

CASE STUDY

A STRONG PROFESSIONAL NETWORK, CAREER-READY GRADUATES: GEORGETOWN'S PLATFORM FOR FACILITATING STUDENT-ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Founded in 1881, Georgetown University Alumni Association's (GUAA) mission is to generate goodwill and support for the university, and to foster a lifelong connection among alumni, their alma mater, and the global Georgetown community. To further this goal, GUAA launched Hoya Gateway, a student-alumni networking program that connects students and alumni for one-to-one career-related conversations.

AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM

GUAA created a flash-mentoring program that differs from traditional mentoring because it encourages multiple one-time meetings instead of more typical long-term relationships. It provides a platform for connections that encourages organic relationships while providing every student with opportunities for meaningful interactions with alumni before graduating.

Currently, the Hoya Gateway program includes several types of meetings, including mock interviews, informational interviews, resume reviews, and job shadowing, with more opportunities planned for the future. In these meetings, students receive personal advice and guidance to help them explore future career paths, learn about different industries, and begin establishing their professional networks.



AWARD WINNING



STUDENT-ALUMNI NETWORKING PROGRAM



2250+
PARTICIPANTS



5 CITIES

4 KEY ACTIVITIES



MOCK
INTERVIEWS



JOB
SHADOWING



RESUME
REVIEWS



INFORMATIONAL
INTERVIEWS

100%
OF ALUMNI
WOULD RECOMMEND
THIS PROGRAM



For GUAA, the program also provides an opportunity for alumni to stay connected by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Bridget Holmes, the Senior Director of Career Initiatives at Georgetown University, said, "We want students to understand the real world and create a professional network before they leave campus. The Hoya Gateway program facilitates this effort and provides an easy, scalable way to make connections between students and alumni. We hope to shift the culture of our student body to help them understand how important a professional network is."

Currently, GUAA has launched Hoya Gateway in five cities with large populations of Georgetown alumni and has recruited alumni volunteers (flash mentors) in nine key industries:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Entertainment & Media | 6. HR & Executive search |
| 2. Entrepreneurship | 7. Law |
| 3. Finance | 8. Nonprofit |
| 4. Government | 9. Technology |
| 5. Health & Medicine | |

Holmes explained, "We launched in these specific areas to create a strategy that would best benefit students and alumni. If we didn't have the student demand for a particular industry, we didn't want to create mismatched expectations on the part of the alumni volunteers."

To meet the ambitious goals of the program, GUAA needed a program that would:

1. Be customizable, scalable, volunteer driven, and self-directed
2. Easily produce hundreds of connections in cities across the country
3. Create easy-to-report results to show program stakeholders

With limited staff and budget, GUAA determined that manual matching, spreadsheets, and reporting would not be sufficient. They would need a technology platform, and it would be a critical piece to the success of the program.



HOYA GATEWAY

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

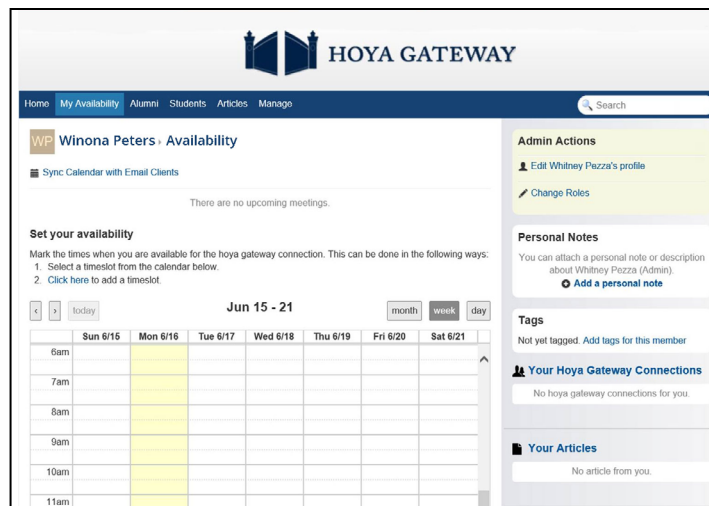
hoyagateway.georgetown.edu

THE CHRONUS MENTOR SOLUTION

GUAA tested multiple technology options during the three-year pilot phase. All of them missed the mark. Holmes explained, “At first we implemented and used a different program, but it was cumbersome and wasn’t as powerful as we wanted. With Chronus Mentor, we liked that it allowed us to create a program that could scale as we did. We also liked that Chronus founders came from Oracle and Microsoft, and thought the history of the company was solid. For us, the flexibility of the platform and the technical reputation of the team led us to subscribe.”

A SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION

Once GUAA decided to sign up with Chronus Mentor, the Chronus implementation team got to work. As with any Chronus customer, there were many customization decisions to be determined beforehand, such as alumni-student pairing methods, relationship workflows, and reporting metrics. Whitney Pezza, Associate Director of Alumni Career Services, said, “Because our program is so specific, we had a lot of specialized development requests.” For example, GUAA wanted to make their program manageable for even their busiest CEOs, so Chronus provided a feature that allowed alumni to set limits on the number of meeting requests they receive per month, quarter, or year.



Online calendar option

Chronus also provided an online calendar option that alumni use to highlight days and times that are available to them weekly, biweekly, or monthly. This allows students to take initiative in finding alumni and setting up meetings at acceptable times for both parties. In addition, Chronus customized the back end for GUAA with the ability to embed video and social media feeds.

What GUAA liked best about the Chronus program, however, is the superior matching function that uses a complex set of data to determine compatible matches.

SOLUTIONS PROVIDED

Software:

- ✓ Chronus Mentor

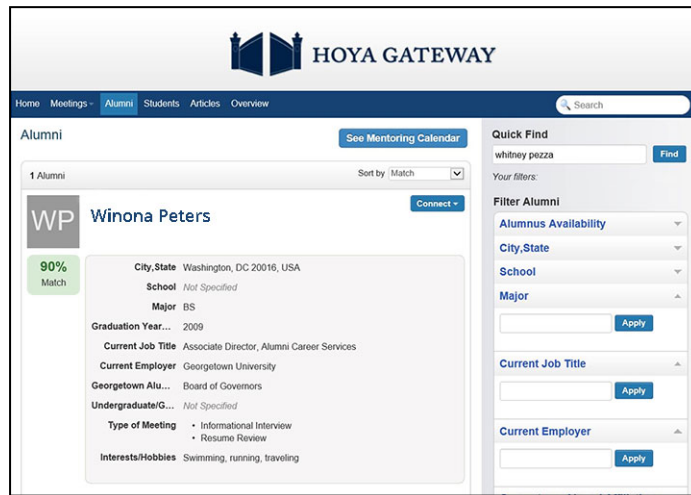
Services offered:

- ✓ Branded user interface (UI) consistent with GUAA branding
- ✓ Online calendaring option
- ✓ Meeting capacity feature
- ✓ Meeting request feature
- ✓ Email-driven program option

Features most appreciated:

- ✓ Flash-mentoring workflow
- ✓ “Browse for alumni” algorithm
- ✓ Ability for the program to scale in size and across geographies
- ✓ Ability to import information from LinkedIn

Pezza said, “Our favorite feature is the algorithm that shows which alumni may be the best match for the student based on certain criteria. This way, students who may be overwhelmed by the number of alumni have a place to start. The ability to browse a list of alumni who are likely matches was an important factor in selecting Chronus Mentor.”



Browse for alumni

ENROLLMENT & SPONSORSHIP

During the pilot phase, Hoya Gateway drew its first participants from alumni and students who had participated in previous events and programs. As the program expanded, GUAA became more strategic in recruiting alumni volunteers who are established professionals in popular industries, as well as young professionals who have recently made the transition from college to beginning their careers.

A PLANNED, STRATEGIC KICKOFF

In May 2013, GUAA officially launched Hoya Gateway in five cities and across nine industries. To encourage more students to sign up, Pezza and Holmes looked at data provided by the Chronus Mentor program to find students who were using the program more frequently than most. GUAA made a promotional video with testimonials from some of these students along with alumni volunteers who are active in the program.

GUAA has also selected Hoya Gateway Student Ambassadors, who are responsible for student outreach. These ambassadors promote the program to their friends and classmates by staffing tables in the center of campus, driving student adoption through social media, and other creative marketing campaigns. Holmes said, “I think they found a lot of success from this and we certainly have a lot of loyalty from the group. It’s probably been one of our most successful ways of encouraging student outreach. They love the program and are eager to continue working for the program once they become Georgetown alumni.”

STUDENT FEEDBACK

“I’ve done 20 Hoya Gateway meetings so far, and each one has taught me something valuable. I used to not have confidence in my resume or cover letter writing skills, but after reviewing it with several alumni, it’s one of the best I’ve seen!”

– Julian M., Class of 2015

“After graduating in December, I landed my first job at a Hollywood studio seven weeks after my final semester. This all would not have been possible without Hoya Gateway.”

– Gabrielle G., Class of 2014

“The program makes it so easy and accessible to reach out to alumni.”

– Katherine P., Class of 2015

“I believe that the Hoya Gateway program is really unique. These are people who have made it, and have opportunities for you.”

– Seun Oyewole., Class of 2014

“The energy that you get from alumni is incredible.”

– Javier Arguello., Class of 2015



Watch a video of the program

A committee of volunteer leaders oversees the alumni-volunteer portion of the program, with each of the volunteer leaders focusing on a specific industry within a geographic region and tailoring their efforts according to the needs of the segment. For example the Entertainment & Media industry is popular in NY and LA, so recruiting volunteers in those geographic centers is a priority. The leadership committee also focuses on training new volunteers, integrating the program into the other schools within the university, and ensuring a high-quality experience for both students and alumni volunteers.

A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

GUAA monitors Chronus Mentor reports to observe key metrics from the program, including the number of alumni who have joined the program, students who have filled out profiles, and newly created meeting requests. Pezza said, "We're working with Chronus now on honing the information that's important to us. That way we can get easier reports on the information that's most important to our program stakeholders, and have it at our fingertips."

Using social media, GUAA publishes educational-yet-entertaining pieces to students about resume-writing tips, as well as how to network and search for jobs. These items are linked to a live feed on GUAA's Chronus Mentor platform to educate students and help them take ownership of building their new careers. Their Chronus Mentor platform also has a resource center that contains important training documents such as best practices for job shadowing, frequently asked questions about the program, and information for students on making the most of their Hoya Gateway experience.

In addition, the Hoya Gateway program is a powerful recruitment tool for incoming students. Pezza elaborated, "With the cost of higher education rising, students and parents are looking at what their tuition can do beyond the four years of college. Students ask, 'What's the network going to be like after I graduate?' Hoya Gateway ensures they can begin building careers from day one."

ALUMNI FEEDBACK

"I think that Hoya Gateway is the representation of what the Georgetown Alumni Association is really all about. Our goal is to help students understand what kind of help is out there after the Hilltop."

– Christine B., Class of 2005

"[Hoya Gateway is important to me because] I love meeting Hoya students and alumni. My Georgetown network has been incredibly valuable to me in both my professional and personal life, so I always look for opportunities to connect others and contribute insight or advice."

– Aldrinana L., Class of 2005

"Hoya Gateway is a game changer."

– Bill Reynolds, Class of 1979,
Executive Director, GUAA

Jeff Chapski, Alumnus and President-Elect of GUAA, said, "One of the original goals of Hoya Gateway is to provide students with a meaningful opportunity to connect with Georgetown alumni and begin building their professional networks. For many students, the connections made with alumni in the Hoya Gateway meetings will be the start of their own professional networks. One of the primary challenges of Hoya Gateway was how to create a massively scalable, volunteer-driven program that would meet both the needs of the mentees (students) and the mentors (alumni volunteers). Using a flexible platform such as Chronus Mentor in conjunction with a dedicated group of volunteer leaders has allowed us to create a very effective and successful program. The adoption of this program by both mentees and mentors has been very strong and the response has been extremely positive."

Recently, the program received industry recognition with a 2014 Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Gold Accolades Award for Best Practices in Alumni Relations.¹

FUTURE PLANS

Following a successful first year with over 1,500 students and 750 alumni registered for the program, GUAA plans to grow the program to a wider range of geographic markets and industries, as well as expand their infrastructure to provide more alumni volunteers for students. As Holmes explained, "We're trying to build out alumni ownership in addition to helping our students. We want our alumni to identify very strongly as Hoya Gateway alumni. In the near future, I would love to be able to use Chronus Mentor to provide alumni-to-alumni networking connections as well."

Hoya Gateway has created an opportunity for alumni to give back to students directly by sharing their expertise and helping students build their professional networks. It has also created a cultural shift in the way Georgetown students think about networking as they realize the value of this experience and begin transitioning into the alumni role. With the Hoya Gateway program, GUAA is helping students build strong careers, networks, and a supportive community for life.

WORDS FOR THE FUTURE

"There is a famous quote by Warren Buffet [...] he said, 'Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.' Each piece of the Hoya Gateway program we build now is like planting another seed that will provide shade for future generations of Georgetown students."

**– Jeff Chapski B'91
Founder,
Hoya Gateway**

¹ CASE is a professional association serving educational institutions and the advancement of professionals who work on their behalf in alumni relations, communications, development, marketing, and allied areas.

CASE STUDY

ABOUT CHRONUS AND CHRONUS MENTOR

Chronus is a leading provider of talent and career development software for enterprise-scale organizations. Chronus empowers mentoring, coaching, and other training and development initiatives by combining cloud-based software and program best practices to provide a complete talent development solution. Complementary to existing talent and learning management systems, Chronus enables a deeper level of program execution that picks up where traditional talent management leaves off. Chronus' talent development solutions, including Chronus Mentor, Chronus Coach, and Chronus Learn, are used by more than 500,000 professionals worldwide at leading institutions including Comcast, Staples, PNC Bank, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Chronus Mentor is software to start, manage, and measure mentoring programs online. Chronus Mentor combines cloud-based software and program best practices to provide a complete mentoring solution that fosters learning



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