

e-Volunteer Newsletter

Community Thread

JANUARY 2010

Mentoring Makes the Difference

Special points of interest:

- Mentor- change a life
- Thank Your Mentor Day—January 21, 2010
- MLK Day—January 18th
- Give a Day-Get A Disney Day

e-Volunteer Newsletter is a monthly newsletter for individuals interested in volunteering, supporting their community — and making a positive impact on those around them.

Mentors are valuable throughout one's life and can help with career advancement, relationships and finding one's passion, among other things. Whether you want to help a young person or not so young person, consider volunteering as a mentor and have a positive influence on another's life.

January is national mentor's month and the following article speaks to the benefits a mentor can make in a young person's life:

Science Daily (Nov. 5, 2009) -Two findings from a new national study reveal the power of mentors, particularly those in the teaching profession:

- For all teen students, having an adult mentor meant a 50 percent greater likelihood of attending college.
- For disadvantaged students, mentorship by a teacher nearly doubled the odds of attending college.

"Potential is sometimes squashed by

the social environment, and the data show that mentors can overcome those forces," said Lance Erickson, a sociology professor at Brigham Young University and the study's lead author.

"Youth who are most likely to need mentors are least likely to have them," said McDonald." Their research shows less than half of disadvantaged students report having any adult mentor. Only seven percent had a mentoring relationship with a teacher.

The data includes information from more than 14,000 adolescents who participated in the National Longitudinal Student of Adolescent Health.

In the statistical analysis, mentors proved pivotal in whether students make the jump to college. For example, students whose parents do not have even a high school degree are normally 35 percent likely to enroll in college. According to the study, the rate jumps to 66 percent when the

students had mentors in their lives.

"Comments from study participants indicate that their mentors weren't necessarily doing anything extraordinary, just being involved and treating the young person as an important human being," Erickson said.

Glen Elder of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill is a co-author on the study.

"Teacher-mentors close the college gap for disadvantaged kids," Erickson said.

The authors point out that much needs to be done to help disadvantaged youth connect to the adults, especially teachers, in their lives.

Brigham Young University (200, November 5). Benefit Of A Mentor: Disadvantaged Teens Twice As Likely To Attend College. ScienceDaily. Retrieved December 10, 2009, from <http://sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091104161837.htm>



Announcements

Do you have a mentor in your life? Let them know how much they mean to you on **January 21, 2010—Thank Your Mentor Day.** Ways to thank your mentor: **Contact Them:** Get in touch via phone, email, car or letter. **Pass it On:** Honor the person who mentored you by becoming a mentor yourself. **Write a Tribute:** Document the importance of your mentor and submit it to the newspaper, radio or TV station, or post it online at www.whomentoredyou.org.

Give a Day Get A Disney Day—Starting January 1, 2010, you can go to www.disneyparks.com to register to volunteer a day of service with a participating organization and Disney will give each pre-registered volunteer one day admission to a theme park at Disneyland Resort or Walt Disney World Resort, free. **Need help finding a place to volunteer?** Call us at 651.439.7434 or go 1-800 Volunteer.org to find a volunteer opportunity.

January 18th MLK Day—Make it a Day of Service.

Community Thread is providing a volunteer opportunity on MLK—Day helping to support Washington County Parks by clearing out the invasive non-native buckthorn plant.

This can also qualify as a day of service in support of "Give A Day Get A Disney Day" Must pre-register for the Disney promotion at www.disneyparks.com.



community thread

Connecting People. Enriching Lives

Lisa Thalacker, Volunteer Center Program Director
Robin Halloum, Volunteer Center Program Coordinator

VOLUNTEER CENTER
2300 WEST ORLEANS ST.
STILLWATER, MN 55082
PHONE: 651.439.7434
FAX: 651.439.7616

E-MAIL:
LISA@COMMUNITYTHREADMN.ORG
ROBIN@COMMUNITYTHREADMN.ORG

Many More Online Volunteer

Opportunities Available!

Simply go to:

Communitythreadmn.org



Click on 1-800 Volunteer.org and you will be guided through the login procedure. *Thank you!*

“Life’s most urgent and persistent question is: what are you doing for others?” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Volunteer Ombudsman – St Croix & Chippewa Valleys

Be an advocate for the elderly in a nursing home that might not be able to speak up for themselves. A Volunteer Ombudsman Program Coordinator will train and guide volunteers throughout the entire volunteer experience. The time commitment is a minimum of six months, 2 ½ hours per week between 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM. For more information call 1-800.815.0015.

Aviary Care Taker – Hudson

Do you enjoy birds and caring for them? Christian Community Homes & Service is in need of a volunteer to be responsible for weekly cleaning of their bird aviary. Volunteer must be comfortable in a small area with birds around them. Day and time are flexible with the volunteer’s schedule. For more information contact Brenda Magadan at 715.381.4205 or e-mail brenda.magadan@ccchudson.org.

Welcome/Hospitality Desk – Oak Park Heights

Come lend a smile and a hand at Boutwells Landing senior living community by greeting visitors at their Welcome Desk. Giving directions and handing out nametags are some of the responsibilities. Work in two-hour shifts or ask the volunteer coordinator to help schedule a time that is good for you. For more information contact Debra Campbell, Director of Volunteer Services, at 651.275.5023 or e-mail dcampbell@preshomes.org.

Mentor a teenager -White Bear Lake

East Metro Women’s Council is looking for volunteers to mentor at risk teenagers. Commitment is 1—1.5 hours a week. For more information contact Cheryl Schindler at 651.773.8401 x 116 or e-mail her at caschindler@emwc.org.

Volunteering—The Story

Big Brother Big Sisters—by Philip Hussong, Marketing & Public Relations Associate

For the past 15 years, Tom Grezek has been passing along his wisdom and friendship to students throughout the Lake Elmo area. As a dedicated Big Brother for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities, Tom has mentored a total of seven different young people at different points since 1994. He still stays in contact with each of his past Little Brothers, sustaining those friendships even after the students graduate from the mentoring program. Tom has seen his ‘Littles’ succeed in high school, college, masters programs and marriages. “It’s rewarding to be included in a program after 15 years still gives me joy,”

says Tom. “I hope the kids get as much out of it as I do. They have all become part of the family.”

Matched in the School-based Program, Tom and his current Little Brother, Hunter, meet for an hour each week at Hunter’s school. Tom has guided Hunter through academic challenges and has been able to connect with him on a deeper level. Hunter’s father recently returned from duty in Iraq, and as a retired military veteran, Tom has been able to share his own experiences and insights regarding service life.

While Tom Grezek has had a positive influence on several young lives in the Lake Elmo area, there are still many children who are in need of a trusted friend. Visit

www.bigstwincities.org or call 651.789.2451 to see how you can make a difference in the life of one of the more than twenty children who are waiting for a mentor in the Lake Elmo and Stillwater area.



Tom and Hunter, Lake Elmo