

The Monthly Mentor

Creating a Culture of Members Helping Members



As we reach the midpoint of this year's Mentor Year Program, it's a natural moment to pause and reflect — not only on what you've done so far, but on what may have subtly shifted along the way. **Mid-year often arrives quietly, yet it can bring meaningful changes: new perspectives, greater confidence, or a deeper understanding of your role within this profession.**

Mentorship has a way of working beneath the surface. **The impact isn't always found in a single conversation, but in how our thinking evolves over time — how we listen more intentionally, ask more thoughtful questions, or feel less alone as we navigate complex professional moments.** Whether you are mentoring, being mentored, or doing a bit of both, your engagement contributes to that growth.

What makes MYP especially powerful is that individual moments of reflection don't stop with us. They ripple outward — strengthening our practice, our teams, and ultimately the students and families we support. **Each connection within the MYP adds to a broader culture of collaboration, care, and shared learning across our community.**

This time of year brings real demands, which is precisely why mentorship matters. **If you haven't revisited your goals from the start of the program, now is a good moment to reflect: what has been most valuable, and what support would be most helpful in the months ahead?**

There is still time to deepen your mentoring connection and make the most of the program. As we move into the second half of the year, we **encourage you to continue showing up with curiosity and generosity — both for one another and for yourselves.** Even small moments of connection can have a lasting impact.

Thank you for the time, thoughtfulness, and care you bring to the Mentor Year Program. **We're grateful to be part of this community with you and look forward to staying on the journey together.**

Malissa Takacs
MYP Outgoing Chair

Miss the mid-yeaer check-in meeting?
Check your email to get the recap!

East Asia, Southeast Asia, & Oceania Regional Institute

April 9-11, 2026

[Register Here](#)

Apply for the [International ACAC Counselor Bus Tour](#)
[Apps due by Feb 13 2026](#)

PODCAST:

["Teaching in Higher Ed"](#)
with Bonni Stachowiak

["Academic-Ally Podcast"](#)
(by students for students)
with ACS International
Singapore

READ:

[The Signal Solution: How Smart Colleges Stop Chasing Applications and Start Converting Students](#)
by Ken Anselment

[Raising Mentally Strong Kids](#)
by Daniel G. Amen, MD & Charles Fay PhD

Save the Date

June 3rd, 2026

All Group

(last ZOOM of the year)

9:00 am Eastern Standard Time (NYC), 3:00 pm CEST, 9:00 pm SG

MENTOR/MENTEE SPOTLIGHT



Mentee: Taylor Hausburg, Upper School Counselor, Lycée International de Saint-Germain-en-Laye (American Section)

Mentor: Matthew Akitani, High School Counsellor, International School of Brussels

Matthew: It was a lovely sunny afternoon when the participants in the 2025 European Regional Conference wandered down to the river for a scenic tour of Prague. By luck, there was a seat next to Taylor that I happily took. We started talking about all the ins and outs of first experiences working in the European context (I made this same transition just 2 years prior from Japan) and quickly bonded over our mutual love of French. Having been a mentor in 2023-2024, I suggested that Taylor look into participating in the Mentor Year Program not knowing that I would even apply to be a mentor at that point as I was going to be joining a new school in the fall. I'm so glad I applied (and that Taylor applied, too!). The MYP team worked its magic and matched us!

It has been such a pleasure learning alongside Taylor. ***Mentors learn so much from our mentees!***

This relationship has truly helped me to better verbalize some of the processes I have used for years and how to make them make sense to another counsellor.

Taylor: By the time I moved to France in 2022, I had spent more than a decade working in education. While I had worked in university admissions—as an Admissions Officer at Duke University, an alumni interviewer, and an independent counselor—it was only ever in the US context. So when I stepped into my current role in 2024—supporting students from more than 60 nationalities who go on to study in Canada, the UK, France, the Netherlands, and China (to name only a few post-graduation destinations)—I had a lot to learn, and fast! I joined IACAC and attended the European Regional Conference eager to make connections, soak up wisdom, and gather resources. **When I met Matthew and heard about MYP, it sounded like a perfect fit, and I only hoped that I would be accepted and paired with someone as experienced, supportive, and fun as them.**

Since then, our conversations have focused on how to thoughtfully structure a university counseling program in an international school setting. This has included clarifying and communicating my role as a counselor, applying the MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support) framework to deliver university-related guidance in a strategic and age-appropriate way, and integrating digital platforms such as Unifrog across both career exploration and the university application process. Along the way, we've also spent time leaning into the social-emotional side of our work—discussing how best to support students in moments of uncertainty and stress—while expanding my understanding of global university systems and facilitating connections with admissions offices.



Taylor in Prague

Looking ahead, we're hoping to meet up in person again soon—after all, Brussels is only a short train ride from Paris!

Matthew, also in Prague, just before meeting Taylor!



**A warm message from: Péter Árvai, University of Pécs,
Vice President of Global Affairs, International ACAC**

Hi everyone, and greetings from the University of Pécs in Hungary!



Among the sea of "fake" quotes often attributed to Winston Churchill, there is one that has always resonated deeply with me: "I am always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught."

To me, that is the true essence of mentoring—the art of learning without the rigid feeling of being "taught." If I possess any specific talent, it is my uncanny ability to surround myself with kind, wise, and generous individuals who support my never-ending learning curve. There is no better example of this than International ACAC, a community of 4,000 professionals who truly believe in lifting one another up.

When I first saw the application for the Mentor Year Program (MYP), I submitted it without a second thought. I knew it would be significant; I knew it would open windows of opportunity and offer fresh perspectives. However, I could never have anticipated the profound impact the MYP would have on my personal and professional development.

I was incredibly fortunate to be paired with the amazing Carolyn Barr from Leiden University, who is undeniably one of the most respected leaders in our industry. While our sessions were filled with practical breakthroughs—including a complete redesign of our Counselor Fly-In program and deep dives into international recruitment strategy—the true value went far beyond the technical.

Above all, Carolyn listened. She held space for me to vent about every challenge, obstacle, and professional "whine" I brought to the table. She met my stress with a calm, understanding presence and a sense of humor that made every conversation a joy. She didn't just give me answers; she gave me the confidence to find them myself.

Ultimately, my time in the MYP confirmed a vital truth: success in our field isn't just about strategy or data. It's about the ability to talk to everyone, listen to everyone, and find the fun in the process.



EVENTS & LINKS

- [**NACAC - Continuing Education and PD Events**](#)
- [**International ACAC EVENTS CALENDAR**](#)
- [**International ACAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE INFO**](#)
- [**International ACAC Facebook Group**](#)

If you and your mentee/mentor would like to be featured in an upcoming MYP newsletter, please email: mentoryearprogram@internationalacac.org