

PMIWDC Mentoring Program Launches 2026 Cohort

The PMIWDC Mentor–Protégé Program officially launched its 2026 cohort on April 9, 2026, with an in-person Kick-Off Meeting attended by mentors, protégés, and program leadership. Sponsored by PMIWDC Professional Development, the program continues to be one of the Chapter’s longest running and most impactful professional development offerings.

Opening remarks were provided by Vishal Khokha, Vice President of Professional Development, who emphasized the value of mentoring as a catalyst for professional growth, leadership development, and member engagement. The Kick-Off Meeting was led by Dominique Clayton (Program Coordinator) and Michelle Boesenberg (AVP Mentor–Protégé Program) who guided participants through the program’s objectives, structure, and expectations.

The 2026 cohort consists of 13 mentor–protégé pairs, supported by two coordination teams lead by Program Coordinators, Dominique Clayton and Deborah Gawrylowicz. Mentors and protégés were formally introduced and given an overview of the program syllabus, schedule, and required deliverables. Participants reviewed mentor and protégé roles and responsibilities, common challenges in mentoring relationships, and practical tips for building trust, maintaining accountability, and ensuring productive conversations. Recommended reading materials and mentoring resources were shared to support participants throughout the program.

Program Structure and Commitment

The PMIWDC Mentor–Protégé Program is designed to foster meaningful, goal-driven relationships. Participants mutually establish development goals and create a Mentoring Partnership Agreement and Learning Action Plan to translate those goals into achievable actions.

Mentor–protégé pairs commit to meeting at least two hours per month, with additional learning activities and reflections documented through Monthly Activity Reports. In addition to one-on-one meetings, four structured group sessions are held throughout the program cycle: the Kick-off, two virtual Check-In meetings, and a Lesson Learned Session at the conclusion of the program.

The program runs from April through October 2026 and follows a proven mentoring life cycle consisting of Preparation, Agreement, Relationship, and Closure stages.

Insights and Shared Experience

A highlight of the Kick-Off Meeting was a “New Mentee Experience” segment delivered by Digant Shah, a new mentor for 2026 who participated in the 2025 cohort as a protégé. Digant shared insights from a protégé’s perspective and reinforced the importance of active participation and open communication.

Chapter President and Chair Tareka Wheeler spoke to the group about how the Mentor-Protégé Program exemplifies her three Es – leadership pillars of Engage, Empower, and Educate. She highlighted the importance of mentorship, and participants' time and participation dedicated to the program.

The evening concluded with closing thoughts emphasizing that successful mentoring relationships thrive when protégés take ownership of their development, and mentors serve as guides and facilitators rather than solution-providers.

Looking Ahead

The next group session, Check-In Meeting #1, will take place on June 11, 2026, where mentor-protégé pairs will report on early accomplishments and participate in a session featuring guest speaker John Pross.

With strong participation and dedicated leadership, the 2026 PMIWDC Mentor-Protégé Program is well positioned to deliver another successful year of professional growth, collaboration, and lasting connections.

