How can Queens College students benefit from the broad range of knowledge possessed by QC’s alumni community? Just ASK (Alumni Sharing Knowledge). Launched by the Office of Alumni Relations in spring 2020, ASK enables one alumnus or a group of alumni to connect with students in different career preparation programs, all taking place over Zoom.

Taruna Sadhoo, who directs the QC chapter of CUNY Service Corps, works with Laura Abrams (Alumni Relations) to procure alumni speakers for her World of Work classes and Lunch and Learn series. “We address various career readiness topics: branding for social media, communication and professionalism in the workplace, networking, global intercultural fluency, interviewing skills,” Sadhoo said. “We also address civic engagement and community service and how you can use those skills to advance your career readiness.”

ASK speakers generally talk about their professional journeys. Many QC students, some the first in their families to attend college and/or from immigrant families, don’t have a support system to rely on when making career decisions. Consequently, the alumni network is a valuable asset for all phases of their lives.

Amy Mack ’94 appreciated the opportunity to talk to peer counselors as one of Sadhoo’s guests in fall 2020. “It was great to connect with current QC students. I hope they enjoyed hearing my stories, my advice, and felt inspired,” said Mack, a former peer counselor herself. She made a second appearance, alongside Linda Maney Quaglio MSEd ’17 and Robinson Cajamarca ’36, in conversations with Psychology Alumni, an ASK program presented in April in collaboration with Elizabeth O’Connell from the Center for Career Engagement.

Other spring 2021 career panels focused on Media Studies, with Jason Figueira ’08 and Stephanie Dunbar Schmitt ’15; Political Science, with Jacob Hochberg ’16 and Susan Stamler ’81; and English majors and Knight News staffers, with Cesar Bustamante Jr. ’09 and Gautier Giacomoni ’09.

During a Lunch and Learn session open to all students, business consultant Ronald Frank ’68 spoke about best practices in interviewing. Students prepared mock interviews and received feedback from Frank. He serves the ASK program in another way: He’s a member of a committee that several alumni joined in January 2021 to promote awareness of ASK among their own QC networks. Three other members, Ricardo Cortez ’72, Gerard Passaro ’79, and Barry Katz ’75, spoke with students in World of Work sessions in the spring.

Diane Shults, co-chair of the ASK Committee, taught a World of Work class during summer 2021. In July, financial advisor Lee Korn ’96 discussed his QC journey. BFA candidate Cindi Li, a design major who anticipates graduating at the end of Fall 2021, valued the opportunity to meet Korn virtually. “Conversations led by Lee Korn have reinforced my outlook on what it takes to be successful in the ‘world of work.’ As an entrepreneur, I can think of no better place to start than Queens College. Please keep me in mind for future opportunities!”

Abrams routinely updates the ASK roster and shares it with Sadhoo, Shults, and O’Connell. The general campus community, Abrams says, can also request alumni guests for remote classes. She encourages interested alumni to reach out to alumni@qc.cuny.edu.

Conversations with Psychology Alumni, an ASK program presented in April in collaboration with Elizabeth O’Connell from the Center for Career Engagement.

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