



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County

Program Title: Women's Mentorship Program

Program Category: Criminal Justice & Public Safety

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Peter Newsham

Title: Chief of Police

Department: Police Department

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Christopher J. Shorter

Title: County Executive

Signature: 

Virginia Association of Counties (VACo)

2024 Achievement Awards

Nomination Narrative

Nominee: Prince William County Police Department

Project: Women's Mentorship Program

Program Category: Criminal Justice & Public Safety

Situation:

The Women's Mentorship Program was developed by the Prince William County Police Department in an effort to support the department's overall strategic goals and ensure mission success. The program is also dedicated to the retention and recruitment of women in law enforcement. The department is committed to training and developing a versatile and competent workforce to meet its long-term needs and those of the community, and the mentorship program is one of many avenues used to engage employees in expanded development opportunities. The major objective of the program is to promote the development of participating mentees in specific areas and the facilitation of successful professional growth. It also serves as a key succession-planning tool aimed at ensuring the department has the most effective leaders among its workforce.

Program Description:

In September 2022, the Prince William County Police Department began work to establish its Women's Mentorship Program as an organized group for women's advocacy within the department. The mission of the program is "to create an environment for professional growth and development through authentic relationships and resources that engage and support members, resulting in confident and empowered staff." The program was formally

Nomination Narrative

Program: Prince William County Police Department Women's Mentorship Program

initiated in January 2023 with the approval of the program's Standard Operating Procedures and establishment of formal program processes and structure. Although this group was conceived to support women within the Department, the Program is comprised of both female and male mentors and mentees. There are currently thirty-four staff members enrolled as mentees being supported by twenty-four mentors.

The Mentorship Program works to accomplish the following:

1. Develop relationships within the Department to address the Department's need for a high-performance group of leaders who are adaptable; who inspire, motivate, and guide others to produce tangible results; who mentor and challenge the workforce; and who demonstrate high standards of honesty, integrity, trust, transparency, and respect.
2. Increase and ensure management support, thereby increasing employee participation and program success.
3. Strive to increase employee perception that the mentoring program and services are career-development and lifelong learning experiences.
4. Increase awareness and ensure program design includes mentoring options that support the Department's demographics and diversity.
5. Provide policy and procedures aimed at assuring appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency in activities, and ensure organizational integration into overall mentoring program.

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This mission will be accomplished through the implementation of Department-wide systems, policies, guidance, and criteria designed to provide institutional knowledge for specific leadership areas that target mentee development and knowledge transfer. Mentoring works to accelerate the culture of high performance amongst staff. Specifically, the Mentorship Program aligns with the following areas:

- **Onboarding** – Support recruits, trainees, and/or new staff members in understanding the Department's values, vision, mission, and goals.
- **Skills Enhancement** – Share the skills and knowledge of successful, experiences, and highly competent staff to pass their expertise on to others who need to acquire specified skills.
- **Organizational Development and Culture** – Help communicate the values, vision, and mission of the organization. A one-on-one relationship can help employees understand the organizational culture more clearly.
- **Professional Identity** – Contribute to understanding what it means to be a professional in the law enforcement environment.
- **Career Development** – Help employees plan, develop, grow, and manage their careers. Mentoring also helps employees become more resilient in times of change, more self-reliant in their careers, and more responsible as self-directed learners.

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- **Leadership and Management Development** – Encourage the development of leadership competencies. These competencies are often more easily gained through application and guided practice rather than by education and training.
- **Education Support** – Help to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Formal education is complemented by the knowledge and hands-on experience of a competent practitioner.
- **Customer Service** – Assist in modeling desired behaviors, encouraging the development of competencies in support of customer service, and cultivating the right attitudes.
- **Staff Retention** – Provide a supportive environment. Ongoing interactions, coaching, teaching, and role modeling will facilitate progression within the organization. In addition, mentoring has been found to influence employee retention because it helps establish an organizational culture that is attractive to high-performing individuals for growth opportunities.
- **Employee Engagement** – Show employees in a tangible way that they are valued, and that the Department's future includes them.
- **Recruitment** – Enhance recruitment goals by offering additional incentive to prospective employees.
- **Knowledge Management/Knowledge Transfer** – Provide for the interchange/exchange of information and knowledge between members within the Department.

Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Achievement Awards

Nomination Narrative

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The mentee's development depends on exploring career aspirations; strengths and weaknesses; collaborating on means to "get there"; implementing strategies; and evaluating along the way. The mentor will help guide the mentee along this path. Learning from the wisdom and experience of the mentor will serve the mentee well and produce positive benefits.

To become a mentee or mentor, employees must apply and meet specified criteria (e.g., length of service; standing; demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities, etc.). Prospective mentors must also participate in a panel interview as part of the application process. Mentors and mentees are selected by the Mentorship Program Manager. Once approved, mentees are then matched with mentors based on needs and strengths, as well as availability and accessibility. During the application and matching process, a mentee will be asked for information that may assist the Mentorship Program Manager in proper placement.

Both mentors and mentees have established roles and responsibilities they are expected to abide by to maintain participation in the program. To maximize the outcome of this experience and ensure that all participants derive value from the program, it is recommended that mentees devote a minimum of two hours per month to program activities. These activities can include, but are not limited to: goal setting, planning, training, special projects and assignments, mentor/mentee meetings, etc.

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Results/Success of the Program:

The efforts of the staff involved in both its inception and ongoing work has led to many women-focused, law enforcement speaking engagements throughout the country. Their successful outreach has also ignited interest from audiences who also desire to launch women's law enforcement support programs within their departments. Regionally, the Women's Mentorship Program has held meet and greets, virtual panel discussions, hosted podcasts, and social events including BBQ and "Paint Night" events all in the effort to unite women through fellowship. The next chapter in unifying women will be accomplished at a two-day regional women's summit which is being planned for October 2024 collaboratively with our other Women of Law Enforcement partners.

Abstract/Executive Summary:

In September 2022, the Prince William County Police Department began work to establish its Women's Mentorship Program as an organized group for the advocacy of female employees within the Department. The mission of the Women's Mentorship Program is "to create an environment for professional growth and development through authentic relationships and resources that engage and support members, resulting in confident and empowered staff." The program was formally initiated in January 2023 with the approval of the program's Standard Operating Procedures and establishment of formal program processes and structure. Although this group was conceived to support women within the department, the program is comprised of both female and male mentors and mentees. There are currently thirty-four staff members enrolled as mentees being supported by twenty-four mentors.

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Program: Prince William County Police Department Women's Mentorship Program

The program was developed in an effort to support the department's strategic goals and ensure mission success. In addition to its mission, the Women's Mentorship Program is also dedicated to the retention and recruitment of women in law enforcement. The department is committed to training and developing a versatile and competent workforce to meet both its and the community's long-term needs, and the mentorship program is one of many avenues used to engage employees in expanded development opportunities. The major objective of the program is to promote the mentee's development in specific areas and to facilitate successful professional growth. It also serves as a key succession-planning tool aimed at ensuring the department has the most effective leaders to achieve overall mission success.

This mission will be accomplished through the implementation of department-wide systems, policies, guidance, and criteria designed to provide institutional knowledge for specific leadership areas that target mentee development and knowledge transfer. Mentoring works to accelerate the culture of high performance amongst staff.

A mentee's development depends on exploring career aspirations; strengths and weaknesses; collaborating on a means to "get there"; implementing strategies; and evaluating along the way. The mentor helps to guide the mentee

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along this path. Learning from the wisdom and past experiences of the mentor serves the mentee well and produces positive benefits.

**Prince William County Police Department Women's Mentorship Program
Program Photographs**

