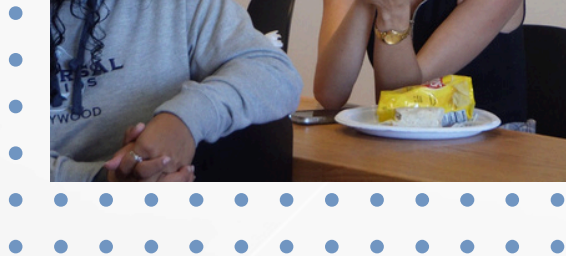




NEXTGEN MENTORSHIP PROGRAM REPORT



Submitted by:

Suli Kenyatta

NextGen Program Leader

Judy Kruger

President & CEO

FALL

2024

WHAT IS THE SANTA MONICA NEXTGEN MENTORSHIP PROGRAM?

Launched in the Fall of 2021, the Santa Monica NextGen Leadership Program is led by the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce Foundation and Santa Monica College to partner students of color with Chamber members who have experience related to the student's field of study and cultural background.

This innovative program matches Santa Monica College students with mentors from the local community, including business owners, entrepreneurs, and industry professionals. Through six weekly 90-minute mentoring sessions, students gain invaluable guidance and insights to expand their professional development and career opportunities. To further strengthen leadership abilities, networking skills, and professional relationships, students complete reflective journal entries after each session. By facilitating meaningful connections with established local leaders, the program aims to empower students, unlock their potential, and equip them with resources to achieve their goals.

Santa Monica College Partners

Chris Baccus

Counseling Faculty
Adelante/Black Collegians

Sherri Bradford

Program Leader
Black Collegians

Destiny Johnson

Career Counselor
Adelante/Black Collegians

Maria Martinez

Program Leader
Adelante

Janet Tercero

Student Services Coordinator
Adelante

Jocelyn Winn

Student Services Coordinator
Black Collegians

Esmeralda Martinez

Career Counselor
Adelante/Black Collegians

FALL 2024 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

OCTOBER 2024 – NOVEMBER 2024

Recruitment

- Interest form sent to SMC Black Collegians and Adelante students
- From more than 70 interest responses, 35 students selected
- 13 Mentors selected from SM Chamber of Commerce members
- Fall 2024 Curriculum developed from student survey
- Programmatic materials developed and Mentor Orientation

NextGen Sessions

- Three 90-minute breakout sessions based on topics
- Townhall meeting focused on student questions
- Graduation Brunch at Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce Office
- Keynote provided by featured Mentor | Andre Jackson
- Student closing with highlights and favorite moments

Program Follow-Up

- NextGen Leadership Certificate sent to graduating students
- Final Survey sent to students to gather feedback on experience
- Findings collected and reported to SMC Foundation Board of Directors
- Final Report Released

NextGen Kick-Off

NextGen Townhall

Graduation Brunch

Breakout Sessions

Cohort Sessions

Program Recruitment

Program Follow-Up

NEXTGEN SESSIONS

Finding Internships and Entry-Level Jobs

Students learned how to leverage online platforms like LinkedIn to identify relevant openings in their field of interest. Through interactive discussions, they gained expertise in crafting customized resumes and interview responses that boost their competitiveness for securing internships and entry-level positions.



Carey Littlefield
Blizzard Entertainment



Chigo Chukwu
Lionsgate



How to Advocate for Yourself in the Workplace

Students learned critical skills for professional self-advocacy and how to confidently communicate their needs and advocate for fair treatment. By the end of the program students gained practical knowledge and experience to navigate workplace dynamics and manage difficult conversations.



Marco Pulido
MP CPA Consulting



Christian Enriquez
Reality Experience Design



Henry Bradley
Blizzard Entertainment

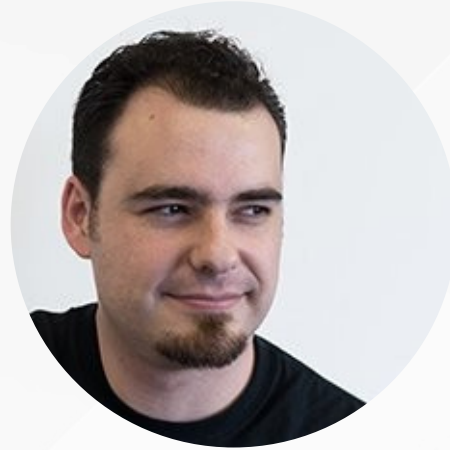


Leadership (Corporate and Individual)

Students were equipped with skills by exploring principles of strategic leadership and decision-making in corporate settings. By the end of the program students were empowered with practical expertise to positively influence and lead with integrity and purpose.



Andre Jackson
Jonathan Club



Roger Garcia
Blizzard Entertainment



Interviewing Do's and Don'ts

Students learned how to thoroughly research companies and positions to craft informed, compelling responses and confidently manage interviews. Additionally, students honed nonverbal communication techniques including eye body language, and professional presentation to optimize their likelihood of receiving job offers.



Pema Choden
Providence Saint John's Health Center



Josiah Clark
Blizzard Entertainment



Interpersonal relationships

Students discussed communication resolution strategies optimized for the workplace, with an emphasis on techniques to effectively foster constructive teamwork and thrive in collaborative settings. By the end of the program students were well-equipped to navigate office dynamics and actively strengthen workplace relationships



Mercedes Burks
Sledgehammer Games



Delana Gbenekama
City of Santa Monica



Networking Tips and Relationship-building

Students learned techniques to establish meaningful connections and harness social media for networking. By the end of the program, students gained the tools and knowledge to build relationships and activate their contacts to foster new connections that support their career aspirations.



Rose Pelikan
Providence Saint John's
Health Center



Keanna Pardassie
Advantage Gold Financial, Inc.



FALL 2024 NEXTGEN



Graduation Brunch



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Andre Jackson,
General Manager
of Beach Club
Operations,
Jonathan Club

COME CELEBRATE IN COMMUNITY!

Saturday, November 16th

11:00a - 1:00p

Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce

2525 Main Street, #103

Santa Monica, CA 90405

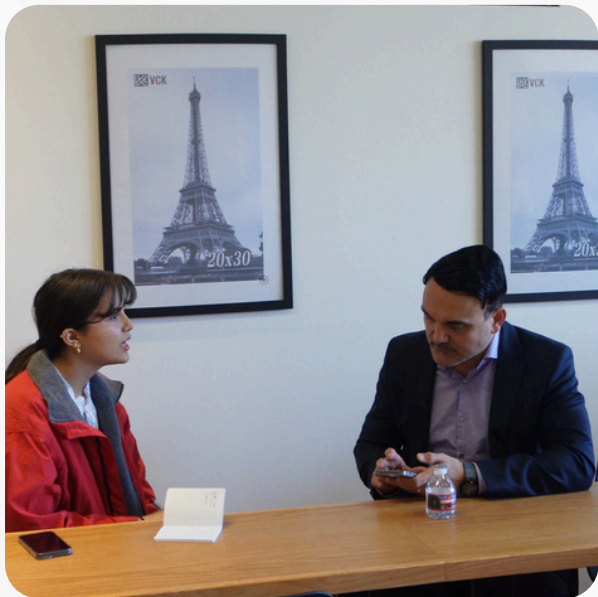
Brunch Provided By

TAVERN
— ON —
MAIN

NEXTGEN GRADUATION

On Saturday November 16th, program participants convened for the third annual NextGen Brunch, hosted at the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce's new office. The NextGen graduation provides the important opportunity for mentors and students to meet in-person for the first time and celebrate the completion of the program in Community.

Thank you to the Chamber for the venue and Tavern on Main for catering!



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

I LEARNED YOU SHOULDN'T BE AFRAID TO PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE AND TO BE CONFIDENT IN WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU BRING TO AN ORGANIZATION.

I LEARNED THAT YOU CAN'T DO EVERYTHING BY YOURSELF, YOU NEED PEOPLE IN YOUR JOURNEY THAT SUPPORT YOU, INSPIRE YOU, MOTIVATE YOU, AND PEOPLE WHO PUSH YOU BECAUSE ONE PERSON CAN'T DO IT ALL.

I LEARNED THAT BEING A LEADER IS NOT ABOUT COMMANDING A ROOM, BUT RATHER BEING A GUIDE FOR YOUR TEAM. ONE MUST KNOW WHEN TO STEP IN AND ASSIST, BUT ALSO LEARN TO LET THE TEAM TAKE CONTROL AND MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON WHAT'S GOING ON.

I LEARNED HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR MYSELF AND MY WORTH ALONG WITH FINDING OUT HOW TO ALIGN THE GAP BETWEEN WHAT A CLIENT NEEDS AND WANTS WITH THE SKILLS I HAVE TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT.

I LEARNED THAT LINKEDIN IS A GREAT AND USEFUL PLATFORM TO FORM CONNECTIONS AND BUILD A NETWORK. NO MATTER WHAT JOB YOU'RE GOING INTO.

I LEARNED THAT SOMETIMES IT'S MORE ABOUT PERSONALITY THAN EXPERIENCE. NOT THAT IT ISN'T IMPORTANT, BUT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE THEY FIND EXCITING AND CAN SEE THE PASSION THEY HAVE FOR THE JOB.

I LEARNED THAT WHENEVER I MAKE MISTAKES, I CAN GROW THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM BY ALLOWING PEOPLE TO GIVE ADVICE ON HOW TO MAKE CHANGES. EVERY EXPERIENCE MUST BE TREATED AS A LESSON FOR YOU TO LEARN FROM AND SHAPE WHO YOU BECOME.

I LEARNED THAT YOU SHOULDN'T ASSUME AN INDUSTRY STANDARD IN TERMS OF CULTURE OR WORK ENVIRONMENT, IT'S MUCH BETTER TO LEARN AND RESEARCH ABOUT THE SPECIFIC PLACE YOU ARE INTERVIEWING FOR; NOT JUST TO GET AHEAD IN THE HIRING FIELD BUT ALSO TO BE SURE IT'S A PLACE YOU WANT TO WORK."

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEXTGEN FALL 2024 GRADUATES!

Abel Flores

Kaylan Anzaldo

Akira Williams

Marjorie Franco

Alicia Lewis

Nallely Garcia Quiroa

Angel Gonzalez-Villeda

Sabrina Korsnes

Angelina Galvan

Samantha Barrera

Bei AchiriMofore

Sandra Deleon

Diana Gonzalez

Sasha Shelton

Edgar Prado

Simone Thomas

Erika Gonzalez

Solano Silvia

Glen Gotoy

SAVE THE DATE

The NextGen Spring 2025 Program will be launching in April!

If you are interested in participating or sponsoring,
please email judy.kruger@smchamber.com to learn more!