



302 South 36th Street, Suite 104
Omaha, NE 68131

CONTACT:

Deborah Neary, Executive Director
402-932-2025 ext. 1005 (office)

402-215.9139 (cell)

dneary@mmpomaha.org

www.mmpomaha.org

www.buildingbrightfutures.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Midlands Mentoring Partnership's Website has Launched!

Now Taking Applications for Mentor and Advocate of the Year Awards!

(Omaha, Neb., Oct. 21, 2010) Midlands Mentoring Partnership, a non-profit organization that seeks to improve the number and quality of mentoring programs available to local youth, launched a brand new interactive website. The site, www.mmpomaha.org, is designed to become a central place where you can find out information about mentoring, mentoring organizations and how to find or become a mentor in the midlands region.

The website allows you to find announcements about mentoring activities, upcoming mentoring events and how mentoring can make a significant difference in our community. If you are looking for a mentor, MMP's new website is a convenient and effective way to help you find the perfect mentor/mentee match. The website boasts information about the 12-member organizations, mentoring effectiveness and how to sign up to find a mentor that fits your specific needs. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, MMP's new website allows you to fill out an interest form that will match you with a mentoring organization that suits your abilities best.

In an effort to highlight exceptional mentors and advocates of mentoring, MMP's new website allows you to fill out a nomination form for "Mentor of the Year" and "Advocate of the Year." The "Mentor of the Year" award honors individuals that are committed to helping young people achieve their potential through mentoring. In bestowing this award, MMP looks for mentors whose exceptional commitment and dedication have changed the lives of the youth they serve.

The "Advocate of the Year" award honors a business or organization that is committed to helping young people achieve their potential through mentoring. In bestowing this award, MMP looks for organizations and/or businesses that serve as committed advocates for the mentoring movement by sponsoring mentoring programs, encouraging their employees to volunteer as mentors, donating funds to mentoring, mentoring new mentoring programs and/or supporting mentoring causes.

Both of these awards will be presented at a special recognition luncheon in January—during National Mentoring Month. The deadline to submit nominations is December 31, 2010.

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MMP's website is designed to showcase the worthwhile event of mentoring. This website alleviates the potential problem of not knowing how to get started, whether it is finding a mentor or becoming one. Dan Padilla, Board Chair of MMP stated about the website, "There are many unique mentoring programs in our community, each with a different niche, type of mentoring program and demographic served, this new website will make it much easier for prospective mentors to find the best match for their interests and availability."

The Midlands Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is a 12-member collaboration designed to raise public awareness of and support for high-quality youth mentoring programs by improving youth mentoring through education, best practices and resource-sharing, increasing the capacity of mentoring programs in recruiting/retaining more mentors and carrying out recommendations made by the Building Bright Futures Task Force.

Stable, caring adults are a cornerstone of positive child and youth development. Through positive relationships with adults, children and youth experience a sense of physical and emotional security and learn that they are valued and accepted by others. Research shows that mentoring can lead to a decrease in risky behaviors, stronger communication skills, leadership experiences, an increase in connectedness to school, an improvement in competencies and self-esteem.

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The 12 Member Agencies Affiliated with Midlands Mentoring Partnership:

[All Our Kids](#)

All Our Kids is a scholarship program providing group mentoring to over 600 Omaha Public School students from 6th-12th grades. Mentors act as role models and participate in the age appropriate curriculum such as: community service projects, career exploration, college access, youth leadership development, academic goal setting, tutoring, prevention education and field trips. All Our Kids gives committed adults the opportunity to improve public education by spending time with students twice a month in a fun structured environment. For more information contact: Jessica Miller, Jessica Warren or Phil Jarrett

[Amachi Mentoring](#)

Amachi is a unique partnership involving both the secular and faith-based organizations working together to provide mentoring for children impacted by incarcerated parents and/or high crime areas. Launched in Philadelphia in 2000, Amachi has spread rapidly; there are now least 350 Amachi-modeled programs in more than 100 US cities and all 50 states. In Omaha, the Amachi

Mentoring Coalition Project is a program of the Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church. For more information contact Margie Dumas.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands

As a donor supported volunteer organization, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands helps vulnerable children reach their potential through one-to-one relationships that produce positive measurable outcomes. We serve boys and girls ages 6 – 18 in Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Washington, and Saunders counties in Nebraska, and Pottawattamie and Mills counties in Iowa. Our professional staff carefully recruit, screen, train, and supervise community volunteers to help ensure children benefit from the guidance, support, and friendship of positive role models. Volunteers must commit to maintaining the relationship for a minimum of one year. Big Brothers Big Sisters offers both community-based and school-based mentoring programs. For more information contact: Sheryl Lindau or Shawna Singhoff

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands (BGCM) reach thousands of youth each year. BGCM deliver a proven youth development strategy, access to Club services five days a week, a safe and clean environment, life-changing programs, and the opportunity to receive mentoring experiences and relationships with diverse, trained and caring staff and volunteers in a supervised and structured environment. Just as a Boys & Girls Club staff member's one-to-one work with each boy or girl is the key ingredient to deepening impact, a volunteer mentor's personal attention and guidance can truly open new doors of hope and opportunity for them. For more information contact: Regina Tullos-Williams

Child Saving Institute (CSI)

Child Saving Institute provides three different mentoring opportunities to Omaha's Community. In the School and Family Enrichment (SAFE) program, CSI partners with Omaha Public School students in developing social skills, increasing coping skills, enhancing their self image, learning strategies for responsible decision-making, assisting with homework and providing one-on-one support and friendship. In the Independent Living Skills (ILS) program mentors help with children aging out of the Foster Care System prepare for independent life. Mentors are instrumental in helping with job preparation and finding resources for continued education. Child Saving Institute also offers mentoring opportunities for Young Parents to help meet their goals of continued education, reducing the risk of abuse and neglect for their infants and learning problem solving and independent living skills. For more information contact: Sherri Harris

Girls Inc. Pathfinder

The Pathfinders Mentoring Program at Girls Incorporated of Omaha encourages all girls to be Strong, Smart, and Bold! In an inequitable society, mentoring has been critical to the success and achievement of many women. Pathfinders is a long-term match program where mentors work with a young lady until she is a senior in high school. Girls are accepted into the program between the ages of 10 and 14. At a minimum, mentors are asked to mentor a girl for three years. The time commitment for Pathfinders is: one 3-hour initial training session, one meeting with the mentee per month for at least two hours, weekly contact with the mentee via phone or e-mail, and quarterly group workshops. For more information contact: Kainette Jones

Ollie Webb Center, Inc.

The Just Friends Program of Ollie Webb Center, Inc. is a peer mentoring and friendship program that matches adolescents (ages 13 – 18 years) with developmental disabilities (e.g., Learning Disabilities, Down syndrome, Autism, etc.) to adolescents without disabilities. Just Friends was created to bring social, recreational and friendship opportunities to individuals with disabilities. Volunteer Mentors are asked to make a one year commitment in which they hang out with their ‘friend’ twice a month by participating in social/recreational activities such as bowling, shopping, movies, etc. and making weekly telephone contact. For more information contact: Lisa Dougherty

Omaha Home for Boys

The Omaha Home for Boys is a non-profit residential group home that provides a structured living environment in a cottage setting with caring House Parents, balanced meals and educational support for boys ages 10-18. The Omaha Home for Boys is looking for adults who have a strong desire to work with youth and are willing to commit to a weekly phone call and one outing per month. For residents at the Omaha Home for Boys, being mentored is a chance for a youth to receive individual attention from a caring adult and, most importantly, a chance to just have fun. For more information contact: Kate Chilson

Omaha Street School (OSS)

The Omaha Street School is a private high school located in North Omaha, designed specifically for teens who have been unsuccessful in the traditional school setting. Utilizing an approach focused on the whole child, OSS incorporates core principles and values into its daily school activities. Mentors at OSS are trained volunteers for the school, and often have additional roles in the school – such as tutoring in a classroom, assisting with college prep material, or working on career assessments. In the context of tangibly assisting our students, mentoring relationships develop. For more information contact: John Parsons

Release Ministries

The Juvenile Justice Mentoring Program is designed to help youth lay a foundation upon which they can continue to build toward success in every aspect of life. This spiritual foundation is the launching point that empowers them to reach beyond themselves and their circumstances into an arena of promise for their future. The mentor is matched to a youth in a one-to-one relationship in order to become a trusted friend and guide. The relationship building may take place within a detention, group home facility and/or out in the community. The mentor and the youth meet once a week for 1 to 4 hours. The focus of the match is relationship building with emphasis on enabling the youth in their spiritual growth. Structured activities may include goal setting, strength assessment and vocational guidance, and discipleship exercises. For more information contact: Woody Winchell, Marcus Brown or Sandra Preston

TeamMates Mentoring Program

The TeamMates Mentoring Program was co-founded by Tom and Nancy Osborne in 1991. Presently, there are over 4,000 mentors in Nebraska and Iowa in 113 communities. TeamMates is a school-based, one-to-one mentoring program. Volunteers who wish to be TeamMates mentors are screened and trained before they are sent to be matched to an elementary, middle or high school student. Mentors spend about an hour a week with a student in a school during

school hours. The commitment is for at least one year. A TeamMates mentor is a positive role model that gives a young person a sense of hope, purpose and vision. For more information contact: Julie Swain, Tom Miller or Adrienne Watson

Youth Emergency Services (YES)

Youth Emergency Services has four programs that strive to provide homeless, at-risk and street dependent youth with the support necessary to thrive. We have a Drop In Center and Emergency Shelter that serves youth ages 13-21. Our two newest programs are the Maternity Group Home and Transitional Living Program serving youth ages 16-21 in the Omaha and Council Bluffs areas. The mentoring program at YES serves the youth in the Maternity Group Home and Transitional Living Program. The mentors provide support and guidance as the residents work to become independent and successful. We ask our mentors to make a commitment to the youth for the duration of their time at YES, with one face-to-face meeting per month and regular contact. For more information contact: Sarah Kent