

Blog - March 2021

ACMAPS Mature Student Mentors: Supporting you at every step!

“It’s like having your very own cheer squad, giving you tips and tricks or just that nudge you needed to keep you moving” - Shani (Mature Student Peer Mentor)

Whether you have already used the ACPMAPS’ Peer Mentor Program, have been considering it or have not previously come across it, then read on!

ACMAPS’ Peer Mentoring Program allows specially trained upper-year students to help you navigate through personal and academic issues of your YU journey. Through their experience and desire to assist their peers, they aim to connect you to resources and services or simply lend an ear when you need it the most.

We all know March is a busy month and perhaps, this year, it feels like the time is going even faster with online delivery of courses. All students are feeling higher levels of stress, due to multiple demands of assignments and exams. No doubt many mature students have the added pressure of work, childcare, and challenges of planning and navigating their academic paths. Well, the good news is that help is on hand from ACPMAPS’ very own Mature Student Peer Mentors!



Alexandra Stone – Mature Student Peer Mentor

So, who are the Mature Student Peer Mentors?

I managed to catch up with three of the Mature Student Peer Mentors and got to ask them some questions about their motivations, experiences and what they have to offer!

Firstly, please meet **Alexandra** who is a second-year Sociology transfer student and has found being back at university as a mature student to be a different and sometimes challenging experience which has motivated her to help others going through the same thing.

Shani is a third-year, part-time transfer student majoring in Psychology who is also a parent to two young boys. She understands the challenges of wearing so many different hats and was fortunate to have a positive experience in orientating through the start of the course with the help of another Peer Mentor - **Katalin**. She says her motivation for becoming a mentor was “to provide the same level of support, encouragement and direction” that she received.



Shani Randhawa – Mature Student Peer Mentor



Katalin Halasz – Mature Student Peer Mentor

Being a part-time Psychology student who will be graduating this year, **Katalin** is a seasoned professional when it comes to Peer Mentoring, having been doing it for five years. Enriched by the challenges she faced at the start of her academic journey including: being a new immigrant; learning English as a second language; being a mature student; a parent and working part-time, Katalin became a mentor to give back and have the satisfaction of knowing that others won't make the same mistakes.

I am not sure if I need a Peer Mentor.

Most people do not consider seeking advice from a mentor because they feel that it is only needed when they have a specific question or problem. “Too often we think we need to do everything ourselves and asking for help is a sign of weakness” says Shani. However, this is the opposite of what should be happening. “Consider us to be another tool in your toolkit that you can access when the need arises”. Building a connection with a mentor now will give you comfort of knowing what is available should you need advice in the future. Having had numerous mentors throughout her life, Shani says, “Mentors are here to be your support and sense of community and sometimes knowing you are not alone can make a world of a difference!” Katalin says that students may not be signing up to be mentored because they feel intimidated or afraid, which should not be the case at all since you never know where the conversation with your mentor might take you or what lightbulbs it may set off!

Since the switch to online learning, the environment has been totally different to in-person campus experience. Alexandra finds that starting back at university in this environment has given her the wisdom and experience to be able to help not only with practical ins and outs, but also with understanding of feelings such as isolation. I know for me, even talking about the online learning experience with her, made me validate my feelings and realise that I am not the only one going through this!



Moe Tavakoli – Mature Student Peer Mentor

Do I need to make an appointment to see a Mentor?

Yes, you can absolutely book an appointment to see the Mature Student Mentors during their scheduled hours. Simply click [here](#) or email acmaps@yorku.ca for an updated schedule (as this may change throughout the year).

You may also want to attend one of the regular [Café Hours](#) organised by ACMAPS. Peer mentors take turns to host the Café Hours and you can also meet other mature students.

Alexandra says she loves being involved in the mature student community events such as Café Hour because it is a nice opportunity to just come, chat, see people's faces (because we don't get to see them on campus at the moment). So, even if you don't have a query, do stop by.

What next?

I hope that you now have a better idea of what to expect from these dedicated and compassionate individuals through the Mature Student Peer Mentor program. Perhaps you are even keen to explore becoming a peer mentor yourself - after all, there is always a need for new mentors with different experiences and knowledge! Connect with us via email, Facebook or Twitter as well as our [events page](#) for the most current event calendar.

Wishing you a successful and productive end of term!

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