

Mentoring For Success



Horace Mann (Continued from Page 1)

The team approach helps to balance the workload each individual does to coordinate the mentoring program at their site. Knowing that staff are working together creates less stress for everyone working on the mentoring program. Everyone on the Mentoring Team has a say in what can happen in the program, creating a positive and creative structure to develop an effective program that works for students.

The teamwork has also resulted in greater support to mentors. All of the mentors in the program are assigned to a Mentoring Team staff member. This breaks the larger group of 20 mentors into smaller groups allowing coordinators to provide more support. When information needs to be disseminated or permission slips collected, the mentor coordinators only need to contact their four assigned mentors instead of the entire twenty. This is fast, efficient, and a lot less daunting than trying to manage all of the matches at once.

Representation from SF Promise on the Mentoring Team has also contributed to the program's success at Horace Mann. There are currently six SF Promise Mentors in the program, two of whom, Maggie Valencia and Elisa Guevarra, work as part of the mentor coordinator's group. "So far, as coordinating with the LSP, to plan events and take care of in adding creativity and collaboration," says Valencia. She says that, "I making a difference, and it has been the most added creativity and dedication to the program the SF Promise Mentors as their matches,

"The mentoring program makes me feel positive towards school, it makes me feel like I have something worth looking forward to."
Rhonda, Student at Horace Mann Middle School

toring Team has also contributed to the currently six SF Promise Mentors in the Elisa Guevarra, work as part of the mentors, we've been able to work closely our team. It's been a great responsibility Valencia. The partnership is working out felt we were at the perfect place for fun, best time of my career, as we've gram." The mentees certainly enjoy having their dedication is commendable.

Thanks to their team and community, **Horace Mann's mentoring program is thriving.** One Horace Mann student, Rhonda, described how effective the mentoring program has been: **"The mentoring program makes me feel positive towards school, it makes me feel like I have something worth looking forward to."** It is precisely for this reason that we continue to encourage mentoring throughout the district. We appreciate all of the participating schools and the gifted individuals who mentor and have dedicated countless hours engaging students to become joyful learners.

Thanks everyone!

SFUSD MENTORS

Show Off!!

Please complete your web-based mentor log on a weekly basis!

This is a best practice and simple tool to demonstrate the fantastic work you are doing with your student.

Log on at <https://psweb.etr.org/sfusd/login/splash.cfm>

If you are having any problems logging on or using the log, please contact Erin Farrell at 242-2615 ext. 3078 or farrelle@sfusd.edu

Your cooperation in making this happen is greatly appreciated.

Mentoring For Success



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Program Highlight: Horace Mann Middle School A Team Approach

Coordinating **Mentoring For Success** at a school site is no easy task. It takes commitment and hard work to ensure the program runs smoothly. At Horace Mann Middle School, a unique structure implemented by Learning Support Professional Vanessa Marrero, has allowed the first year program to take root and thrive.

Marrero has accomplished a great deal since Mann began the program in the fall. In addition to attending regular monthly activities, matches participated in World AIDS Day activities, took a field trip to the Asian Art Museum, published a monthly mentor program newsletter, created a breakfast club that meets twice a week, and is currently planning a service-learning project for this month.

The success and organization can be attributed to Horace Mann's team approach. Currently, two teachers, two SF Promise Mentors, a Gear Up Coordinator, and Marrero come together once a week to plan for the program. They discuss new matches made, mentor log documentation, issues that arise within individual matches, and plan for the monthly activities. During the meeting tasks are delegated according to people's abilities and interests.
(Continued p. 6)



Spring 2010—Inside this issue:

Program Highlight... Horace Mann Middle School	1
Match Spotlight	1
Mentoring Activities	2
Helping Hands	3
Mentor Acknowledgement	4
Marching Toward Summer...	5
Participating Schools	5

Match Spotlight



**Valerie and Jessica at
Horace Mann Middle School**

This month we interviewed 6th grader Jessica Menjivar and her mentor Valerie Barth, the school librarian at Horace Mann Middle School.

Can you tell me one interesting hobby, talent, or fun fact about yourselves?

Ms. Valerie: I like to read as I am a librarian (smile). I like to cook and look after my dog. I also really like to spend time with my family and with my mentee.

Jessica: I like swimming. I enjoy spending time with my family too. I also like going to see movies with my mentor and with my friends too.

What led you to join the mentoring program? How did you two meet?

Ms. Valerie: Personally, I really enjoy working with kids. I have done mentoring before but always in informal settings just to work with students in terms of getting to know them better and just to be a friend and an advisor to them etc. One day, I received an email sent by the site coordinator Vanessa Marrero to all school staff asking if we would be interested in becoming mentors. I immediately decided to volunteer. I thought it was a good opportunity for me really to be involved in it. I wanted to learn what really mentoring means by attending trainings to be a,



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positive mentor to children. I did not know Jessica beforehand and Jessica and I met through our school coordinator.

How long has your mentoring relationship been occurring? What activities have you two done together? Any favorites?

Ms. Valerie: We met in October. Mostly, we do some fun activities like hanging out together and going out to movies. We also go out to eat and sometimes go out shopping together. But, we sometimes have done homework together when she comes to the library to do her homework. Also, I have gone to her classroom sometimes just to observe her and to help out.

Jessica: I liked all of the activities we have done together so far. I also enjoyed going to the Asian Art Museum with other mentees and mentors at school.

Now that you two have known each other for some time, how do you feel about mentoring? Has anything surprised you about the relationship?

Jessica: Well, at the beginning, I heard that she was a strict person from other kids as she was a school librarian. Surprisingly, once I got to know her, she was a very nice and easy going person. That surprised me (smile).

Ms. Valerie: I, and other teachers, or any school staff can be strict to students if they misbehave; for example, if you behave disrespectfully in the classroom by not following the school rules, I would also insist that you behave appropriately at school, no matter if you are my mentee or not. What do you think Jessica?

Jessica: Yes. I agree.

Ms. Valerie: Overall, it has been a positive ongoing relationship, and she also met with my children, which was nice. I am glad that she could really trust in me and was open to me.



What are you looking forward to doing together in the future?

Jessica: I would like to do more of the same, because what we do is fun to me. But, I would like going to see movies with her again.

Ms. Valerie: On one holiday in winter, Jessica was invited to go the mountains to see the snow with my family, but she could not come. So, I am hoping maybe in the future we could do another trip with my family sometime. I have a daughter who is around Jessica's age, so they were happy to meet with each other too. When my daughter comes to my school, we sometimes could hang out all together. We all went out to a movie and went to have a meal together.

Any advice you would like to mentors or mentees who have just begun their relationships?

Jessica: I would say to them that once you try to get to know each other better, then everything will be easy. I like my mentor because she is always there for me.

Ms. Valerie: I try to fit the activities into my life style, and it has been naturally going well. Most importantly, it is good to have someone in your life to care for each other. It is a very nice and trustworthy relationship.

Mentoring Activities

Challenge Course with Pacific Leadership Institute. Fort Miley, May 15, or May 18
If you signed up please be sure to submit your Consent Forms to your Site Coordinator (including the one for PLI), coordinate transportation, pack a lunch and have a great time!

Mentoring Best Practices Training is a two hour training that gives mentors a foundation in mentoring best practices. Mentors get practical tools and information to deepen their connection with students, and gain valuable information to address roadblocks to future academic and social success. Thanks to the following schools for hosting trainings at their sites!
Bret Harte Elementary School, Thurgood Marshall High School, Rosa Parks Elementary School, International Studies Academy, Horace Mann Middle School

Marching Toward Summer: Personal Disclosure and Continued Connection

As we come back from Spring Break, and launch into CST testing and the end of the 2009-2010 school year, it is not too early to begin thinking about transition and continued match support.

With an impending budget deficit, changes in our schools and in our district as a whole are a reminder that environmental changes do affect our entire school community. We need to ask ourselves, how do we safely and appropriately address our own histories and daily life challenges in our mentor-mentee relationships?

Disclosure in relationships is a controversial topic among professionals who work with young people. Therapists, probation officers, principals, after-school personnel and teachers may all have a different take on how much is too much personal information to share with a young person.

Trust in relationships usually requires some level of sharing and connection, especially with youth who may have had difficulties making strong connections with adults in their lives. As their mentor, you have likely been asked questions that make you uncomfortable, that probe at what you feel is too personal and not helpful in providing appropriate guidance to the young person. You may choose to share photos of your children or plans for an upcoming weekend with your mentee. Some adult mentors, however, avoid sharing any personal information to refocus all of their attention to their mentee. In a recent Mentor training a presenter from Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY), a former foster youth with many years of mentee experience, shared that she preferred her mentors open up with her to demonstrate equality and respect.

As a general rule, student mentees' learning and development should be in the forefront while making any personal disclosure. We can share our own stories and past experiences in ways that model reflective thinking and positive decision-making.

Assisting youth in making good choices and developing a sense of responsibility and future-oriented thinking poses a challenge to all adults working with young people. Referring to our Mentor Program trainers Stacy and Alex's work, we hope to build each student's Network of Care, developing their ability to independently develop social capital, recognize opportunities, and access resources—now, this summer, and in their long-term futures.

Summertime can be a stressful time for students who prefer to be at school than at home, and as their mentor you will have likely become a significant positive part of that school experience. Start discussions with your mentee now about goal-setting and decision-making to develop a plan for activities during the summer. Your continued contact during summer months is an essential part of sustaining the trust you've built in your relationship. When discussing how you will maintain contact, through a phone call or postcards or a monthly meeting, think about ways to engage your mentee in conversations about choosing healthy options for their personal and academic development during their out-of-school time.

For additional ideas for summer activities, please contact Elaine Ellis, Match Support Coordinator, ellise@sfusd.edu.



Participating Schools

- AP Giannini Middle School
- Aptos Middle School
- Bessie Carmichael
- Bret Harte Elementary School
- Civic Center Secondary School
- Claire Lilienthal
- Everett Middle School
- Francisco Middle School
- Herbert Hoover Middle School
- Horace Mann Middle School
- International Studies Academy
- James Denman Middle School
- James Lick Middle School
- Marina Middle School
- Mission Middle School
- MLK Middle School
- Paul Revere
- Presidio Middle School
- Rooftop Alternative School
- Roosevelt Middle School
- Rosa Parks Elementary School
- Visitacion Valley Middle School
- Willie Brown College Preparatory Academy