

AFB Scholars Program: Required Scholar Activities

MENTORSHIP ENGAGEMENT

The AFB Scholars Program mentoring experience aims to foster meaningful connections between scholars and AFB leaders with lived experience, supporting scholars in their academic, professional, and personal growth while strengthening their confidence and networks within the blind and low vision community.

Scholars **must meet all mentorship requirements** in order to renew their scholarship award on an annual basis. Upon a scholar's successful completion in the AFB Scholar's Program, the mentor will provide a **letter of recommendation** for the scholar to include in their professional portfolio.

Scholar Requirements

AFB Scholars and their assigned AFB mentors will meet at minimum twice a semester (once per quarter) for at least one hour each for the duration of the Scholar's participation in the program.

Scholars will be expected to:

- Be communicative and prompt in support of scheduling and planning the mentorship sessions.
- Set and pursue clear goals for the mentorship as well as sharing needs, expectations, and challenges transparently.
- Come prepared for mentoring sessions with questions, updates on progress, and topics for discussion.
- Actively participate in discussions and follow through on action items.
- Be open to feedback, new ideas, and exploring different perspectives.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

AFB Scholars are required to participate in one annual professional conference to help build your professional skills, expand your network, and connect with the broader community of professionals working to advance inclusion for the blind and low vision community.

Scholars will attend one approved conference during each scholarship year, accompanied by an AFB staff member to maximize this unique growth opportunity. Scholars **must meet the conference participation requirement** in order to renew their scholarship award on an annual basis.

Note: Approved expenses for the conference participation (travel, accommodations, registration, per diem) will be covered by AFB.

Scholar Requirements

AFB Scholars will submit their preferred conference from a pre-approved list. Scholars should be mindful of the timing in relation to their other responsibilities and responsible for making their own arrangements for absence with their academic institutions.

Scholars will be expected to:

- Be proactive and prompt in conference selection, adhering to all guidelines during planning.
- Work with your AFB mentor to establish clear goals in advance of the conference.
- Coordinate a meet-up with AFB staff also attending the conference.
- Attend at least one networking activity or event to foster meaningful connections and enhance your professional network.
- Submit a written reflection to your mentor within 2-weeks of the conference, evaluating your participation based on your established goals and requirements.