



MIDLANDS  
mentoring  
partnership

## OUR MISSION

The Midlands Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is a backbone organization that seeks to increase the number and quality of mentoring opportunities available for youth.

## OUR VISION

To bring about community-wide, systemic change that will allow mentoring programs to serve more youth with quality services.

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Winner of the 2014 Catalyst Award

Presented by the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands

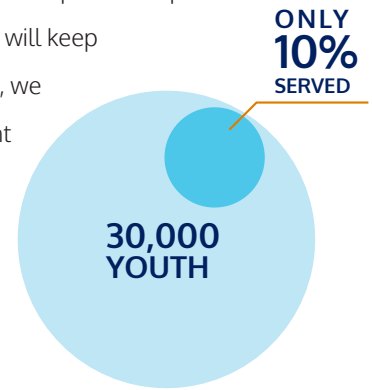


**Deborah Neary**  
Executive Director

## As we all know, there is nothing constant in life except, perhaps – change! Change is what the Midlands Mentoring Partnership is all about.

We (MMP and our 11 partner agencies) know that if nonprofits keep doing business as we have always been, then we will keep getting the same results. In the mentoring sector, we have collectively decided that we can't be content serving only 3,000 youth in Greater Omaha each year when there are 30,000 youth living in poverty in the Omaha community and more than 80,000 youth in poverty across our state.

**We must change to serve more youth!**



This theme resonated even more deeply than usual this past year as MMP underwent a major transition and was reminded of what Aristotle said thousands of years ago, that “change in all things is sweet.” After five years of generous support from a parent organization, MMP took steps to diversify our funding support to achieve increased impact and become even more successful. During the past year, we moved from having one single donor to more than 80 donors.

This change has had a ripple effect in helping us reach our mission more efficiently. We have developed a stronger, more focused and more inclusive way of conducting business and working with our partners. Our partners advocate for the work we do, and the philanthropic community is beginning to better understand our role as a backbone agency.

We are proud to be an agency that embraces change with so much enthusiasm. And, we are grateful to have such amazing partners, donors, volunteers and mentors helping us work toward our goal of providing a positive and meaningful quality mentoring relationship for every child in our community.

CHANGE





Pictured from left to right: John Ewing, Kelly Sears, Callie Erickson, Julie Hefflinger, Josh Bartee, Deb Denbeck, Ashley Robinson, Mayor Jean Stothert, Tracy Wells, Dan Padilla, Nichole Turgeon & Whitney Mastin

## Big thanks to all our partners in change!

City of Omaha, Mayor Jean Stothert  
 Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce  
 Holland Foundation  
 Peter Kiewit Foundation  
 Community-based Juvenile Services  
 Aid Program  
 Lozier Foundation  
 Millard Foundation

Mutual of Omaha Foundation  
 Nebraska Children & Families Foundation  
 Omaha Community Foundation  
 Pacific Life Foundation  
 The Sherwood Foundation  
 United Way of the Midlands

## Members Agencies

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands  
 Girls Inc. Omaha  
 Hope Center for Kids  
 Kent Bellows Mentoring Program  
 at Joslyn Art Museum  
 Kids Can Community Center  
 Ollie Webb, Inc.  
 Partnership 4 Kids

TeamMates Mentoring Program  
 Release Ministries  
 Youth Emergency Services (YES)  
 100 Black Men of Omaha

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

MMP is a collective impact backbone agency. The goal of collective impact work is to address social issues that require many different players to come together and change their practices in order to solve a complex issue. The work of MMP encourages mentoring programs to move away from the traditional way of competing and demonstrating “isolated impact” and more towards working collaboratively across sectors to accelerate reach and impact.

MMP accomplishes this because the staff and board are able to focus on community issues and research-based solutions from a strategic level. Data and evaluation help identify gaps and weaknesses in reaching cross-sector goals. MMP coordinates the efforts of individual mentoring programs, other nonprofits, educational institutions and the business community to better serve youth with quality mentoring relationships.

### BACKBONE

MMP serves as a backbone entity that coordinates the mutually reinforcing activities of evidence-based mentoring programs in Omaha including: establishing cross-sector partnerships with the business, government, and education communities; creating measures for shared accountability among partners; and engaging funders to support the work of quality mentoring programs.

### COMMON AGENDA

A common agenda has resulted in a shared vision for mentoring activities in the community, including expansion of quality services to the youth most at-risk.

### SHARED MEASUREMENT

MMP and its partner agencies have worked to create common data indicators so that mentoring data can be evaluated “apples to apples.” This work has helped to identify gaps in mentoring services as well as the impact of current mentoring services.

### MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES

MMP has engaged in mutually reinforcing activities including a shared campaign to recruit new mentors, an annual mentoring summit, and joint training efforts throughout the year.

### CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION

MMP convenes with members on a monthly basis; and communicates with members on a weekly basis.



**common  
agenda**

**shared  
measurement**

**MMP  
Collective  
Impact  
Backbone**

**mutually  
reinforcing  
activities**

**continuous  
communication**





**20%**  
attendance  
increase

**Annual Summit**

**Recruitment  
Campaign**

**20%**  
increase in  
new matches

# PROGRAMS

## Background Checks

Youth safety is increased by ensuring a standardized background check as a minimum requirement for prospective mentors. In FY 2014, MMP paid for 1,153 background checks at a cost of \$45,000, with a cost equivalent to approximately \$39 per check. This cost reflects the significant volume discount MMP was able to negotiate in order to decrease costs for all partners.

## Training & Technical Assistance

MMP has found that most mentoring programs do not have the resources to provide specialized training on mentoring best practices. MMP provides this training, which increases the quality of mentoring provided by each agency. Every new staff person in a member program goes through this best practices training and is provided ongoing technical assistance. MMP also brings trainers into the community on an as-needed basis. It is more cost-efficient to provide these trainings to several programs at once, instead of one program at a time.

## Annual Mentoring Summit

The annual mentoring summit is a cost-effective way to bring the community together to discuss and build awareness around mentoring. The diverse audience includes youth providers, mentoring professionals, mentors, school personnel, community and business leaders and policy leaders. More than 700 individuals attended our 2014 summit featuring keynote speaker Paul Tough, author of the influential book *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*.

## Data Collection & Developmental Evaluation

To evaluate the impact of each agency's mentoring program, and its adherence to mentoring standards, MMP uses a peer review process and a 100-question mentoring assessment tool called Quality Mentoring Assessment Path (QMAP). Six agencies participated in the detailed assessment in FY 2014, and remaining MMP member agencies will participate in FY 2015. Member agencies also have access to a case management and data tracking system called MentorCore to ensure an organization is tracking data to evaluate the effectiveness of its mentoring program. Collecting data and analyzing impact on a continual basis ensures that all efforts remain aligned, and enables the participants to hold each other accountable and to learn from each other's successes and failures. Additionally, these systems increase efficiency and reduce costs over time.

## Recruitment Campaign

In August 2013, MMP initiated Omaha's first-ever, citywide, multi-agency mentor recruitment effort. The campaign generated 702 mentor prospects for 11 mentoring programs that resulted in more than 500 new matches. This served MMP's mentoring agencies by providing a cost-effective way to recruit new mentors. In all, there was a 20 percent increase in the number of mentors recruited in Douglas and Sarpy counties, over the same period the prior year.

## Prioritizing Youth Safety with Research-Based Mentor Screening Practices

In FY 14, MMP became one of three mentoring partnerships in the country to have a staff member certified to offer the SAFE training curriculum. SAFE: Prioritizing Youth Safety with Research-Based Mentor Screening Practices is curriculum recognized in the field as the gold-standard for mentor and volunteer screening. All MMP programs will receive the 6 hour training and supporting materials for the SAFE training before the end of the 2014 calendar year. This training helps to reinforce MMP's #1 priority -- to keep mentors and mentees safe in a professionally supported, evidence-based mentoring relationship.

## Support for Mentor Matches

Throughout the year, MMP provides opportunities for mentors and their mentees to participate in training and/or fun activities. A few of the opportunities that were donated to MMP and passed on to mentors include:

- Creighton University Men's Basketball Tickets
- Tickets to Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol
- Tickets to Tarzan: The Stage Musical at The Rose
- Tickets to Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at The Rose
- In-kind tickets to the Strategic Air and Space Museum
- Dan Yaccarino Mentor/ Mentee discussion at Joslyn Art Museum
- Jazz on the Green Social for Mentors
- Daniel Beaty at Holland Performing Arts Center - 2014

These were especially valued by some of our smaller mentoring agencies that do not have the resources to solicit these donations on their own.





Mutual of Omaha employees involved in mentoring and mentoring support

## 2014 MENTOR OF THE YEAR & ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

**MENTOR OF THE YEAR:** Dakotah Taylor, Nominated by Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands

**BUSINESS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR:** Mutual of Omaha & Mutual of Omaha Foundation, Nominated by Youth Emergency Services

### PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### 2013

**MENTOR OF THE YEAR:** Tess Larson, Nominated by Girls Inc.

**BUSINESS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR:** OPPD, Nominated by Partnership 4 Kids

#### 2012

**MENTOR OF THE YEAR:** Laura Hopp, Nominated by Ollie Webb

**BUSINESS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR:** Kiewit Company, Nominated by TeamMates

#### 2011

**MENTOR OF THE YEAR:** Elaine Bankey, Nominated by TeamMates

**BUSINESS ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR:** Kutak Rock, Nominated by Partnership 4 Kids



## Programs, cont'd

### Capacity Building & Expansion Work

MMP provides funding to establish new mentoring programs and expand existing programs to meet new needs. As more data is collected to reveal where gaps in service exist, MMP is able to use funding support to encourage partner agencies to challenge their status quo, to expand capacity and to serve more youth, especially those with unique needs such as teens who are homeless, GLBTQ or who have been involved with the foster care or juvenile justice system. In FY14 & FY15, this funding is being used to implement the Youth Initiated Mentoring model to serve more foster care youth and youth who have come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Partners on this project are Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands, Youth Emergency Services, the Douglas County Juvenile Assessment Center and Project Everlast (Nebraska Children & Families Foundation).

### Youth Initiated Mentoring

In June 2014, MMP launched a Youth Initiated Mentoring (YIM) pilot through a collaboration with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands, Youth Emergency Services, the Douglas County Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) and Project Everlast.

The YIM pilot project was developed in response to data collected by MMP that indicated current mentoring programs were not successfully reaching high numbers of youth who have been involved with the justice system or are in foster care. The YIM program works by empowering medium and high-risk youth to identify potential mentors from the constellation of caring adults already a part of their lives, which has proven especially effective in serving at-risk youth.

**In FY 2013-14 MMP released \$100,000 in support for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands, Girls Inc. of Omaha, Kent Bellows Mentoring Program at Joslyn Art Museum, Kids Can Community Center, and Youth Emergency Services. This funding resulted in a total of 316 new matches for with an average cost of \$315.46 per match. Expansion & capacity building projects completed in FY14 are summarized here:**

### Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands \$30,000

**Goal:** Match 20 foster care youth in Douglas and Sarpy counties with a mentor through community-based mentoring. Matching foster care youth is a balancing act between caseworkers, mentors, and ensuring youth are ready for a match.

**Result:** Big Brothers Big Sisters was able to serve 18 youth in the foster care system and serve them better. They have also been able to increase awareness of the need of these youth through recruitment of potential Bigs. The organization developed partnerships with area foster care organizations to facilitate wrap around supports for these mentees.

### Girls Inc of Omaha \$25,000

**Goal:** Provide a mentor to every member who requested one to help guide girls through the successful completion of high school, and accelerate efforts to better serve girls in foster care and/or of refugee status.

**Result:** 96 new matches

### Kent Bellows Mentoring Program at Joslyn \$10,000

**Goal:** Complete the partner membership process for MMP and create the documents needed to bring the teen mentoring program to a validating level.

**Result:** New mentoring tools for the Kent Bellows program including: mentor and mentee exit interview template, mentor orientation and training tools, teacher and school outreach plans, and off-site curriculum tool.

### Kids Can Community Center \$15,000

**Goal:** Forge relationships between current mentors and mentees that prepare the youth to be successful in school.

**Result:** Seven new matches and the mentoring activities included baking, art projects such as painting clay pots, movie making and puzzle assembly.

### Youth Emergency Services \$20,000

**Goal:** Match all YES youth with a mentor within 30 days of referral, initiate the Youth Initiated Mentoring model, and have training sessions for both mentors and mentees with 100% participation.

**Result:** 40 new matches. 10 youth matched were homeless. Began training for YIM mentoring model.

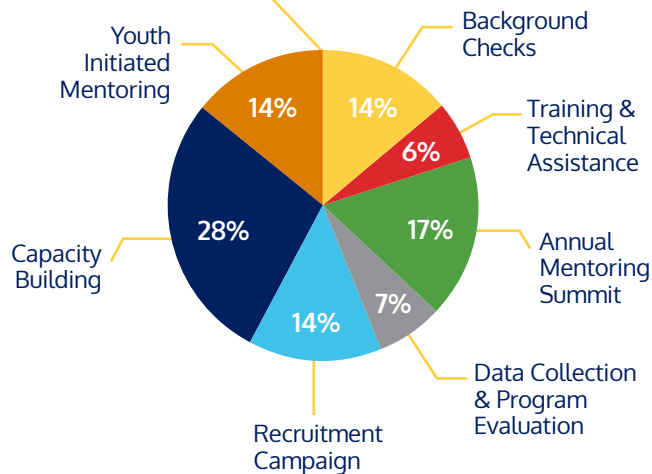
# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY FOR JULY 1, 2013 - JUNE 30, 2014

## Note regarding the *Statement of Activity* for FY14:

MMP's annual budget is approximately \$500,000 in cash income and expenses. The FY14 audited income & expense amounts reflect \$160,000 of in-kind donations and expenses for the Annual Recruitment campaign. The income also includes gifts intended for FY15 that were received in FY14.



## PROGRAM SERVICES



## MENTORING BY THE NUMBERS

Are the total number of mentoring matches increasing in the Greater Omaha area? Yes!

**2012: 25% increase** over 2011

**2013: 8% increase** over 2012

**2014: 12.5% increase** over 2013

Total youth being served by quality mentoring relationships in the Greater Omaha area: **3,000**

There are over **40** agencies in the Omaha community that say they do "mentoring" But only **11** have demonstrated they follow evidence-based practices.

**73%** mentees enrolled in MMP partner programs receive free or reduced lunch.





Pictured from left to right: Shelli Inness, Deborah Neary, Whitney Mastin and Carla Hagan

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Julie Hefflinger, President**  
Community Volunteer

**John Ewing, Vice President**  
Douglas County Treasurer

**Kathy Clark, Treasurer**  
CFO, FBG Services

**Richard Spellman, At-Large**  
General Counsel, UNMC

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Josh Bartee**  
CEO, Enterprise Bank

**Vernon Daniels**  
Douglas County Juvenile Court Judge

**Greg Gonzalez**  
Deputy Police Chief

**Kenny McMorris**  
CEO, Charles Drew Health Center

**Ashley Robinson**  
Attorney, Baird Holm LLP

**Chris Rodgers**  
Douglas County Commissioner

**Deborah Neary**  
Executive Director

## MMP STAFF

**Deborah Neary** serves as the Executive Director for the Midlands Mentoring Partnership and has led the efforts of this newly-formed collective impact organization for four years. Neary holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration and has 20+ years of nonprofit leadership experience in the arts, healthcare and in the social services. Deborah is a group mentor with Partnership 4 Kids and a one-on-one mentor with Girls Inc. Deborah was selected to participate in the week-long Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring at Portland State University and serves on several national mentoring advisory committees. She and her husband, Joseph, have cared for eight foster children and are both passionate advocates for youth living in poverty, and foster care issues. Deborah was named the 2014 Catalyst Award Winner by the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands (NAM).

**Whitney Mastin** serves as MMP's Director of Programs. Whitney is responsible for providing strategic leadership and oversight for the implementation of quality standards, data collection and evaluation in mentoring programs. Whitney received her Master's Degree in Public Administration & Nonprofit Management from the University of Nebraska-Omaha. She has completed numerous trainings including the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and the Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring at Portland State University, and has presented at statewide and national conferences on mentoring. Whitney currently serves as a youth mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands and is a member of the Omaha Women's Fund Circles.

**Carla Hagan** was hired recently to help support MMP's Youth Initiated Mentoring pilot project with Douglas County and Project Everlast. Carla is a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University and is a mentor for TeamMates.



**MIDLANDS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP**

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