

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **President Obama designates January as National Mentoring Month Omaha has Many Activities Planned! Nominate a Mentor or Business of the Year!**

OMAHA NE- Mentoring organizations, mentors, school personnel , community and business leaders in Omaha, the Governor of Nebraska, and the Mayor of Omaha, are involved in a month of activities to celebrate National Mentoring Month in January.

Last week, President Barack Obama issued a [proclamation](#) designating January 2011 as National Mentoring Month. He stated, "Across our Nation, mentors steer our youth through challenging times and support their journey into adulthood. During National Mentoring Month, we honor these important individuals who unlock the potential and nurture the talent of our country, and we encourage more Americans to reach out and mentor young people in their community."

January 2011 will mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Mentoring Month, an annual media campaign to recruit volunteer mentors for young people. Spearheaded by the Harvard Mentoring Project of the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, this year's campaign focuses on mentoring as a strategy for boosting academic achievement. The campaign's tagline is "Help Them Get There. Become a Mentor."

General Colin L. Powell, a spokesperson for the campaign, is featured in a public service announcement (PSA) prepared for broadcast on television and radio. In the [PSA](#), General Powell states, "Our nation's future depends on what we do today to prepare our young people for productive and fulfilling lives. All of us need to get involved to help kids stay focused and stay in school. We must become a nation of graduates. One way for you to help is to volunteer as a mentor."

Research has shown that volunteer mentors can play a powerful role in reducing drug abuse and youth violence as well as boosting academic achievement. Mentors help to build young people's character and confidence, expand their universe, and help them navigate a path to success.

Despite these benefits, however, the gap between the number of mentors and the number of young people who need a mentor continues to grow. Today, 15 million young people need a caring adult mentor in their lives.

### **OMAHA ACTIVITIES:**

Midlands Mentoring Partnership, a non-profit organization that seeks to improve the number and quality of mentoring programs available to local youth is working with 17 local mentoring organizations and Building Bright Futures to highlight mentoring.

Additionally, in an effort to highlight exceptional mentors and advocates of mentoring, MMP is accepting nominations 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 on January 26, 2011.

Nominations can be submitted at [www.mmpomaha.org](http://www.mmpomaha.org). The deadline to submit nominations is January 7, 2011.

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.

#### **National Mentoring Month Activities include:**

Wednesday, January 19, 2011, 9 am, Provider’s Council Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2011, Gov. Dave Heineman is issuing a proclamation for National Mentoring Month

Friday, January 21, 2011, National Thank Your Mentor Day

Saturday, January 22, 2011, Mentoring Fair at Westroads Mall, 12-4PM near Dick’s Sporting Goods on the second level

Tuesday, January 25, 2011, Reception for Dr. Andrew Mecca

Wednesday, January 26, 2011, National Mentoring Month Conference and Recognition Luncheon, Holiday Inn Coco Keys

Keynote Speaker Dr. Andrew Mecca from the California Mentor Foundation will be speaking about his experiences working as California’s drug Czar and then later the President of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors. Dr. Mecca has also authored multiple books on self-esteem

and mentoring including: *Lifepan: Tools Every Teenage needs to Thrive, Not Merely Survive*. This event is being offered in collaboration with Building Bright Futures.

**Attachments:**

Ten Things to Do During January—National Mentoring Month PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH YOUR PEERS

Questions about the Midlands Mentoring Partnership

Descriptions of 12 Mentoring Organizations that make up the MMP

Presidential Proclamation

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [www.mmpomaha.org](http://www.mmpomaha.org)

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**MIDLANDS**  
**mentoring**  
**partnership**



**BUILDING**  
**BRIGHT**  
**FUTURES**

## **10 THINGS TO DO IN JANUARY DURING NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH**

### **Brought to you by the Midlands Mentoring Partnership (MMP)**

1. Become a mentor in your community. Find the right organization for you at [www.mmpomaha.org](http://www.mmpomaha.org). MMP partners with 17 local mentoring organizations all offering unique programs to best fit your interests.
2. Attend the Mentor Fair at Westroads Mall on Saturday, January 22, 2011, from Noon-4 pm by Dicks Sporting Goods.
3. Learn more about mentoring by attending the National Mentoring Month Conference on January 26<sup>th</sup> at the Coco Keys Holiday Inn. Free lunch and conference sessions, registration required, please visit [www.mmpomaha.org](http://www.mmpomaha.org) for more information and registration.
4. Partner with a mentoring organization to do a community service project.
5. Tell 5 friends about National Mentoring Month.
6. On Thank A Mentor Day (January 21), think about the mentors in your life and post a tribute to them online.
7. Invite MMP to your church, business, or organization to give a presentation on Mentoring.
8. Help us post or distribute some of the thousands of posters, bookmarks, flyers that we have promoting National Mentoring Month in your business, organization or church.
9. Serve your community on MLK Day of Service by deciding to become a mentor.
10. Make a donation to a mentoring organization in your community.



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### **Questions for Deborah Neary, Executive Director, Midlands Mentoring Partnership**

*During January, 2011, the President and First Lady Michelle Obama will give a tremendous boost to the efforts to recruit volunteer mentors to help transform the lives of America's youth. Why? Because January is National Mentoring month. The Midlands Mentoring Partnership is playing a large role in this celebration and we hope the readers of Revive will join us to learn more!*

#### **Q. What is the Midlands Mentoring Partnership?**

**A. We are not a mentoring organization-but we work collaboratively with Building Bright Futures to support mentoring organizations in our community. Midlands Mentoring Partnership seeks to increase the number and quality of mentoring programs in the Omaha Metro. We have 12 member agencies and that number continues to grow.**

#### **Q. What mentoring agencies are members of MMP?**

**A. Full members are:** All Our Kids, Amachi, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, Child Saving Institute, Girls Inc., Omaha Home for Boys, Ollie Webb Center, Omaha Street School, Release Ministries, TeamMates and Youth Emergency Services. Additionally-five organizations are becoming members of MMP. These candidate members are: 100 Black Men, Goodwill, Hope Center, Midwest Trailblazers, and South Omaha Cares Council. We also hope to connect with many other mentoring organizations in our community.

#### **Q. What's mentoring all about?**

**A. Mentoring is about:**

- *people helping youth to succeed*
- *ensuring that youth are connected with positive role models*
- *changing the cycle of poverty*
- *raising the graduation rates, grades, and school attendance of children being mentored*

#### **Q. What do mentors do with youth?**

**A. Mentors are caring adults**—they do not have to have a background in teaching or youth development to be a good mentor. They just have to care and be good listeners, offering support and encouragement. Mentoring a child requires a very small time commitment—usually an hour a week—and can have a great impact on the future of the child.

#### **Q: How do I find a program that's "right" for me?**

**A: Visit [www.mmpomaha.org](http://www.mmpomaha.org) for the links to mentoring organizations in our community. Or:**

1. **Attend our free lunch and mentoring conference on Wednesday, January 26, 2011!**
2. **Visit our Mentoring Fair at Westroads on Saturday, January 22, 2011!**

3. **Also—if you complete a mentor prospect form on our website**—we can help you find the right organization for your interests. Once you determine the organization for you--then, ask the program representative the following questions:
- i. Where does the mentoring take place?
  - ii. What is the required time commitment for the mentoring??
  - iii. What types of mentoring does the program offer?  
What kind of initial training and on-going training and support does the program offer?
  - iv. can I expect to receive to assist me in my mentoring?  
How are mentors and mentees matched? Is it based on common interests, same gender, or what other criteria? What is the age of the mentee with whom I will be working? Do I have choices in that regard?

*Good luck!! I am confident that you will find this experience very, very rewarding—while at the same time you will be saving the life of one more child!*



## **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

Additionally—MMP has 5 Candidate Members:

100 BlackMen

Hope Center

Goodwill

Midwest Trailblazers

South Omaha Cares Council

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 21, 2010

## Presidential Proclamation--Mentoring Month

Across our Nation, mentors steer our youth through challenging times and support their journey into adulthood. During National Mentoring Month, we honor these important individuals who unlock the potential and nurture the talent of our country, and we encourage more Americans to reach out and mentor young people in their community.

The dedication of mentors has helped countless young men and women succeed when they might have otherwise fallen short of their full potential. Mentors can provide a steady presence and share their valuable knowledge and experiences. Even brief amounts of quality time set aside by these compassionate adults can have a lasting impact on the development of a child. Mentors can also support the lessons of parents and teachers by encouraging students to complete their schoolwork and by instilling enduring values of commitment and persistence. From coaches to community leaders, tutors to trusted friends, mentors are working with today's youth to develop tomorrow's leaders.

We know the difference that a responsible, caring adult can make in a child's life. Effective mentoring programs can result in better school attendance, positive student attitudes, and a reduced likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use. Across the Federal Government, we have provided resources to expand mentoring opportunities for America's young people. We are increasing mentoring efforts in Native American and rural communities and are working to ensure our investments are coordinated, effective, and focused on those most in need. To help build healthy families and communities and provide our youth with strong role models, I launched the President's Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative. First Lady Michelle Obama and I have also established mentoring programs within the White House, pairing staff with young men and women in the Washington, D.C., area. For information and resources about mentoring opportunities, I encourage all Americans to visit: [www.Serve.gov/Mentor](http://www.Serve.gov/Mentor).

Many Americans have realized their promise because a mentor encouraged them to reach for new heights and guided them along the path to achievement. The contributions of these engaged adults extend beyond the lives they touch and have a lasting impact that strengthens our country and our future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 2011 as National Mentoring Month. I call upon all public officials, business and community leaders, educators, and Americans across the country to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA