Why Network with Alumni?
You may benefit from networking with alumni because they may be able to give you:
- A better understanding about a particular field of work
- A lead on a job or internship
- Information about a specific job or about a specific employer
- Advice on how to apply for a particular position
- Suggestions for other people to talk to, in the field or at the organization

Making Contact:
- Introduce yourself, explain your interest in the individual’s organization and/or job, express your desire to learn more about their experiences, and propose a meeting.
- The more you talk about your skills and interests, what you have done, what you would like to do, and where you would like to do it, the more likely it is that people will begin to see links between themselves and you.
- Remember that most people are flattered if you ask questions about what they do and how they got there, and if you ask for their opinions and solicit their advice.
- Be sure to make it clear that you are interested in gathering information and advice only – NOT a job.
- Remember to send thank-you notes! A few lines thanking them for their time and help will indicate your appreciation and will keep you in their memory. Be specific about information you learned from them, especially those facts or stories that you found especially useful or interesting.
- Keep a record of any and all contact with alumni for your own information and reference. Useful information to record would include names, titles, addresses, dates and major points of discussion. Such information will enable you to effectively get back in touch with your contacts at some point in the future.

Questions Regarding the Occupational Field:
Preparation:
- What credentials or degrees are required for entry into this kind of work?
- What types of prior experience are absolutely essential?

Present Job:
- How do you occupy your time during a typical workweek?
- What skills or talents are most essential for effective job performance in this job?
- What are the toughest problems you must deal with?
- If you were to leave this kind of work, what factors would probably contribute to your decision?

Lifestyle:
- What obligation does your work place upon your personal time?
- How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, hours of work, vacation, or place of residence?
- How often do people in your line of work change jobs?

Job Hunting:
- How do people find out about these jobs? Are they advertised in newspapers (which ones?), by word-of-mouth, or by the personnel department?
- How does one move from position to position? Do people normally move to another agency (company, division), or do they move up in the agency (company, division)?
Sample Email:

Hello Mr./Mrs.____,

I hope this note finds you well. My name is ______ and I am currently a 3rd year student in the School of Engineering and Applied Science. I found your contact information on HoosOnline/UCAN and am very interested in gaining insight into your career field. As such, I was wondering if you would be willing to spend some time speaking with me about your experiences.

I would love to learn more about the company as a whole, and also, specifically about your particular field of work. I am curious about your experiences/career thus far, and how you obtained your position in this competitive field.

I have attached my resume for your information, and to assist you in learning a bit more about me. I am hoping that we can set up a time to speak over the phone. I would be happy to send you specific questions in advance, if you would like. I can be reached via email or via phone at *(insert phone number).* Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name