



ASCEND

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Kick-Off Session

April 7, 2026

TODAY'S AGENDA

- 1 ASCEND Objectives & Benefits
- 2 Program Overview & Schedule
- 3 ASCEND Addresses Common Challenges
- 4 Group Session Calendar
- 5 Breakout Session
- 6 Next Steps & Q&A

PSA ASCEND

2026

Driven • Reliable • Caring

MEET PIERCING STRATEGIES



Arika P. Williams, JD
CEO & Founder



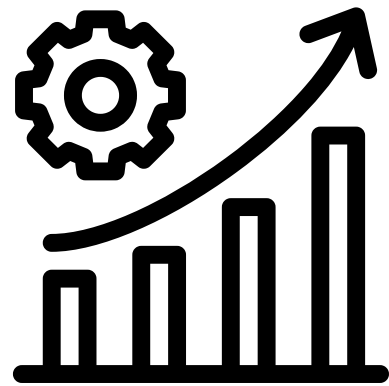
Jahnavi Brenner, PCC, ELI-MP
Leadership Consultant
& Executive Coach



Barbara Johnson
Client Success Leader

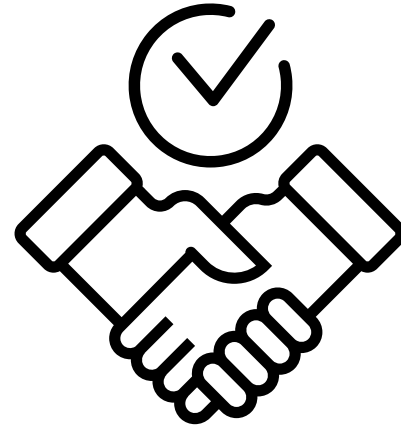
HOW THE ASCEND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM EMBODIES THE PSA WAY

DRIVEN



Encourages proactive personal and career development.

RELIABLE



Builds trustworthy relationships and a dependable support system.

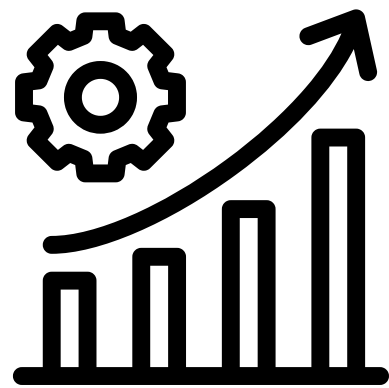
CARING



Fosters a culture of mutual support and growth.

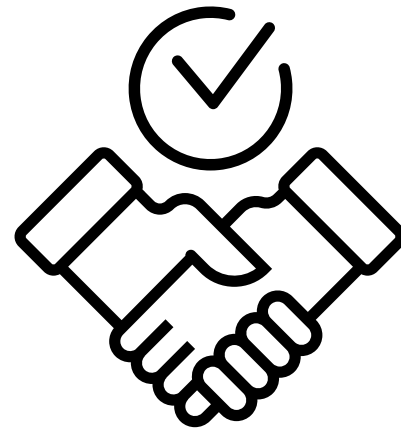
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ASCEND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM GOALS

- Offer opportunities for professional development.
- Foster a supportive environment that promotes both personal and career growth.
- Establish mentorship relationships aimed at addressing specific leadership gaps and developing key skills.



"The guidance received from a mentor is often the most significant factor in achieving professional success."



WHAT IS A **MENTOR?**

An individual who has experience and understanding of the organization's formal and informal structure, procedures, and culture, and who **can provide insight, guidance, and development resources to a mentee**. Together, they discover learning opportunities within and outside their current work. Mentors **stimulate others through ideas and information** that can lead to personal and professional growth.



MENTORING PRODUCES RESULTS

Successful professionals consistently report that it was the **guidance received from a mentor that made the most significant difference in achieving success** in their careers.



BENEFITS OF MENTORING **MENTEES BENEFIT BY:**

- Tapping the **wisdom, insights** and experience of the mentor.
- Receiving **encouragement, support, and affirmation** from the mentor.
- Having a **safe environment** to explore new ideas and creative solutions, and to take risks.
- Gaining **valuable insights about formal/informal relationships** and organizational priorities.
- **Building confidence** to challenge themselves to reach for new goals.
- Knowing they are **valued** by the organization.



BENEFITS OF MENTORING

MENTORS BENEFIT BY:

- **Learning** by teaching.
- Receiving **recognition** for their legacy of **personal knowledge, insight**, and experience.
- Exploring their own standards, philosophies, relationships, awareness, and expertise.
- Sharing in the **growth of the mentee**.
- Gaining **higher visibility** within the organization and potential for career enhancement.



OVERVIEW ASCEND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

April–November (8 Month Program)

Mentor/Mentee Matched by Program (4/10), Intro Calls (4/13–4/21)

Focus on Leadership Soft Skills — 2/3 Skills + 1 Goal

4 Video Training Sessions (April, June, August, October)

Monthly Meeting Agendas & Tip Sheets

Monthly Office Hours with the Piercing Strategies Team

H.U.M.A.N. FIRST™ Leadership Lab, Midpoint Session & Closing Session

8

MONTHS

April through November

Up to 20 mentor/mentee pairs

ASCEND ADDRESSES COMMON MENTORSHIP CHALLENGES



"I don't know what to talk about"

Monthly guided agendas and tip sheets give every meeting a clear starting point



"I feel intimidated to engage"

Facilitated intro sessions and structured breakouts ease pairs into the relationship



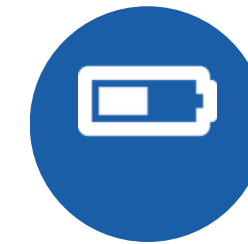
"I'm unclear on my role and responsibilities"

Mentor and Mentee Handbooks outline expectations from day one



"We don't have a clear goal"

Goal-setting process focuses each pair on 2–3 skills + 1 defined goal



"We lost momentum over time"

Monthly office hours, checkpoints, and training modules keep pairs on track

2026 GROUP SESSION CALENDAR

#	Date	Session	Attendees
1	Tue, Apr 7	Program Kick-Off	All
2	Wed, Apr 29	H.U.M.A.N. First™ Leadership Lab	All
3	Thu, Jun 25	Lab 1: Creating a Culture of Feedback	Mentees
4	Thu, Jul 23	Midpoint Session	All
5	Thu, Aug 20	Lab 2: Leader as Coach	Mentees
6	Thu, Sep 10 & 17	Peer Problem-Solving Sessions	Mentees (Pick 1)
7	Wed, Nov 19	Closing Session & Graduation	All

 All Mentors & Mentees

 Mentees Only

All sessions 10–11am EST

MENTEE 360 ASSESSMENT & TRAINING TOPICS

360 ASSESSMENT

April 16 | 360 Overview (10–10:30am EST)

April 23 | Deadline to submit raters

April 24 - May 8 | 360 Questionnaires open

May 11 - 22 | Individual Debriefs

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Creating a Culture of Feedback Workshop
- Leader as a Coach Workshop
- Peer Problem-Solving Session

Monthly Office Hours

VIDEO TRAINING MODULES

APR

Maximizing Your Mentor Relationship

JUN

Building a Collaborative Relationship

SEP

How to Overcome Common Mentoring Challenges

OCT

Maintaining Momentum Throughout the Mentor Relationship

Mentees: Monthly
1:30–2:00pm EST
Zoom link in your calendar

MENTOR TRAINING TOPICS

VIDEO TRAINING MODULES

APR Effectively Developing Your Mentee

MAY Best Practices for Crucial Mentoring Conversations

JUL How to Overcome Common Mentoring Challenges

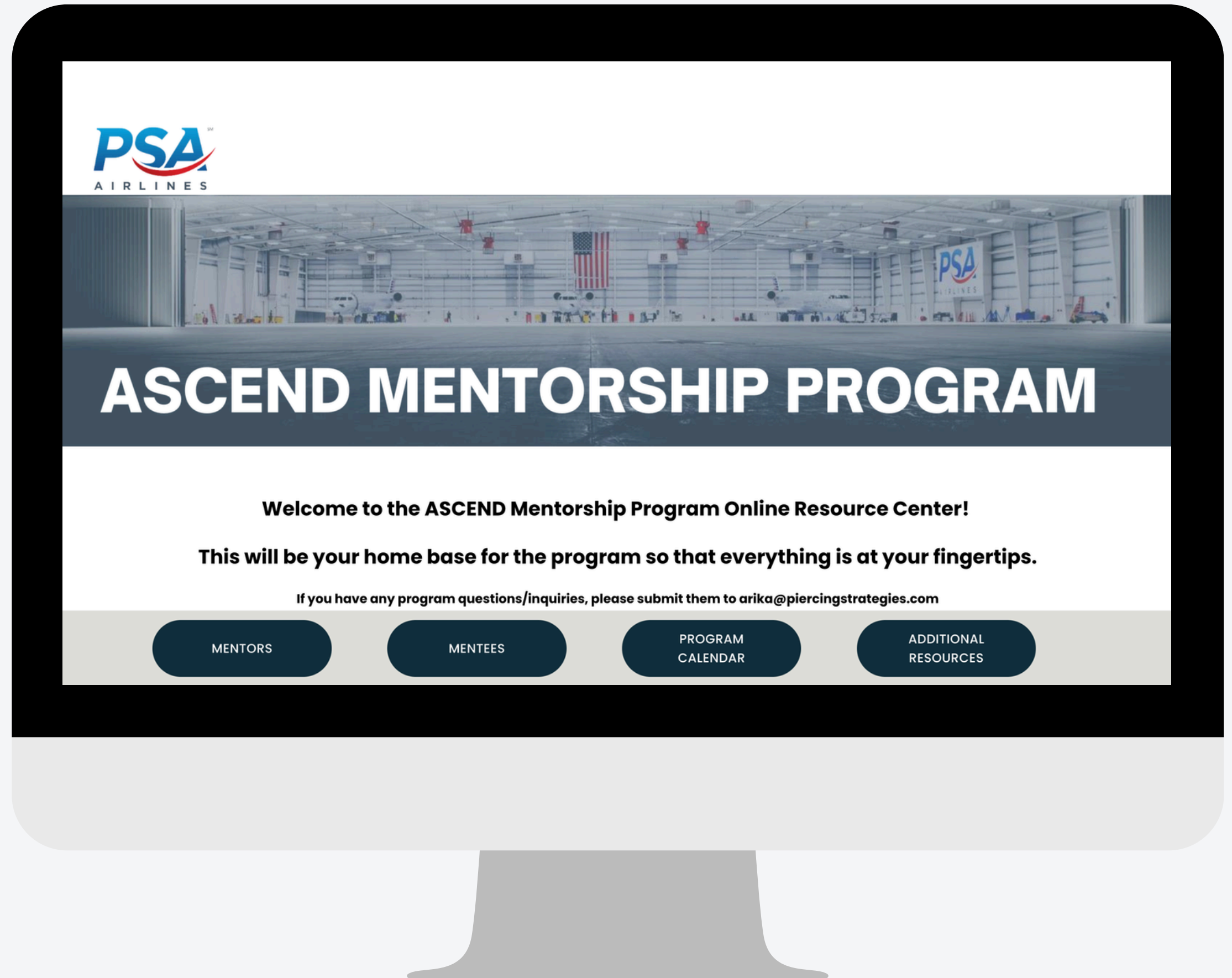
AUG Maintaining Momentum Throughout the Mentor Relationship

Monthly Office Hours

Mentors: Monthly
1:00–1:30pm EST

Zoom link in your calendar

ASCEND
MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM
ONLINE HUB



www.piercingstrategies.com/psaascend

BREAKOUT

SESSION — 10 MINUTES

- 1 Briefly introduce yourself
- 2 What are your expectations for the program?
- 3 How can we embody being driven, reliable, and caring in our mentorship interactions?

Driven

Proactive
personal growth

Reliable

Dependable
& trustworthy

Caring

Mutual
support & empathy

Share.
Connect.
Inspire.

10 minutes

NEXT STEPS — APRIL

CHECK YOUR INBOX

Watch for your pairing announcement from Piercing Strategies (by Apr 10)

MEET YOUR PARTNER

Facilitated intro calls: Apr 13–21
Piercing Strategies will coordinate

MENTEES: 360 ASSESSMENT

360 Overview: April 16
Submit raters by April 23

VISIT THE ONLINE HUB

Review your calendar & handbook
Watch Training Module #1
piercingstrategies.com/psa/ascend

ATTEND H.U.M.A.N. First™ Leadership Lab

April 29
10-11am EST



ASCEND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

THANK YOU



Driven



Reliable



Caring