



Healthcare Leadership Network *of the Delaware Valley*

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? BE A MENTOR!

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Have you ever thought about becoming a Mentor? Whether officially or unofficially, or whether or not we even realized it, all of us have had Mentors somewhere along the line as our careers progressed. It may have been that healthcare executive who agreed to take you on as a summer Resident or post-graduate Fellow. It may have been that professional colleague who took you under his or her wing in your first job and "taught you the ropes". Or it may simply have been that Director, Vice President, or CEO who seemed to be just a little harder on you than some others, but was still always there for you when you needed guidance or advice. Whomever it may have been, we've all had them - those individuals with a little more experience who always seemed to care enough to help us when we asked for it, give us a shoulder when we needed it, or give us a career break when we earned it.

Personally, I've had two individuals in my life who were significantly instrumental in all those areas, and helped me to mold my administrative style in a way that made the best use of my natural skills that worked well for me throughout my career. I spent the first twenty-six years of my forty-one total years in healthcare management working for and with each of them before breaking away to take the reins of my own healthcare system. What I learned from them over the years was totally immeasurable, yet absolutely invaluable. What these two veteran healthcare leaders taught me could never have been learned from any textbook. Without their personal guidance it would have taken me years to learn what I did on my own. In short, they taught me how to be a total healthcare leader, and whatever success I've enjoyed over the years, I clearly owe in great part to them and the valuable lessons they taught me.

Do you ever wonder why these successful and experienced men and women do this? I believe it all has to do with that old adage of paying it forward, or simply giving back. Two such leaders helped me which, in turn, instilled in me a strong desire to help others - essentially to give back to others what had been given to me. To that end, I've mentored, both officially and unofficially, a number of young healthcare professionals, graduate students, and even a few medical students along the way. As a recently retired CEO, I'm still sharing my years of experience by mentoring a first-year graduate student at my alma mater, and two young

healthcare professionals through the Mentorship Committee of the Healthcare Leadership Network of the Delaware Valley.

Why do I do it? Besides the desire to give something back and repay some of what I've been given, the internal rewards are simply incredible. It's so heartwarming to hear a young professional tell you how much he or she appreciates your time and expertise, or how much your advice helped them through a certain issue, or see a light come on in a graduate student's eyes as they finally understand a particularly difficult concept that you've explained using real-life examples. In addition to all that, our experiences as veteran healthcare leaders are invaluable to these young professionals, and they're like sponges, looking to absorb all they possibly can. In short, it's hard to put into words the heartfelt gratification you feel at the end of the day that by giving a little of your time you've made a real difference in the life of a young, up-and-coming leader.

So, have I convinced you to take that next step? Would you like to share those same feelings of giving back and making a difference? If so, the HLNDV Mentorship Committee needs you! We are currently looking for experienced leaders right now to meet the requests of some of our own young professionals. So if you'd like to help, please click on the link below to access our brief Mentor application form on our HLNDV website to get started in our Mentorship Program.

Please click here: <http://hlndv.ache.org/career-development/mentorship-program/>