



RESOURCES

This week's newsletter focuses on the benefits of assembling a network of mentors, and it was written by Sarah Renee Phillips of the Multimedia Subcommittee.

Casting a net, instead of a line

At the beginning of *The Divine Comedy*, Dante calls upon predecessors—pens of epic poems past—for guidance. Ultimately, he takes Virgil, author of *The Aeneid*, as his mentor and departs through *Inferno*, *Purgatory*, and *Paradise*. I'm of the opinion that Virgil is an ineffectual mentor, often disappearing at the exact moment guidance is needed. Dante succeeds, so an alternative hypothesis is that wandering off at critical junctures is part of a mentoring strategy. Either way, *The Divine Comedy* was a daunting undertaking by Dante with only one mentor in tow.

Mentoring is a cornerstone of higher education and graduate study, particularly in the sciences. We rely on mentors for advocacy, instruction, honing of methodology, networking, writing, and, ultimately, career progression. We've all heard that a good (or bad) mentor can make (or break) you. If you've made it to Early Career status, you likely have a marble bag full of mentors as colorful and distinct as marbles themselves. Each of those mentors has likely played a different role in your life, inspiring some aspect of your growth. It's entirely possible you've learned as much (maybe more) from mentors who didn't jibe with you as from ones who did.

During my career, I've had many mentors and been one myself. I've had mentors who were friends and accompanied me during field and laboratory work and mentors who were hands-off and aloof, as well as everything in between the two. I believe mentorship to be a life-long commitment in the sciences, and that is how I choose to mentor. I'm present and work alongside my mentees when they desire that oversight and let go and let them fly when their words or behavior tell me that's the logical next step. I never disappear. I make sure every mentee knows I will always be in their corner anytime they call upon me.

We find ourselves in unexpected conflict in modern science, and it's uncertain where this upheaval will lead. It will look different on the other side, and you will likely not emerge from this with all the people you thought you'd have access to when you started training. It's a good time to broaden your mentoring network. Bring in more people who will help with your science, but also life coaches and mental health professionals who will help you navigate the hurdles ahead.



GSA [Early Career Leadership Program](#) Resources

Meet ECS Community Membership and Engagement Subcommittee member Mahmoud Izadi and read about his research on genomic instability and the DNA damage response (DDR) within the context of cancer, interests in the entrepreneurial side of science, and his passion for mentorship in [Genes to Genomes](#).

If you're feeling stuck on a manuscript or looking to tighten your grant proposal, this workshop is for you. GSA members are invited to join us on May 7, at 1:30 p.m. EDT, to hear from science writer Carolyn Beans—this marks the start of a six-week academic writing workshop with tailored topics based on the writing projects participants are currently tackling. We'll look at grant proposals, manuscript sections, job application statements, and more, so participants can gain a better understanding of how to edit their work to produce clear and engaging academic pieces. [Sign up](#) today as space is limited!

Hear from fellow scientists in the genetics community, build connections, and find resources from peers that will help you navigate your professional and academic journey and ongoing policy changes impacting researchers in the United States and across the globe. GSA members are invited to join us for the first GSA Peer Support Group on Tuesday, May 13, at 4:00 p.m. EDT. [Sign up to participate](#).