

Mentoring Matters

Issue No. 10, January 2006

Published by StrengthBuilding Partners

www.strengthbuilding.org

Editor's Note: This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about the StrengthBuilding Partners Mentoring Program. This program at Johnson Primary, Lawrence Intermediate and Hohokam Middle Schools is being funded (in part) by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families through a grant provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Title IV Program through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Contents:

- 18 New Mentors Matched in December!
- 100% Participation in Two Departments
- Mentor to Mentor
- Ask Pam
- StrengthBuilding Tip
- News from the Partnership Team
- Upcoming Events
- Meet the Mentors
- How You Can Help

18 New Mentors Matched in December!



Lorena and Danae with the artwork from their first visit.

A record 18 mentors were matched at parties at Johnson, Lawrence and Hohokam in December, including Lorena Redondo and Danae. Lorena signed up at a presentation given by Marie Stickford at the Pascua Yaqui Health Department.

At the Meet Your Mentee Party at Lawrence on December 6, sisters Mercy McNamara and Monica Valenzuela met their mentees for the first time, too. It's terrific to see the program grow through mentors and mentees recruiting and including their friends and family, as well as through the presentations.



Daniela with her mother Teresa Molina

The group of new mentors at Lawrence included Teresa Molina and her daughter Daniela Molina, who can enjoy being with each other and their mentees at the same time. The Molinas had been familiar with the program because Teresa has provided balloons for special events. Teresa decided to become a mentor to help out even more. Daniela had attended the Yoemia Nau Yohame Conference, and decided on her own it would be good to become a mentor.

It's always a treat when new mentees can have members of their family join them at the matching party. Alma is a new mentee whose mother and brother were there on December 6 to meet Alma's mentor, Socorro Miranda. Alma's mother Melissa was familiar with the program because Alma's brother Rudy had participated last year. Melissa noticed that it helped Rudy do his homework, and communicate more, so she was pleased to have her daughter matched with a mentor.



Alma with her brother and mother at the Meet Your Mentor Party.

When your family and friends are included, the matching party is more fun. And sharing your mentoring experience with others you care about benefits everyone. See Marie to pick up an application for someone you would like to see join the group as a mentor.

100% Participation in Two Departments

Congratulations to the Healthy Families Department and the Public Defender's Office for 100% staff participation as mentors. As explained by Maria Paisano of Healthy Families, there are added benefits when the whole department participates.

"We work as a team in our department, both internally and with the families we serve, so this approach extends to being mentors," says Maria. "We talk about mentoring during our weekly

team meetings, and are planning to go to the schools in pairs or small groups to support each other. This can make it more fun for us and for our mentees.”

Maria had been to a presentation by Marie Stickford, and invited Marie to come to her regularly scheduled department team meeting to talk about the program. One member of the department, Adriana Valencia, was already a mentor and talked about her experience. As a result of the meeting and encouragement by Maria, all seven members of the department are now mentors.

“The mentoring program fits with the mission of our team,” continued Maria. “We do home visits with families and this extends our involvement into the schools.”

Mentors from Healthy Families include: Yvette Grajeda, Rita Lindsey, Adriana Valencia, Lorena Redondo, Eva Flores, Sara Mendoza and Maria Paisano.

Mentor to Mentor

“One of the things that I learned from the training was the difference between being a friend and being a mentor. When I first met with my mentee, we discussed this, and set up the boundaries for our relationship. I have found this really worked well.”

Melissa Duarte

“My mentee liked to play with her friends in the afternoon, so I arranged to be at school in the morning. The teacher liked it when I was in the classroom while my mentee was working on math. I also found that incentives helped to improve her attendance.”

Jessie Alvarez

“Be consistent, and don’t give up on your mentee. If your mentee seems shy, just try again, it’s not that she doesn’t want to be with you. At first, my mentee was timid. Now, it’s like the sun came out, she greets me with a big smile and a hug.”

Jessie Alvarez

Ask Pam

Dear Pam,

I am committed to being a mentor, but my work schedule has made it difficult to visit my mentee during her lunchtime. What should I do?

Signed: Lunch Time Doesn’t Work

Dear Lunch Time Doesn’t Work,

All three schools ask that the mentoring program respect the academic needs of the mentees by attempting to plan mentor visits around their mentees’ lunch hour. However, research shows us how instrumental mentoring can be to a student’s academic success. You ARE important to your mentee and her success in school.

You didn't mention which school your mentee attends. There is flexibility in the times you visit at Lawrence and Hohokam. Please, please talk with your mentee's teacher(s) and/or Marie to arrange an alternative time to visit your mentee. If your mentee attends Johnson, please speak with Marie or Pat and they will try to assist you. As always, we encourage you to communicate any issues and/or concerns you may have regarding your mentee.

Never doubt your importance in the life of your mentee. Just your presence and attention can make all the difference in the world for her.

Pam

StrengthBuilding Tip

Do you remember a time or a moment in your life when someone noticed something about you...something that you did or said...and told you how great you were because of it? Do you remember when someone pointed out a strength that you have that you didn't realize was there? Do you remember how wonderful you felt that someone noticed you and was really paying attention to you? This is what mentoring is all about.

So, with the new year, visit your mentees and have a renewed sense of getting to know them. Even if you have known them for a couple of years now, you can still find new strengths or strengths you have already seen, but ones that are growing and maturing. Share your observations with your mentees, and with their teachers. Let them know how wonderful you think they are just because they are exactly who they are.

Enjoy, and Happy New Year!

News from the Partnership Team

We are pleased to report that there are now 88 active pairs of mentors and mentees! An additional 10 mentors were trained on January 10 at the Tribal Council Chambers. Whenever possible, upcoming trainings will be held at the Tribal Council Chambers.

Michele Manuel has rejoined the Partnership Team and plans to be a mentor. The Partnership Team also welcomes Mildred Manuel of the Pascua Yaqui Education Department. We are saddened by the loss of Mentor Florentina Molina who passed away in October. Her mentee has been matched with a new mentor to help the mentee adjust to the loss.

Fun and festive holiday parties were held at each of the schools. The parties included a gift exchange, with mentees giving their mentors personally decorated ornaments with their photos, and mentors giving their mentees a gift selected just for them from Barnes & Noble.

Two workshops have been planned for the remainder of the school year (see below for dates). The first 20 mentors to sign up for each workshop will receive a stipend of \$35 for their

attendance on their own time. Classes were determined by interest surveys and input from the Partnership Team.

Mildred Manuel and Pam Clark-Raines are developing the 8th Grade Mentoring Pilot Program and the Memo of Understanding between the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and SBP. It is anticipated that the program will be in place when 8th graders from Hohokam move to Cholla High School next year.

Upcoming Events

February 23-24	Rodeo Break
Wednesday, March 8	Emotional Intelligence Workshop, 6 – 9 p.m., PYT Health Department Conference Room
March 9	End of Quarter
March 10	No school, Teacher Grading and Planning Day
March 15	Lawrence Mentor/Mentee Game Time, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
March 21	Johnson Mentor/Mentee Game Time, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
March 28	Hohokam Mentor/Mentee Game Time, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 5	Multiple Intelligences Workshop, 6 – 9 p.m., PYT Housing Warehouse Conference Room
April 13, 14, 17	Spring Break
Tuesday, May 2	Mentor Recognition Dinner, 5:30 – 8:30 at Hohokam Cafeteria
Wednesday, May 24	Last day of school for students

Meet the Mentors

Jessie Alvarez is a dispensing nurse for the New Beginning Clinic in the Tribal Health Department. She started with the Tribe in 1996 as a Community Health Representative, and then became a Community Health Nurse after receiving her LPN. For nearly 10 years, she has made home health visits, serving all ages of the community. Born in Tucson at Old Pascua, she graduated from Tucson High, and attended the Pima College Desert Vista Campus. Jessie worked at a nursing home for 10 years before joining the Health Department at the Tribe.

Jessie has been a mentor for three years. She first became involved because she believes that kids need one-on-one attention to help motivate them to finish school. She has two boys and family at both old and new Pascua. She enjoys participating in the cultural activities of the Tribe.

Melissa Duarte is a social worker with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and has worked with the Tribe for four years. This amazing mother of three girls and two boys (ages 10, 7, 6, 4 and 3) makes time in her busy schedule to be a mentor because she remembers the value of her mentors, including Tribal Councilman Francisco Munoz, and Mr. Olea and Mrs. DeLacruz, two teachers at Hohokam Middle School.

Melissa has lived on the reservation for most of her life, and enjoys the support of family, including her mother and grandmother, and the community. In between sports activities with her children, Melissa is attending Pima Community College and training to become a certified social worker. She would like to create a non-profit organization to help single mothers become self-sufficient, in keeping with the goal of the Tribe.

How You Can Help

Please continue to encourage your friends and co-workers to contact Marie Stickford at **404-6275** for more information or an application to become a mentor. Marie is also available to make a presentation or home visit to talk about how to become a mentor. Call Pat Trainor with mentee referrals at 481-5760.

We also welcome your submissions of stories about the mentor/mentee relationship and ideas for activities for publication in this newsletter. Please send your articles or comments to Marie at maries@strengthbuilding.org.