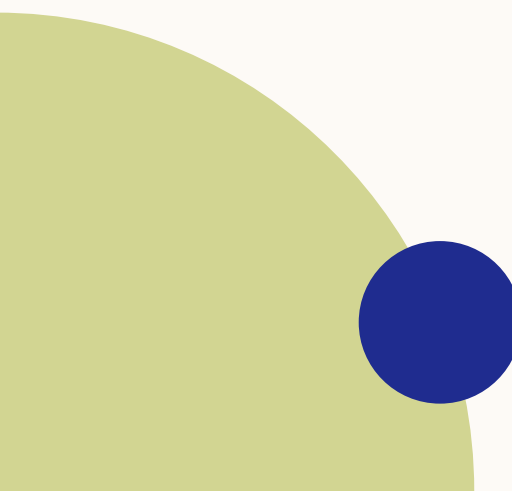
INFORMAL RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Activities
Study groups
Group chats

RESOURCE LINKAGE

Connecting students to various campus resources such as Career Design Center

Building Pathways of Community

TIME TO STRETCH!

GROUP BREAKOUT SESSIONS!

Yay ☺

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Breakout into small groups

2) Introduce yourself to each other (Name, Pronouns, Area of Work etc)

3) Choose a person to be the speaker for your group

4) Identify a marginalized population that you work with (i.e., disabled people, low-income students, first-gen students, people of color, LGBTQIA+ etc)

5) Discuss how you would create a mentoring program for the identified populations with your groupmates

6) You will have about 20 minutes for group discussion then we will move into the main discussion

HANDOUT QUESTIONS

- Name
- What Organization, School, College, Office, or Department do you work in?
- Which marginalized population could you potentially be working with in your role?
- How do you plan on executing a mentoring program for this group?
  - Who are you identifying as potential mentors?
  - What kind of resources or support will you offer to this group?
  - What would your timeline be like?
  - Would it be a structured or unstructured program? Why?
- What do you anticipate your successes to be ?
- What do you anticipate your limitations to be?

DISCUSSION TIME! ☺

- How did your individual answers differ when working in your group?
- What was something that stood out for you in your group discussion?

QUESTIONS?

"In order to be a mentor, and an effective one, one must care. You must care. You don't have to know how many square miles are in Idaho, you don't need to know what is the chemical makeup of chemistry, or of blood or water. Know what you know and care about the person, care about what you know and care about the person you're sharing with."

Maya Angelou

THANK YOU

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Rose Thomas

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PLEASE FILL OUT OUR EVALUATION BEFORE YOU LEAVE

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