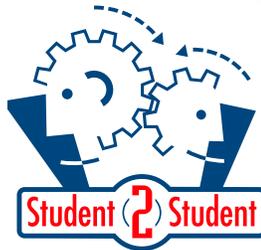


# Student2Student

## MENTORING PROGRAM



SkillsUSA's national mentoring program  
in support of America's Promise Alliance.

### INSIDE: A DETAILED GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

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**S**ports figures do it. TV and movie stars do it. Are your students doing it?

“It” is mentoring, and it can be one of the single most rewarding experiences for young people today. Mentoring is a powerful and popular way for people to learn a variety of personal and professional skills. In fact, mentoring is one of the oldest forms of influence around.

The common thread throughout history has been that people learn a skill from an expert. Whatever quality or skill they want to develop, they “get it” by spending time with people who have it.

Alexander the Great conquered and ruled the world but not because he was born a prince. He achieved greatness because a great man, Aristotle, taught him. Aristotle learned how to be successful from another great man, Plato. And Plato learned from Socrates.

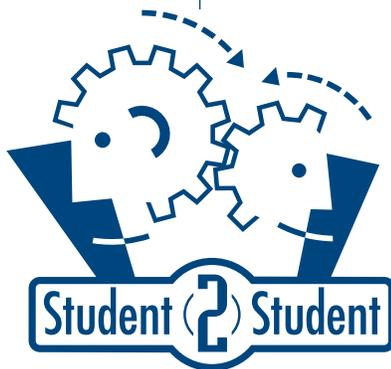
Virtually anyone can benefit from having a mentor or having been a mentor to someone. Through SkillsUSA's Student2Student mentoring program, your students are afforded the opportunity to be a significant person in a youngster's life, and in return, your students may feel a new sense of pride as they become a role model.

The Student2Student program involves high school students in helping elementary- and middle-level learners make decisions that will lead to marketable skills, a productive future and serving their communities.

### **Why Involve Students in Mentoring?**

All children have the potential to succeed in life and contribute to society. However, not all children get the support they need to thrive.

Mentoring builds positive, supportive relation-



ships for your students and for the students they mentor. Being a positive role model gives young people a new responsibility to live up to and increases their leadership potential and encourages staying in school.

Mentoring engages students in activities that can stimulate the mind and imagination. Many students may be venturing into uncharted territory by mentoring. The learning potential is endless, as are the possible lifelong effects.

Mentoring builds awareness of career options and the importance of career and technical education in elementary- and middle-school students. Too often, these students don't know about the opportunities that exist in career and technical education.

Mentoring can instill a life-long commitment to “giving back” to the community and create attention and visibility for your students and school program.

### **The Benefits of Mentoring**

The word “mentor” comes from the Greek for “steadfast” and “enduring.” Mentoring is the one-to-one or group relationship that one or more adults develop with one or more young people to help them develop and succeed.

Mentoring offers many benefits:

- Improving self-esteem for both the mentor and the younger student
- Keeping young people in school
- Helping improve academic skills
- Leading young people to resources they might not find on their own
- Providing support for new behaviors, attitudes and ambitions
- Increasing young people's ability to seek and keep jobs
- Providing students a way to give back to their community

## Proof Positive

Research supports the benefits of mentoring. A Procter & Gamble study showed that of 133 Cincinnati students with mentors:

- All stayed in school, and their average attendance improved
- Their grade point averages were almost half a unit higher
- Seniors were almost three times more likely to go to college
- Students were more trusting of parents or guardians and less likely to lie to them

Of 400 high school students with mentors who participated in a Louis Harris poll:

- 73 percent said mentors helped them raise their goals and expectations
- 87 percent went to college or planned to attend college within a year of graduation
- 59 percent improved their grades
- 87 percent said they felt some benefit from their mentoring relationship

Researchers from Columbia University and the University of Massachusetts found that young people who overcome poverty to reach college often share a common bond: a mentor, or several mentors.

## A Commitment to America's Promise

SkillsUSA's mentoring program was created as a way for our members to participate in America's Promise Alliance. Colin L. Powell was the founding chairman of this national campaign, which was designed to ensure that our nation's youth have access to five resources:

- A caring adult: mentor, tutor, coach
- Safe places and structured activities during nonschool hours to learn and grow
- A healthy start leading to a healthy future
- A marketable skill through education

- An opportunity to give back through community service

SkillsUSA's partnership with America's Promise began in 1998 with the Volunteers in Career Awareness program. High-school and college mentors were encouraged to arrange tours of their schools for younger students in the hopes that the younger students would see the value of career and technical education and understand that it was an option for their future.

To encourage chapters to continue these efforts and maintain an even more engaging one-on-one involvement with middle-school students, SkillsUSA piloted another level of the program: Student2Student. Currently, the program encourages the fostering of even more personal development. This helps elementary or middle school students and high-school students make good decisions about their futures.

To help maintain our partnership with America's Promise, please report your efforts to SkillsUSA at [www.skillsusa.org/programs/mentoring-student2student/mentoring-recognition-program/](http://www.skillsusa.org/programs/mentoring-student2student/mentoring-recognition-program/) and be automatically enrolled in the mentoring recognition program. Your chapter could win up to \$500 and a chance to attend the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference.

*Student2Student was elected to the **2003 Associations Advance America Honor Roll**, which nationally recognizes associations that propel America forward with innovative projects in education, skills training, standards setting, business and social innovation, knowledge creation, citizenship and community service.*



**M**entoring is all about students sharing experience. Student2Student is a voluntary relationship between two people: a high-school or college student and a middle-school student. The aim is to encourage the younger students to explore future careers and make decisions that will lead to marketable skills, productive futures and service to their communities.



## Step One: Getting Your Ducks in a Row

Setting up a steering committee to establish the specific goals and rules of the program is the first step in delivering an effective program.

Committee members may include:

- SkillsUSA advisors
- Elementary or middle-school instructors
- Career guidance counselors
- Career center and elementary- or middle-school administrators
- Student project managers

The steering committee duties may include:

- Creating a vision statement for the program
- Writing program goals
- Developing ways to measure goals
- Writing program rules, including appropriate times and places to meet as well as acceptable activities to do
- Monitoring results

## Step Two: Planning for Success

The steering committee helps “steer” the project and advise. An instructor who will “champion” the project provides the leadership to make it happen. If you are an instructor, either assume the role of champion yourself, or have students seek out another faculty member or administrator to serve in this role. Next,

through an informal election, appoint a few responsible students to serve as managers, assume leadership roles and keep things moving.

### Steering Committee Preparation

A successful program requires goals. Before your steering committee meets to write goals to support career awareness, have them

discuss and brainstorm answers to the following questions:

- What do we want the mentees to achieve?
- What do we, the mentors, want to achieve?
- How can our schools benefit?
- How can we involve the community?

Next, have committee members review the following *sample* goals before they set their own goals and begin planning:

- Improve communication skills for all mentors
- Develop project planning and leadership skills for student managers
- Expand knowledge of local career options for all younger participants
- Build awareness in the career cluster areas for all younger participants
- Improve communications between elementary, middle and secondary schools
- Strengthen our relationship with other organizations

When your committee is ready to begin the planning process, make sure they review the following considerations:

- Get people involved. To be successful, mentoring participants should be willing volunteers. Eligibility criteria may include attendance records, grades, and leadership experience. Then, get creative about promoting the opportunity to students and instructors.

- Define roles.

**Mentors:**

- Create a fun icebreaker activity
- Organize a large group activity
- Research requested career topics
- Develop a fun game about careers
- Present on a chosen career
- Help younger students complete a project

**Elementary- or Middle-School Students:**

- Complete a given assignment
- Shadow a mentor for half a day
- Participate in activities
- Keep a journal of thoughts
- Work with a mentor on a joint project

- Keep everyone in the communication loop. Since you will be working with younger students, it may be helpful to develop a Student2Student agreement, which can be signed by parents, teachers and program coordinators. The agreement can describe the program goals and activities.
- Decide how you will match mentors and mentees. Some programs have the younger students complete an inventory of their interests. Mentors and younger students are paired up based on the younger students' identified interests.

### Step Three: Training For Success

Training for both sets of students is important for a successful program. A sample agenda for a one-day training session for mentors appears at right. You may also want to set up sessions on one or more of these topics:

**Training for Mentors:**

- Program goals and ground rules
- What to expect from mentees
- How to work with mentees
- What to do if there's a problem
- How to research careers
- How to start conversations
- How to use icebreakers
- Where to get help

- The very first meeting
- How to be an active listener
- Elements of working together

**Training for Elementary- or Middle-School Students:**

- Program goals and ground rules
- The role of the student being mentored
- Definition of career awareness
- Brainstorming appropriate activities
- Completing a career interest inventory

**Special Topics for Mentors:**

- Learning styles
- Characteristics of elementary- or middle-level students
- Decision making
- Brainstorming
- Team building
- Trust building
- Cultural diversity
- Conflict resolution
- Problem solving
- Drug and alcohol abuse

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*This agenda represents  
a one-day training session for mentors*

### Sample Student2Student Training Program Agenda

10 a.m.–10:25 a.m.	Icebreaker
10:25 a.m.–10:55 a.m.	Define mentoring
10:55 a.m.–11:10 a.m.	Positive and Negative Aspects of Mentoring
11:10 a.m.–11:40 a.m.	First Meeting Activity
11:40 a.m.–12:10 p.m.	Planning and Orientation
12:10 p.m.–12:40 p.m.	Lunch
12:40 p.m.–1:25 p.m.	Understanding and Writing Goals
1:25 p.m.–1:35 p.m.	Mentor Preparation Checklist
1:35 p.m.–1:55 p.m.	Areas of Growth and Development
1:44 p.m.–2:05 p.m.	Barriers–Motivation
2:05 p.m.–2:40 p.m.	Career Development
2:40 p.m.–3 p.m.	Elementary or Middle school Student Characteristics
3 p.m.	Closing

## Step Four: Student2Student in Action

Now you have a champion, student managers, a steering committee, goals, rules, participants and training. It's time for mentors and younger students to meet. Here are a few pointers:

- At the beginning, keep student visits focused on getting acquainted. Use icebreakers (see Page 8) and team activities to help students build confidence and trust in each other.
- Activities should be fun, fast-paced and structured, and should help participants learn about each other.
- Develop hands-on, engaging activities that encourage exposure to career options.
- Open the program with small groups meeting on related topics, class-to-class adoption with pairs working together, or start right away with one-on-one pairing.
- As you develop ways to explore careers, consider some of the following topics: understanding a workplace, nontraditional positions or special workplace environments.
- When you schedule meetings, remember: *Consistency* of contact is more important than frequency.
- Hold regular debriefings to discuss progress, troubleshoot problems and create activities.

## Step Five: Program Focus

Remember, the purpose of the program is to help mentees gain career awareness. Although the program will evolve to focus on what the younger student wants to explore, activities may start differently. Still, the program should progress in these phases:

### Sample Activities

- Have mentors and the younger students hold a Career Day at the elementary or middle school.
  - Have mentors perform a job skill demonstration for the younger students. Guidelines can be found in the *SkillsUSA Championships Technical Standards*.
  - Have students take a field trip together to visit a science center, art museum or power plant.
  - Have students perform a community service and reflect on the career skill sets used.
  - Have mentors and younger students take a career interest survey or personal assessment.
  - Have mentors organize SkillsUSA Championships-style contests for younger students.
  - Have mentors organize a career day or tour of their school that involves younger students and their parents.
  - Hold a banquet to honor students and their mentors.
- 
- **Starting Phase:** In the beginning, the focus is on *building trust and confidence*, and activities should be prescribed by the steering committees and instructors with input from students. Example activities may include icebreakers, interviews, team games, reading together or building models.
  - **Transition Phase:** Activities in this phase are decided based on the needs of the elementary- or middle-school students and class. Determine this with help from the teacher. Example activities may include

assisting the younger student with subject material such as math or science, exploring careers on the Internet, or discovering how computers work.

- **Student-Driven Phase:** At this level, activities are determined by the mentees. The mentor helps him or her explore careers of interest. For example, the younger student may want to investigate how to get into politics, what it's like to fly a plane, or what's needed to become a chef.

## Step Six: Evaluate Your Effectiveness

Encourage the steering committee and student managers to develop ways to evaluate and provide feedback to improve the program. One tool is an exit interview. Students participate in a confidential exit interview to share what they've learned, how the relationship worked and how to improve the program.

## Step Seven: Recognition

As with any SkillsUSA initiative, find ways to recognize and reward great performance. Create participant certificates or hold a special function.

## Resources

SkillsUSA's *Professional Development Program* provide guidelines for service projects that may help in planning and information on mentors.

The U.S. Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (in your library or guidance office, or at <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>) has descriptions of occupations and salary information, as do trade publications.

Training modules from the National Mentoring Partnership are on the Internet at: [www.mentoring.org/training/TMT/index.adp](http://www.mentoring.org/training/TMT/index.adp).

See Pages 11 and 12 for additional mentoring resources and web sites.

## Mentoring Myths

- Mentoring only happens on a one-to-one, face-to-face basis.  
*With modern technology mentoring can take place by e-mail, telephone or even Facebook and may only need a few hours.*
- Taking time to mentor decreases productivity.  
*Mentoring improves productivity through better communication, goal clarity, increased commitment, and succession planning.*
- A mentor needs to be 5-10 years older than the person he or she mentors.  
*Personal experience is such a great teacher that younger people often have opportunities to mentor; peers are often effective mentors.*
- Mentoring is a rare experience and only occurs for a few great people.  
*Informal mentoring is probably the most frequent method of transmitting knowledge and wisdom in society; virtually everyone has experienced it.*
- Young people who have poor attitudes, minimal work habits or few skills do not need mentors.  
*Many successful people started this way, but virtually all of them needed an older guide that listened to and respected them.*
- The person being mentored is the only one who benefits from the relationship.  
*When mentoring is effective, all parties perceive benefits.*
- The best mentors are those who set out to be mentors.  
*The majority of mentoring occurs without conscious knowledge of either party, but it does help to cultivate key mentor attitudes and behaviors.*

Source: [www.mentors.ca/mentormyths.html](http://www.mentors.ca/mentormyths.html)

An icebreaker activity will create a friendly atmosphere where mentors and younger students begin to communicate and get to know each other. Activities like these will help students establish one-on-one relationships that last well beyond the first meeting.

## Application

Here are some icebreaker activities to do with your program participants.

1. **Playing favorites.** Prepare a single sheet of paper for each person. List at least three of the following on the sheet and add a line after the listing: name, hobby, favorite book, favorite sport or activity, favorite movie, favorite song, pet's name, number of siblings, favorite color. (Each sheet should have this information listed three times.) Provide everyone with the sheet of paper and the following instructions (verbal or written): "When the signal is given, quickly interview at least three people you do not know and find out the information listed on your sheet." At the end of three minutes, have each participant introduce one person to the rest of the group.

Or, have students pair up (one mentor/one mentee) and interview each other. Participants should ask their partners five questions and use the answers to write one paragraph about their partners. Then, have them introduce their partners to the class by reading the interviews.\*

2. **A picture is worth a thousand words.** Give students sheets of drawing paper and ask them to tell about themselves — using only pictures. For example, a plane, a stack of books and a hill might represent traveling, reading and hiking. Then break into small groups. (Be sure to have



equal numbers of mentors and younger students in each group.) Participants then try to tell about the people in their group.\*

3. **Snowball activity.** Have students write on a sheet of paper three things about themselves. Then have them crumple the paper up into a "snowball" and have a one-minute snowball fight. At the end of the minute, everyone grabs the closest snowball and has to try to find the person who wrote it. They then introduce that person to the rest of the group, sharing the three facts.\*

4. **Sticker partners.** Give mentors and younger students stickers to put on their hands when they enter the classroom, but don't tell them what the sticker is for until the time is right. Be sure there is a younger partner with a matching sticker for every mentor. When the time comes, ask students to find their partners and interview them (name, grade, hobbies and similar details). Then, each interviewer is responsible for introducing each interviewee to the rest of the class.\*

## Summary/Evaluation

After your icebreaker activities, have students discuss how it felt to approach someone new. Have them consider what it was like to ask questions about someone else. Did they learn anything? Find out if they shared common interests they might not otherwise have known. How did they feel when they were asked to share information about themselves?

## References

\*Details on these activities and others can be found at: [www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson131.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson131.shtml).

**T**he Student2Student initiative was piloted at two sites in two different states. From those sites, we learned what works and what doesn't. Here's some advice and a few pointers from those sites.

- Students who are successful mentors do not need personal experience in lots of jobs. Instead, they need to be willing to research different careers and be active listeners.
- Mentees not only appreciate having attention and help from a mentor, but they also enjoy recognition for participating in Student2Student. Have a program celebration and award certificates to mentors and younger students.
- Make sure mentors have a support system: someone to help them solve problems, offer advice and point them toward resources.
- Create a public relations campaign. The campaign should help recruit volunteers, spread the word about training and activities, and share results of your efforts. Engage student mentors as the journalists, videographers or webmasters.
- When you develop recruitment and promotional materials, emphasize the benefits of being a mentor. A reference or quote from a national figure is effective.
- Get support from the administrators of participating schools. Administrators are essential in working out logistics including transportation, schedules, permission forms and the basic needs of each group.
- To begin the program, go to the younger students' school first. This will help establish their trust and confidence. Have mentors choose clothing that isn't too formal or intimidating — for example, a school polo shirt or special T-shirt.
- Involve students in all phases of planning.
- Have the elementary or middle-school students keep journals or create websites about their mentoring activities. This will help enrich their experience and give them practice writing, too.
- Establish and train student managers to lead projects. As the program evolves, the student managers can take on more responsibilities.
- Find a champion. A champion can be a faculty/staff member, a community leader, a parent or other person who believes in the Student2Student program. The champion's role is to cultivate enthusiasm, support the players, promote the effort and recruit more involvement.
- Invite elementary or middle-school teachers to observe technical classes and participate in hands-on experiences. This will help to create a better understanding of industry standards and the skills needed to succeed in the work force. Invite guidance counselors, too.
- Be realistic. Mentoring does not solve personal problems. It is, however, an invaluable tool for helping young people find the best in themselves and live up to their potential.
- Start small and set realistic goals. If your program is good to begin with, it will expand naturally — and by then you will have the resources to handle the growth.

In Waynesburg, Pa., 40 seventh-grade students at Margaret Bell Miller Middle School shared 20 mentors from Greene County Vocational Technical School, a pilot site in the Student-2Student (S2S) program.

The word mentoring implies enduring. These relationships are enduring because of commitment from both the middle school and the career and tech school, and because the mentors have received formal training from students at Pennsylvania State University (PSU).

The Greene County's principal, Jan Quaily, put the word out for student volunteers and a handful showed up for day-long training from the PSU students. All of the mentors were members of SkillsUSA and the students of advisors Kathy Wood and Jerry Tylka.

Quaily next contacted the middle-school guidance counselor, Becky Karluk. Karluk contacted middle-school teachers and coaches to select participants. The teachers asked their students who might enjoy learning about the opportunities at the career and tech school.

Before they began, the middle-school students were given a Career Occupational Preference System Interest Inventory. Once assessed, the



middle-school students were matched with mentors based on career area, and discussions about careers then started.

The semester-long program took place during regular school hours, and sessions lasted about 40 minutes, one day a week. The mentoring activities were held

every other week.

Once the program was established, the mentors guided the younger students through a career exploration, according to Karluk. Adults were always present.

If a middle-school student had a question that the mentor could not answer, then the older student — on his or her own time — found the information and brought it back.

The program was successful, with the only glitches being an occasional poor match among mentor pairs. When this happened, the partners were switched.

“We had a great deal of flexibility in this program,” Karluk says. “But the bottom line is, we wanted the kids to learn.”

*See the SkillsUSA website for more S2S examples.*

## Acknowledgments

SkillsUSA thanks the students, faculty and administration of the following schools, upon whose experiences as pilot sites of the Student2Student mentoring program this guide is based:

- **Greene County Vocational-Technical School**, Waynesburg, Pa. Advisors: Jerry Tylka, Kathy Woods. Principal: Jan Quaily. Director: Richard Ohler.
- **Tulsa Technology Center, Riverside Campus for Applied Science, Technology and Research**, Tulsa, Okla. Student Manager: Joe DeLustro. Advisor: Donna Williams. Director: Kay Hamilton.

The following people developed the training program agenda described on Page 5: John Moeller, Michelle Becker and Steve Rivera of Penn State University's Workforce Education and Development program.

## Gain Recognition for Your Chapter's Mentoring Efforts

**S**killsUSA sponsors a national recognition program based on the Student2Student mentoring program. Any chapter involved in mentoring can submit their project plan, description and outcomes. The winning chapter will be recognized in *SkillsUSA Champions* magazine, in the National Leadership and Skills Conference *Awards and Recognition Book* and at an event during the SkillsUSA national conference. In addition, the overall winning chapter will be invited to attend the national conference and present their winning mentoring program as a part of SkillsUSA University.

### Purpose

To select the outstanding chapter that best exemplifies the purposes and goals of the Student2Student Mentoring Program and to recognize excellence and professionalism in the area of student mentoring.

### Eligibility

This event is open to all SkillsUSA chapters in a career and technical education program at a secondary or postsecondary institution that are participating in a SkillsUSA mentoring project with local elementary- or middle-school students. The entire chapter and/or multiple programs at one school can join forces and participate in a mentoring program. SkillsUSA membership for the current school year will be verified.

### Deadline

All entries must be submitted online to the national office by April 1. Winners will be announced in May.

### Awards

The Grand Prize winning chapter will receive a plaque, a \$500 check for the chapter to use toward expanding next year's mentoring project and a \$500 stipend as assistance for the

chapter advisor and at least one student to attend the national conference. The Grand Prize chapter will be recognized at an event during national conference and have the opportunity to present their winning program at a SkillsUSA University educational workshop.

### Judging

All entries will be judged by a special committee of national SkillsUSA staff. The winners of the competition will be announced in May and immediately notified. This contest may or may not be held in the future, and there may or may not be additional rules and requirements.

### How to Enter

Complete the project description questionnaire online at: [www.skillsusa.org/programs/mentoring-student2student/mentoring-recognition-program/](http://www.skillsusa.org/programs/mentoring-student2student/mentoring-recognition-program/).

### Resources Available from SkillsUSA

***Jumpstart! Icebreakers and Mixers to Energize Meetings, Workshops and Other Activities:*** This quick reference guide allows presenters to quickly identify activities ideal for either small or large groups, with varying degrees of physical activity, or requiring little to no materials.

***Champions Serving Others: An Easy Guide To Community Service Projects:*** This guide is designed to simplify the planning and executing a community service project. It contains documents, templates, and exercises that will help you identify and carry out your community service project in a timely and effective manner.

**Visit:** [www.skillsusa.org/store](http://www.skillsusa.org/store) or call 1-800-321-8422 for a SkillsUSA Educational Resources Catalog.

## Famous Mentor Pairs

Mentoring relationships can be found in all walks of life, and many famous people credit their success to a mentor. By being a mentor, you never know what lasting effects you can have on someone's life.

Many famous political figures and celebrities had mentors:

- Hillary Clinton mentored by Donald James (minister)
- Colin Powell mentored by Luther Powell (father)
- Tom Brokaw mentored by Frances Morrow (teacher)
- Gloria Estefan mentored by Consuelo Garcia (grandmother)

From: [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

Take a look at these famous sports mentor pairs:

- Bill Russell mentored by George Pole (childhood coach)
- Phil Jackson (NBA coach), mentor to Michael Jordan
- Dale Earnhardt Sr. (race driver), mentor to Michael Waltrip (race driver)
- Jumbo Elliott (NFL player), mentor to Jason Fabini and Ryan Young (NFL players)

Mentoring relationships are also depicted in novels, major motion pictures and in television:

### Mentoring Sites

Further information on mentoring can be found at your local library or by searching the Internet. Here are some websites we found useful and worth a visit:

[www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)

[www.whomentoredyou.org](http://www.whomentoredyou.org)

[www.nwrel.org/mentoring/](http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/)

[www.middleweb.com/mentoring.html](http://www.middleweb.com/mentoring.html)

[www.mentoringusa.org](http://www.mentoringusa.org)

- Professor Dumbledore, mentor to Harry Potter in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*
- Morpheus (played by Laurence Fishburne), mentor to Thomas Anderson/Neo (played by Keanu Reeves) in the 1999 motion picture *The Matrix*, directed by Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski
- Kevin Brown or Agent K (played by Tommy Lee Jones), mentor to Agent T (played by Patrick Warburton) in the 2002 motion picture *Men in Black II*, directed by Barry Sonnenfeld
- Rupert Giles (played by Anthony Stewart Head) mentor to Buffy Summers (played by Sarah Michelle Gellar) in the TV series *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*

From: [www.mentors.ca/mentorpairs.html](http://www.mentors.ca/mentorpairs.html)

## January is Designated as National Mentoring Month

January has been designated as National Mentoring Month (NMM). Led by the Harvard Mentoring Project and MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, NMM also was supported by President George W. Bush, the U.S. Congress and state governors and mayors across the country. The initiative is sponsored by media companies, government agencies, and a number of nonprofit organizations: the Advertising Council, America's Promise Alliance, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Communities in Schools, the Grammy Foundation, Mentoring USA, National Association of Broadcasters, National Restaurant Educational Foundation, Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Points of Light Foundation, United Way of America and more.

During January, attention is focused on how mentoring benefits the child, adult and society, as a whole. It is also a time to thank the people who are "everyday heroes" to those they mentor and to encourage others to share the experience and become a mentor.