



MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT

Meet Mentor: Arwa Z. Al-Riyami, MD, FRCPc

Arwa Z. Al-Riyami, MD, BSc, FRCPc, is a senior consultant hematopathologist working at the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital (SQUH) in Muscat, the Sultanate of Oman. She joined AABB in 2012 and has been to every AABB Annual Meeting since. In this time, she has volunteered as an assessor and in the Professional Engagement Mentorship Program. She is a member in both the Transfusion Medicine and Cellular Therapies sections and a member of the AABB Cellular Therapies Section Coordinating Committee. She has also served as a member of the AABB Global Transfusion Forum Steering Committee, which addresses how to improve transfusion on a global scale. She is an AABB ambassador and was involved in the regional committee that organized the 2019 annual meeting highlights conference in the Middle East.

AABB NEWS: WHY DID YOU WANT TO BECOME A MENTOR?

AL-RIYAMI: Becoming a mentor has been one of my most rewarding experiences! Not only does it provide the opportunity to positively impact someone's life, but it also allows me to share my knowledge and expertise in a meaningful way.

As a mentor, I have the opportunity to share my experiences with others and provide feedback, advice and encouragement. I also get the opportunity to guide, empower and motivate my mentee to reach their full potential. It can help them develop new skills, gain confidence and overcome challenges they may face along the way.

But it's not just about what you can give as a mentor. It's also about what you can gain. Mentoring can be an incredibly enriching experience, as you learn from your mentee and gain new perspectives in the world. I have been a PEP mentor since 2018, during which I mentored eight mentees from different countries. I learned from every mentee I encountered! Mentorship is a two-way street, and you can also learn a lot from your mentee in the process, including developing new skills and insights yourself.

AABB NEWS: CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT YOU AND YOUR MENTEE FOCUSED ON DURING THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM?

AL-RIYAMI: During my mentoring session, I had the pleasure of working with a transfusion medicine fellow who was eager to learn about career preparedness and professional development. Together, we explored the various opportunities available through AABB for individuals at the early stages of their career, such as volunteering for committees and becoming an AABB assessor.

In addition to discussing these opportunities, we also talked about the significance of creating a personal presence on professional social media accounts and building networks. Through our conversation, we were able to provide valuable insights and strategies that hopefully will help my mentee succeed in their career path. We also discussed the latest updates presented in the 2022 Virtual AABB Annual Meeting in transfusion medicine and biotherapies.

AABB NEWS: HOW DID YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND IN HEMATOLOGY HELP YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS A MENTOR?

AL-RIYAMI: My qualifications in both transfusion medicine and cellular therapy made me a good fit for my mentee's needs in this mentorship program. Additionally, I have four years of experience as a program director for one of the residency programs in Oman, which has helped me develop important mentorship skills, such as reflecting on my own career experiences, applying the lessons learned from them, practicing active listening and building trust and rapport with my mentees.

AABB NEWS: WHAT WAS THE BEST PART ABOUT HAVING A MENTEE?

AL-RIYAMI: As a mentor, you can make a difference and help someone reach their goals. It's an exciting opportunity to share knowledge, inspire others and make a positive impact!

