

NAC Council of Representatives Opportunity

Definitions

Class: The year(s) in which NAC students participating in summer research with the NAC program. Currently, there are six classes: NAC I (2013), NAC II (2014), NAC III (2015), NAC IV (2016), NAC V (2017), and NAC VI (2018).

Cohort: The site(s) at which NAC students participated in summer research. Sites include: NRAO-Socorro, NRAO-Charlottesville, Princeton, Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI), NASA, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Provenance

The primary goal of the National Astronomy Consortium (NAC) is to increase the number of traditionally underrepresented people in STEM and STEM careers. This is achieved, on the surface, by granting undergraduate students opportunities to do their own original scientific research, but professional development is just one part of the NAC. Since its inaugural class in 2013, the NAC program has taken inspiration from the [Posse Foundation](#), which helps students remain in their chosen fields by fostering strong emotional support networks.

With that goal in mind, our hope is that NAC students form lasting friendships across cohorts from which they can draw support long after their NAC summer ends. To do this, we need a thriving NAC alumni network. We believe that the best way to create and maintain such a network is by forming a *council of representatives* from each NAC class (year) who would presumably have close ties to their classmates and can help keep everyone connected.

Representative Responsibilities

Collectively, the representatives from each NAC class would be responsible for fostering community amongst NAC alumni. Individually, each representative would be responsible for staying in touch with their classmates and trying to involve them in NAC alumni activities. The following are examples of things the council could do to strengthen the alumni network.

- Arrange for speakers to hold Zoom presentations on relevant topics (jobs in and out of academia, networking, mental health, etc.). A speaker fee would be covered by the NAC.
- Arrange for a NAC alum to give a Zoom presentation on an interesting/fun topic (perhaps on experiences that they have had that others can reach or look out for as well)
- Plan a NAC gathering at the AAS
- Plan inter-site and inter-class activities
- “Check in” with your classmates via email and/or surveys
 - Figure out how they’re doing and if they need anything that the NAC can help provide

- Let NAC HQ know if there are barriers that the NAC program can help remove or mitigate
- Arrange “check in” Zoom sessions where alumni can ask for advice on anything from research to studying for exams to filling out applications
- Encourage posting in the NAC FB page... maybe offering to post on behalf of others in their cohort
- Help edit the NAC website to include a history of the program
- Help maintain the NAC website to include updates about alumni achievements

We encourage the representatives to work together and think creatively about what can be done to foster community and strengthen ties both within and between NAC cohorts.

Eligibility

All NAC alums are eligible to apply for this opportunity.

How to Apply

Please [fill out this form](#), and include:

- a brief (2-3 sentence) description of your interest in serving on the council (why this resonates with you)
- An idea or two for increasing intra-class and inter-class contact during the year

Stipend

For serving a 12 month term (October 1-September 30) on the council, each representative will receive a \$500 (taxable) stipend.

Council members will be given a modest budget to support interactive meetings of the classes and cohorts.