PROGRAM OVERVIEW
Women of Aquatics (WOA) wants to provide as many opportunities as possible for women to enter the aquatics industry, succeed, and advance their careers. The WOA Peer Mentoring Program provides women who want to move forward in their career guidance to do so. Women who are new to the industry will be connected with more experienced women to work together to help each person in the relationship move forward toward their goals. Whether you are looking for short-term help to move past a stumbling block, or would prefer support in reaching long-term goals, the WOA Peer Mentoring Program will help you get to where you would like to be.

WHAT IS PEER MENTORING?
A peer mentoring relationship helps individuals grow professionally and personally through the experience of a mentor. Mentors provide interactive guidance and identify opportunities for growth to help mentees reach their goals more effectively. However, just as the mentee is working toward their goals with the help of their mentor, the mentor is also a professional who is working toward her own goals. In peer mentoring, the mentor’s goals and progress are discussed as well. Mentees may also provide insights into opportunities for growth for the mentor, as well as additional networking opportunities. Through peer mentoring, both mentor and mentee benefit from open conversations, goal setting, and providing accountability and mutual encouragement.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I AM A MENTOR?
Get to know your mentee both professionally and personally. Understanding your mentee on both levels will help you provide the most effective guidance for their situation. Mentors do not provide flat answers, but instead offer actionable advice while working with the mentee to develop realistic goals. Mentors act as bridges for communication and networking and as guides to help the mentee achieve her goals. The relationship length can vary based on the needs of the individuals involved, but is to set up in a way to be mutually beneficial, without adding undue additional work to existing responsibilities.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I AM A MENTEE?
Recognize that mentors don’t have quick answers. Often, mentee experiences are complex and require time and energy to create action plans to achieve their goals. Mentees should recognize that their mentor is there to help them develop steps to reach those goals more effectively than they could on their own. Mentees need to be transparent with mentors about strengths, opportunities, challenges, and concerns for them to be able to provide guidance that will be most effective. It will be the mentee’s job to make sure meetings are scheduled and the mentor is updated on progress and be proactive with communication and scheduling. This will help structure conversations and ensure progress.

WHAT NEXT?
If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, simply let us know on your membership application form or email us at: info@womenofaquatics.org. WOA will provide information and training on how to be a mentor and mentee along with basic structure recommendations for the relationship. Once established, you may work with your mentor/mentee to set up goals for the relationship and a structure that works best for both of you.