Mentoring Plan for BlackGirlsHack

December 18, 2020

Introduction

BlackGirlsHack was started to help ease the barriers for entry for Black women and girls into Cyber Security. BlackGirlsHack Foundation (BGH Foundation) is a registered non-profit organization in the state of Virginia that is waiting on IRS decisioning on our 501c3 application, filed in November 2020. 501c3 designation will allow BGH Foundation to be able to receive grant money and provide funding both for our services and our operations. BGH Foundation was created because there existed several troubling barriers to entry that because of institutional and systemic biases made it more difficult for women and specifically women of color to get into the field. Some of those barriers included a lack of representation in the cyber field, the high cost of certifications and their associated training, requiring a CISSP (a certification that requires a minimum of 5 years of on-the-job experience) for entry level jobs, the high cost of setting up or participating in cloud lab environments, and the high resource cost of operating a home virtual lab. There is a lack of diversity and representation not only in the field but in its leadership, and in executive suites. Each of these barriers represents an area of need which provides the outline for BGH Foundation's organizational goals. BGH Foundation's plan for its future operations is to provide training and low cost and free resources to provide Black women with a network of people where they can practice their cyber related skills, study for certifications, gain experience, mentoring, and get subsidies to help reduce the cost of cyber certifications. BGH Foundation offers cyber skills training through a wide variety of its programming including, Security+ and Certified Ethical Hacking training programs and study groups, CEH tools and lab training, Friday Night Labs skills workshops to help provide hands on training, and STEM outreach programs to help expose K-6, secondary and high school students to careers in cyber. Additionally, through the provision of mentoring and resume and LinkedIn review programs, BGH Foundations hopes to provide well rounded and prepared members of the future of Cybersecurity.

Purpose

The purpose of this mentoring plan is to outline an overall approach to ensure that mentees and mentors develop a mutual understanding of expectations from the beginning of their relationship. It is our hope that the mentoring program will provide for the mentees, the direction, insight, and wisdom necessary to ease entry into the cybersecurity field.

Communication

Mentors will communicate to their mentees through their personal email. Mentors are not expected to sign Non-Disclosure agreements but are expected to keep the confidence of their mentees and to keep their information confidential.

Expectations

It is expected that each mentee/mentor pair will:

- Establish communication expectations (Text/Phone/Email)

- Identify goals for the mentoring relationship
- Communicate changes to planned meetings
- Outline skill areas and areas for improvement
- Maintain communication

Mentees are expected to:

- Meet on a regular basis and maintain frequent communication
- Review progress as you work towards your goals
- Maintain an open and honest dialog and ask direct questions
- Maintain confidentiality of the mentor/mentee relationship
- Provide mentor with short and long term goal expectations

Mentors are expected to:

- Meet on a regular basis and maintain frequent communication
- Provide honest feedback for mentee progress
- Provide guidance, encouragement and guidance
- Track mentee progress and help them work towards their identified goals
- Not require mentees purchase or provide financial compensation for assistance
- Maintain confidentiality of the mentor/mentee relationship

Guidelines

- Take the time to get to know each other before you begin working together
- If at anytime you feel you may not be a good fit, please notify the mentor coordinator of your concerns so a more appropriate fit can be found
- Share only information you are comfortable sharing
- Discuss desired outcomes for the relationship
- Discuss whether a short (situational) or long-term relationship is desired
- Identify responsibilities and roles for any research that will be performed
- Specify how often you would like to meet and what types of communication are acceptable (time/method/etc)
- Make a list of skills the mentee was to work on and discuss what skills might be important for long- and short-term goal achievement