mentor

noun

1. an experienced and trusted adviser.

TEAMMATES
MENTORING PROGRAM
Together We Transform Lives

Annual Report 2015
“She always reminded me that I was an awesome kid and that I was going to do some big things in the world.”

— TeamMates Mentee

“I really believe my mentor is making my life better, I always can’t wait for the day he comes so we can shoot hoops, play games or just talk. I’m really happy I signed up.”

— TeamMates Mentee
We would like to take this opportunity to thank the more than seven thousand mentors who provide countless hours to mentor young people. We also appreciate the financial support from so many of you, as TeamMates is entirely supported by private individuals, foundations and agencies. I would also like to thank the board members, building coordinators and TeamMates staff members who make everything run efficiently and smoothly.

TeamMates recently created a new five year Strategic Plan which will take us through 2020. Our new vision is to reach twelve thousand matches within the next five years. It is important to realize that this growth must not be achieved at the expense of quality.

In recent years we have continued to gather data which indicates what works with our mentoring matches. We have focused on strengths which the mentees can build on with the help of their mentors. We have launched post-secondary mentoring which is focused on transitioning our mentees from high school into post-secondary education. The post-secondary support has increased the likelihood that our mentees will continue their college education to year two from sixty percent to over ninety percent.

Once again, we thank you for the transformative, life-changing work you do each day on behalf of youth.

Rhyia Gibbons’ TeamMates journey began in seventh grade. She said she didn’t really understand what she was getting herself into. “When I was first matched with Connie [Palmerton] it was weird,” she explained. “I didn’t know whether to trust her.”

Now, Rhyia is a freshman at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and plans to major in theatre. Looking back on the past seven years, Connie said she’s seen Rhyia grow into a confident young woman.

“I’ve seen a big change in her,” Connie explained. “She grew beyond the maturity of me.”

Rhyia and Connie still meet as part of the post-secondary program, but that’s not the only way Rhyia is staying involved. She’s now paying it forward, and has switched gears from mentee to mentor.

“My mentor helped me out so much in school, and I know that some other child needs it,” she said. “I can’t imagine not making TeamMates a top priority in my life.”

Match Spotlight: Rhyia & Connie
In reflecting on the past year, TeamMates has made significant strides toward retaining our matches and providing quality mentoring services. In sharpening our recruiting message, focusing on the art of making great matches and incorporating additional match support, we are seeing longer and stronger matches. As a result, our senior classes continue to increase in size as matches successfully reach the important milestone of high school graduation.

As we look back on the last 24 years, we can only be filled with gratitude toward our mentors, mentees, families, coordinators, board members, school districts and donors who truly make TeamMates a great organization. Thank you for believing in the mission and vision of TeamMates.

Striving for Gold
A letter from TeamMates’ Executive Director

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Nich Herrington
Regional Coordinator

Not Pictured
Annette Woodhead
Regional Coordinator

In 2015, the TeamMates Board established a list of Strategic Initiatives:

1. Marketing/Branding
2. School District Engagement
3. Mentor Support
4. Mentor Recruitment
5. Financial Sustainability
Corey Craig’s TeamMates story began in 2000 when he was in sixth grade. He was matched with Bill Orr, husband of former Nebraska Governor Kay Orr.

“I got into a lot of trouble,” he said. “Bill came to school every week, and really helped me find my identity as a young man.”

Corey explained he had a difficult childhood. His father died when he was 6 years old. Corey and Bill’s relationship had to grow in order to see change and trust.

“Once he broke through that barrier, he was really the only male influence I had in my life,” Corey said.

TeamMates is a developmental mentoring program, not a prescriptive one. This means mentors are not tutors, counselors, or “fixing” their mentees. Their only job is to be an advocate or a cheerleader for their student. Corey said even though Bill followed through with his role as a safe adult friend, their relationship helped improve Corey’s attitude about school and life.

“I think every mentor strives to have a good relationship, and Bill was the best mentor for me,” he explained.

In 2004, Corey was accepted into the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, and moved out to California, saying goodbye to Nebraska and Bill.

Corey is now an actor in Los Angeles, and is producing a comedy show, but that’s not all. He’s also paying his experience forward and founded a non-profit called The Troublemaker Foundation. The organization helps young people going through challenges identify and apply their innate abilities. Corey gives motivational speeches to kids about overcoming adversity and inspires them to reach their full potential.

“It’s something that keeps me grounded and provides humility for me,” he said.

Up until Bill’s death, he and Corey kept in contact. To this day, he believes his relationship with Bill helped him become the man he is today. Corey said if he could talk to Bill right now, he’d say “thank you”, and “I love you.”
The TeamMates Mentoring Program’s mission is to positively impact the world by inspiring youth to reach their full potential. One Iowa chapter is doing that by incorporating the STEM program.

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and math. In Waterloo, Iowa, their chapter is showing young girls the importance of those fields by exposing them to different careers.

“Research has shown that elementary-aged girls have an interest in mathematics and science,” Waterloo Program Coordinator Ellen Vanderloo explained. “They get into middle and high school and it’s ‘not cool’, so this is an opportunity to show them that STEM women are cool, fun, and smart.”

The Women in STEM program started back in 2012. Volunteers in those careers can apply to be a TeamMates mentor, then indicate if they’re interested in being a part of this extra focus on the STEM fields. The volunteers go through the same training and application process as traditional TeamMates mentors.

Renee Miller is an engineer and a STEM mentor in Waterloo. She said the girls can see what opportunities are available to them, and learn how to solve problems.

“It’s important for the girls because even if they don’t go into engineering, they can use those skills in many ways,” Renee explained.

Here’s how the program works: young girls who show an interest in math and science can request a mentor in the STEM fields. Once a month, the mentors and mentees meet with other TeamMates matches and do a project together.

“It’s a sharing and learning experience for both of us,” Renee said. “I love engineering through her eyes.”

Victoria and Renee have been matched for two years. Victoria said she was really interested in the Women in STEM Program because her dad is an engineer.

“My favorite part is looking at our beginning ideas then comparing them to the end of our final product, and seeing how much difference there is between the two products,” she explained.

Victoria said she’s thinking about becoming a veterinarian when she grows up. She said one of her goals is to invent something that could help animals.

She’s coming up with different ideas for her to help animals,” Victoria’s mother, Tasha, said. “It’s helped her blossom.”

The Value of TeamMates Volunteer Hours

$133,456 Mentoring Hours

X $23.07 In Value

$3,540,229

In Donated Time

independentsector.org
Shannon Allen

Long-term support for long-term success

Shannon Allen’s TeamMates journey began when she was in sixth grade in Grand Island, Nebraska. She was matched with a woman who she said changed her life—Becky Wagner.

“She was my favorite person to see every week. I was going through a lot of stuff, and she was always there, very supportive through academics,” Shannon said. "When I felt like giving up, she gave me that extra push.”

“The difference in her since I met her and now, is how she'll reach out to people, she knows what she needs to do, and that's huge,” Becky said.

Nancy Jones is the program coordinator in Grand Island. She said she knew Becky and Shannon would hit it off right away.

"Becky got the big picture,” Nancy explained. “She was a good person to make Shannon see the big picture as well.”

Shannon is the first in her family to go to college. She said she credits Becky for pushing her toward her goal. Through TeamMates, Shannon was awarded the Osborne Opportunity scholarship in 2013. That scholarship provides support for three semesters at a University of Nebraska school.

Now, she’s a third-year biology major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She hopes to become a cardiologist, and her motivation hits close to home.

Last summer, Shannon and her father were visiting her sister when he collapsed. She sprung in to action and performed CPR while her sister called for help. Her father luckily survived after undergoing bypass surgery.

“It took me about a week to get over the bad feeling that this had happened to him, but when I realized that the first response helped save him, it was a pretty great feeling,” she said.

Shannon said her dad credits the TeamMates Mentoring Program for giving her the push to go in to the medical field. As Shannon pursues her dream, she has her Post-Secondary mentor, Angie Muhleisen, to guide her through.

The Post-Secondary Program helps transition students from high school to college. The program helps mentees with soft skill development, career preparation, and additional resources and support for academic success as they pursue their post-secondary education.

DeMoine Adams is the Post-Secondary Education Coordinator. He said he paired Angie and Shannon up because they have different personalities and strengths.

“Angie brings a lot of wisdom and experience to the table,” he explained. “While Shannon, who is a natural learner, soaks it all in.”

Their differing personalities didn’t keep them from becoming close. Angie said it took time for them to break down that trust barrier.

“I live in such a sheltered world,” she explained. “You don’t realize it until you meet someone who had to go through situations you never had to.”

As she looks back on the past nine years in the TeamMates Mentoring Program, Shannon said she looks forward to becoming a mentor.

“I’ve seen so many mentors impact lives, I want to give someone hope to know that they are capable,” she said. “To have someone there, when they think they have no one, is the greatest.”
Omaha city officials and organizations are working hard to improve the lives of families in North Omaha. The TeamMates Mentoring Program is part of this initiative.

Collaboration between The Empowerment Network, Omaha Public Schools, the City of Omaha, and 40 community agencies, has led to the creation of the Village Zone Project. The formation team developed a 30 year plan with the vision to connect the rich history and legacy of the community to a thriving, sustainable future by accelerating the transformation of North Omaha into a great place to live and raise a family.

The TeamMates Village Zone initiative is growing. Coordinators are recruiting new mentors to make an impact on a child who lives in the 68111 and 68110 zip codes.

Giovanni Jones has been a mentor with TeamMates for about three years. Her mentee is a student at King Math and Science Center in North Omaha. When Giovanni was asked where she wanted to mentor, she said the answer was obvious.

“There’s a need for mentors all over,” she said. “I really wanted to be concentrated somewhere with the greatest need.”

Giovanni said she adores her mentee, but she’s not afraid to be tough. For instance, they play a lot of games, but she’s not going to sit back and let her win. She said she wants her mentee to learn that she has to work for what she wants.

“One day we played scrabble, and she spelled a 19 or 22 point word. We both were over the moon about it!” she explained. “I don’t let her win, but when she does, she knows she earned that and no one can take that away from her.”
For Laurie Venteicher, freshman year of college feels like a lifetime ago.

“I have more overall confidence that stuff’s going to work out, and I’ll be able to handle it,” she said. Now, the University of Nebraska-Kearney senior is getting ready to say goodbye, not only to college, but to her TeamMates mentor, LeeAnn Amm.

“It’s a little bittersweet that the meetings won’t happen quite as often,” Laurie said.

Laurie joined the TeamMates Mentoring Program after receiving the Aksarben-Horatio Alger State Scholarship. Only 50 students from Nebraska and Western Iowa receive the award. The scholarship program is dedicated to students who are successfully overcoming adversity. Recipients of the Aksarben-Horatio Alger State Scholarship, like Laurie, are given the opportunity to be matched with a mentor in college. That’s when she decided to move forward with the TeamMates Mentoring Program.

“When I first met LeeAnn, I was struck by how friendly she was,” Laurie said. “She was immediately welcoming and smiling.”

Working at UNK, LeeAnn said she was excited to get to know a student on a more personal level.

“It’s nice to be able to connect with someone who is living the dream, going to class every day, and finding out what’s important to her,” she said.

Aksarben Foundation President Jon Burt said it’s a joy to see scholarship recipients and TeamMates mentees giving back.

“That’s a real inspiration to see them pass along that support and encouragement they have been provided as they continue their journey,” he said.

Laurie hopes to work in print journalism after college. In September, Laurie wrote an article about her experience in the TeamMates Mentoring Program, and her first meetings with the Post-Secondary Education Coordinator DeMoine Adams.

She wrote, “He said that having a mentor was ‘like how a GPS helps a driver on the road, particularly roads that you’ve never taken before.’”

LeeAnn said after reading the article, she was very touched to hear Laurie is having a worthwhile experience.

“It’s nice to see that she’s taking full advantage of the opportunities given to her,” LeeAnn said. “She’s a good kid.”

$71,000 in college scholarships from TeamMates’ Central Office
$91,000 in college scholarships from local TeamMates Programs
$379,308 in college scholarships from TeamMates College Partners
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For more information on the TeamMates Foundation, or to make a planned gift to provide endowed support to TeamMates Mentoring Program, contact Jennifer Benson, Development Director, at 402-390-8326.
TeamMates Mentoring Program

Income
$4,594,722

- In-Kind 31%
- Contributions 46%
- Grants 17%
- United Way 4%
- Other 1%
- Investment 1%
- Federal 4%

Expenses
$4,533,937

- Program Expense 82%
- Management 12%
- Fundraising 6%

TeamMates Foundation

Income
$75,632

- Donor Contributions 50%
- Investment Income 50%

Expenses
$98,778

- Scholarships 63%
- Disbursements 13%
- Fees 16%
- Misc. 8%
"I like my mentor because he’s my best friend."
- TeamMates Mentee

"My mentor has changed my life because I’m a lot more confident at school and with my friends."
- TeamMates Mentee

TEAMMATES®
MENTORING PROGRAM
Together We Transform Lives
Nearly every successful person can point to a mentor who showed them the way or had a significant impact on their life. “Mentoring Matters” makes the case for mentoring and how it impacts not only young people but also the adults who serve as mentors. Throughout “Mentoring Matters”, Coach Osborne details the need for mentors, tools for identifying strengths and the meaning and purpose of mentoring.

To purchase: Visit the TeamMates Store! Go online to teammates.org or call 402-390-8326.