

ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

Michigan Face to Face

Alumni Volunteer Guide

INTRODUCTION

As current students and alumni of the University of Michigan, we are all united through our shared experience as Leaders & Best over many decades. The Alumni Association of the University of Michigan seeks to enhance this bond by providing opportunities for you to engage with current students through a variety of avenues. When we get students and alumni into the same room, it's always going to be a win-win scenario: to compensate you for your time, the Program offers you the unique ability to strengthen your connection to the University. At the same time, the invaluable insights and knowledge you share with students ultimately empowers them to fully maximize *life beyond graduation*.

We greatly value the time you have set aside for this program and we strive to make every effort to ensure that the event is enriching and worthwhile. The following guide is intended to provide you with a general outline of Michigan Face to Face program, including information about your role as an *Alumni Connection* and the expectations we have of our student participants. You may notice that some sections have a computer icon next to them (example to the left) – if you are acting as an Alumni Connection for virtual session participants, this icon will indicate information that is specific to online activities.



If this is your first time participating in one of the Association's professional networking events with students, welcome! You'll soon discover that interacting with current students will allow you to *keep your U-M spirit alive*, as you will find yourself re-living your time on campus vicariously through the stories and conversations with its current inhabitants. If you are one of the many returning alumni volunteers, we thank you for your continued involvement in Association programming. The knowledge that our members bestow upon the newest members of the Michigan Family is highly valued and we hope this event will enrich your connection to fellow alumni, the Association, and the U-M Community – we know it will greatly impact the lives of current students.

HOW WILL I BENEFIT AS AN ALUMNI VOLUNTEER?

Our alumni members continue to remain engaged in events where they get to interact with students. Many alumni discover that conversations with current students can produce positive and enriching results in the following aspects:

- It keeps the UM Spirit Alive: learn about the U-M of today and reconnect with the Community
- You'll refine coaching and mentoring skills
- You will develop meaningful connections with current students, fellow alumni and the Alumni Association's staff
- You can expand your own professional network, including students and fellow alumni

HOW DO STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM MY INVOLVEMENT?

You are an invaluable resource for students interested in career exploration. We all know how scary it is to think about the real world, and for this reason, students will value having someone to provide positive advice, encouragement and industry insight. Depending on the interests of the student and the nature of your conversation, your role as an Alumni Connection can be that of:

1. **Motivator:** you express confidence in the student's educational background and encourage the student to try new things.
2. **Supporter:** you maintain open dialogue and provide honest feedback and suggestions
3. **Resource:** You offer advice on navigating the job search, becoming involved in professional associations, what to look for in an entry-level position and how to expand existing professional networks.
4. **Coach:** You help the student identify areas for improvement and then develop action items to assist the student with their journey towards career-readiness.

"It's a great opportunity to talk with interested and motivated students. It takes me out of the mode of thinking about my job as routine, and makes me look at my role with a fresh perspective."

-Face to Face Alumni Volunteer

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The purpose of Michigan Face to Face is to provide an arena for alumni and students to connect and discuss career exploration. In the weeks leading up to the session, we clearly articulate that students who do not spend an adequate amount of time getting ready for their meeting will not receive nearly as much direction and advice compared to those who take the time to prepare for this interaction.

Nearly 70% of all jobs and internships are obtained through networking, and this program creates an environment in which students and alumni can engage in quite interesting and powerful conversations. In essence, networking is all about relationship-building. Students are prohibited from asking you for a job or internship, but rather focus their attention towards gaining insight through the lived experiences of you – a fellow member of the Michigan Family. Such a forum allows you to speak honestly and openly about your professional and academic practices, specifically within the following areas:

1. **Career Advice:** discussing your educational background and the role of educational preparation for the field, identifying current trends/issues, what to look for in an entry-level position
2. **Job Search Strategies:** direction on where to best look for jobs/internships, required qualifications, things students can do now to prepare for a career in the field
3. **Personal Insights:** how to balance personal life with a career, what to expect, what you may have done differently while at UM, dealing with personal/professional challenges, etc.
4. **Networking:** how to establish professional relationships with UM alumni, identifying professional associations and other opportunities to connect with colleagues in the field.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

FOR IN-PERSON ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS:

- Feel free to dress as you would like: there is no dress code; however, in the past, participant clothing has ranged from business attire to jeans. Because our student participants are typically scheduling their session between classes, we do not have a dress code.
- Please Plan to arrive at the Alumni Center (200 Fletcher Street) at least 10 minutes prior to your first meeting.

FOR VIRTUAL SESSION ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS:

Shortly after students register for a session, they will receive an email from the Association confirming their Alumni Connection. At that point, **it is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with you within 5 business days.** You can expect to receive a message with the following information:



- Preferred method of interaction (email, phone, Skype, Google Hangouts, etc.)
- Several meeting times throughout the day that they are available to meet
- Their background, including their major, graduation year, activities/interests, and clubs

WHAT IS NOT EXPECTED OF AN ALUMNI CONNECTION?

- Invitations to apply for a job or internship
- Initiating contact with participants
- Leading and driving the conversation
- Having the answers to *all* questions posed
- The obligation to continue communication after the 30-minute session

“Face to Face is a great chance to network on both ends. I was able to be a resource for these students, but I, too made some connections with students...It’s just a great opportunity to help ease the minds of students who are about to graduate. If I can help ease someone’s mind by giving them some positive advice and encouragement, then that is invaluable to me.”

-Face to Face Alumni Volunteer

STUDENT PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS?

In order to maximize the session, we make it clear to participants that they should act with a professional disposition throughout the program. Not only does this pertain to interacting with you in an appropriate and timely manner during the 30-minute session; rather, we emphasize to participants that they must also prepare for this encounter by critically thinking about what they would like to discuss during the meeting. To have a productive relationship with you, we expect students to complete a few tasks prior to meeting with you. Leading up to the event, Michigan Face to Face participants will be engaged in the following activities:

- *Research*: spending time getting to know you by exploring your professional digital footprint (LinkedIn page, company website, published literature, online bios, etc.).
- *Critical Thinking*: completing worksheets and resources provided by the Association to help formulate thoughtful questions surrounding academic and professional experiences.
- *Developing Professional Dispositions*: Understanding how to act in a professional, respectful, timely and appropriate manner during communication and interaction throughout the duration of correspondence with you and to be appropriate in the requests of alumni (not asking for a job or internship)
-  *If participating in a virtual session*, participants are responsible for making the first contact with alumni and responding to all communication

Above all, we ask participants to possess humility throughout the preparation and interaction with you: they must approach the session with an open mind and be receptive to suggestions, insights and feedback. We know that one of the many reasons Association members continue to engage in our events with students is to give advice to fellow Wolverines, and we encourage students to realize that the feedback you provide is unparalleled.

FINAL TIPS FOR OUR VALUED ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS:

Give Advice. Make sure you are providing your thoughts and feedback instead of directly telling the student what to do. This will ultimately help them develop skills in judgment and decision making.

Maintain the Connection. If you'd like to continue corresponding with your student connection after the meeting, we invite you to do so. As previously mentioned, there is no requirement to maintain contact; however, student and alumni participants in the past have developed mentoring and networking relationships that started through this type of event with the Association.

Be Ready to Learn! Don't forget that Michigan Face to Face is a chance for you to acquire new knowledge as well! Students are the living pulse of the university and can provide you with a first-hand view into U-M today.

Be Encouraging. For many participants, this will be their first professional networking event. Applaud them for their initiative and bravery, and provide optimistic (yet genuine) feedback.

Leverage the Power of Storytelling. Using anecdotes during the conversation will help 'break the ice' and students can certainly learn a lot from your lived experiences as a professional.

Seek Out Common Ground. Find shared experiences between you and your student. Relationships are stronger when you share something in common and students will be more apt to internalize your advice.

Review Our Student Guide. If you'd like to see the types of activities and questions we encourage students to utilize in preparation for the meeting, please feel free to review the [Michigan Face to Face Guide for Student Participants](#).

THE YEAR OF INVOLVEMENT

You've participated in Michigan Face to Face...*Now what?* If you enjoyed the rewarding experience of this program, we invite you to participate in future programming with members of the Association and current students. Over the course of the past year, we have greatly expanded the amount of events with students and we encourage you to become involved in any way possible. We have some really exciting events planned for the academic year and we would love to have you join us!

Hail & Hello

Help Michigan students develop and practice their networking abilities by joining us for a [networking reception](#) at the Alumni Center. You'll have the chance to enjoy the company of fellow alumni while also talking to Michigan students about you and offering feedback about their networking skills.

LEAD Scholars Mentor Program

LEAD Scholar Mentors build a bond over time with a Michigan student from the LEAD Scholars program. As a [LEAD Scholars Mentor](#), you can share your unique U-M experience and the details of your career and life path since earning your degree. Spend time developing a personal and professional relationship and help them navigate campus and beyond.

ADDITIONAL FACE TO FACE SESSIONS

If you'd like to participate in future Michigan Face to Face sessions, please let us know!

Virtual Sessions

Can't make it to Ann Arbor? We offer virtual sessions too, so you can network with Michigan students and young alumni anywhere in the world. Shortly after participants register, they will contact you and arrange a time to meet with you online (using Skype, Hangouts, gChat, etc.). The following months have been designated for virtual conversations with students:

October
November
February
March
May (also open to new graduates)

In-Person Sessions

Staff from the Association transform the Founder's Room at the Alumni Center into a networking hub, and you'll get to interact with current students throughout a full day. The following months have been designated for in-person conversations with students:

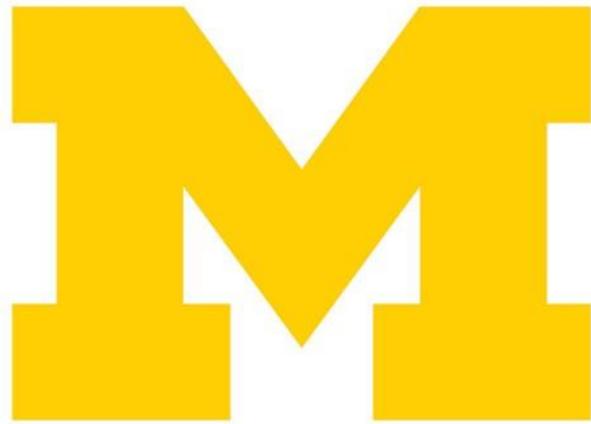
October
November
January
February
April

STAY CONNECTED!

If you haven't already done so, please complete our [online volunteer form](#). Once submitted, we will be able to keep you in the know about opportunities to engage with students in future professional focused and networking programs – Michigan Face to Face and Hail & Hello – as they are announced.

Questions?! We welcome you to contact a member of our staff if we can help you at any time throughout the Program. Our goal is to make this an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all students and alumni volunteers.

alumniCareerservices@umich.edu



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

For additional information and dates, please contact us or visit us online:

www.alumni.umich.edu/give | alumnicareerservices@umich.edu

Michigan Face to Face is a service provided by the Alumni Association of the University of Michigan to students and alumni of the university. While the Alumni Association strives to identify relevant and high quality professionals to provide career advice, we cannot be responsible for screening or evaluating the quality of any advice provided by alumni participants.