

## Monthly Mentors: Career Advice for Young Bankers

Our Monthly Mentor this March is someone with an ardent passion for empowering those around her: **Sondra Collins**, senior vice president and mortgage community outreach officer at North State Bank. Sondra's role allows her to engage in business development and civic initiatives throughout her community while identifying opportunities to provide homeownership workshops. She's involved in many community-based organizations, including the recently established NCBA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council.



By finding a way to align her career and her passion, Sondra has found her motivation.

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Imagine finding a career that fulfills your passion and gives you a feeling of enthusiasm. Imagine waking up each workday looking forward to your list of “to-dos” and feeling unstoppable. That’s me. Every day.

My passion is empowering individuals and families in underserved communities with information, tools and resources to enhance their lives. I believe education is **the best** way to inspire and motivate others who desire a better life.

As North State Bank’s mortgage community outreach officer, I lead the bank’s efforts to educate and empower individuals and families in our community on their path to build wealth through homeownership. As a part of this role, I am active in many community-based organizations, including serving as chair for the City of Raleigh Fair Housing Hearing Board, which educates and improves public awareness of the city’s fair housing ordinance and laws. I recently joined the North Carolina Bankers Association’s new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, which is charged with identifying resources the organization can provide to members to measurably and sustainably improve diversity and inclusion in the North Carolina banking industry.

More than a job, I believe my work is a calling. It’s both an honor and privilege to come into people’s lives, even if only for a season, to help align them with information and resources that can propel them to a better life.

I encourage you to align your work with your passion. Take time to explore and identify what motivates and excites you. It may extend beyond your work life but find something you care about and improves our world. It will make all the difference in how you feel about your day.

*“Look closely at the present you are constructing: it should look like the future you are dreaming.” - Alice Walker*

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Do you have a mentor who has helped you along with your career? Would others appreciate their advice?  
Reach out to Scott Brownlow ([scott@ncbankers.org](mailto:scott@ncbankers.org)) in order to suggest future guest mentors!