



MENTOR
NEBRASKA

2024

ANNUAL REPORT





WHO WE ARE

MENTOR Nebraska is the driving force behind Nebraska's mentoring movement. Our team is on a mission to close the mentoring gap for the one in three young people growing up without a mentor. Through our four core areas of work - **training, technical assistance, policy & advocacy, and mentor recruitment** - we expand and enhance mentoring across the state, and work to ensure that all young people have access to high-quality mentoring.



MENTORING EXPERTS



CAPACITY BUILDERS



YOUTH ADVOCATES



MENTORING CONNECTORS



WHO IS NEW



Board



PETER FERGUSON
Lincoln Public Schools



TIM WILSON
FORVIS LLP

Staff



SAFARI ONYX
Training & Capacity
Building Intern



MELISSA WESTBROOK
Associate Director of Member
Engagement & Learning

Consultants



MANGER BAW
STRIVE Mentoring



CHRISTOPHER MCCROY
Success Mentors

WHAT WE FUND



INTENTIONAL MENTORING INITIATIVES
to help schools & programs connect students to mentors

\$127,070



MENTOR RECRUITMENT GRANTS
to support programs recruiting mentors for young people

\$8,950



STATEWIDE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN
to raise awareness for the 1 in 3 youth without a mentor

\$11,200



1,006+ HOURS NO-COST CONSULTING
to enhance program quality & build capacity

\$75,450



MENTOR BACKGROUND CHECKS
to ensure the safety of young people

\$19,956



DATA COLLECTION & SOFTWARE
to support matches and identify gaps in the sector

\$25,642

We invest in Nebraska's mentoring sector

by providing pass-through funding, grants, and membership benefits that help connect more young people with mentors. With no-cost consulting, training, data collection, and a statewide mentor recruitment campaign, we empower mentoring programs with the tools and support they need to thrive!

Total Investment in Our Sector **\$268,268** 

WHAT DATA TRENDS WE SAW IN 2024



22 PROGRAMS

A total of 17 organizations participated in this year's data collection process, representing 22 unique mentoring programs across Nebraska, including:

- Columbus
- Grand Island
- Hastings
- Omaha
- Lincoln
- Kearney
- North Platte



3,900+ YOUTH IMPACTED

Over 3,900 young people across Nebraska were matched with mentors through these 22 programs in 2024.



POSITIVE GROWTH

Mentoring matches increased by over 720 from 2023 to 2024, reflecting significant growth in access to mentoring opportunities.

In 2024, more than 475 youth engaged in community service, either alongside their mentors or through their involvement in mentoring programs.

For over 15 years, MENTOR Nebraska has conducted an annual data collection process

to analyze trends in the mentoring sector, gain insights into the demographics of the youth served, and identify opportunities to expand access to mentoring for underrepresented youth populations across the state.

Thank you to our partners for sharing their data in our efforts to ensure that all young Nebraskans have access to quality mentoring:

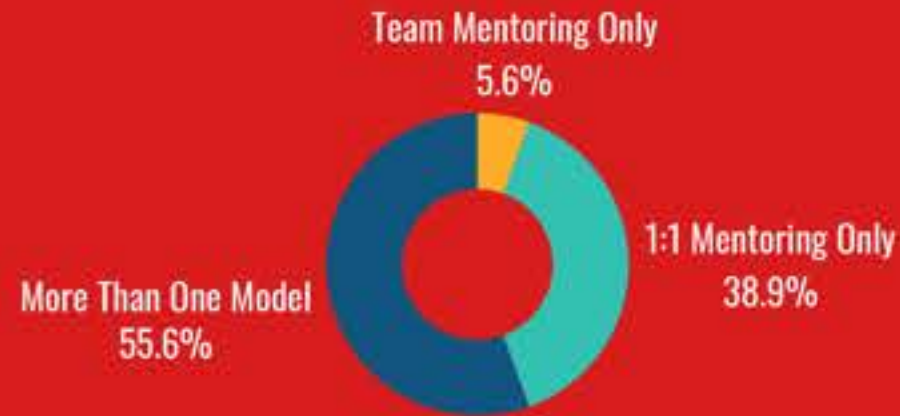
- 100 Black Men of Omaha, Inc.
- ACE Mentor of Greater Omaha
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Nebraska
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands
- Big Pals Little Pals of Greater Columbus
- Community Connections Mentoring
- Girls Inc. of Omaha
- International Council for Refugees and Immigrants (ICRI)
- Kids Can Community Center
- MentoringWorks
- Partnership 4 Kids
- Release Inc.
- TeamMates Mentoring
- The Bike Union
- The Friends Program
- The Keys Foundation
- Visionary Youth

2024 Data Collection Highlights

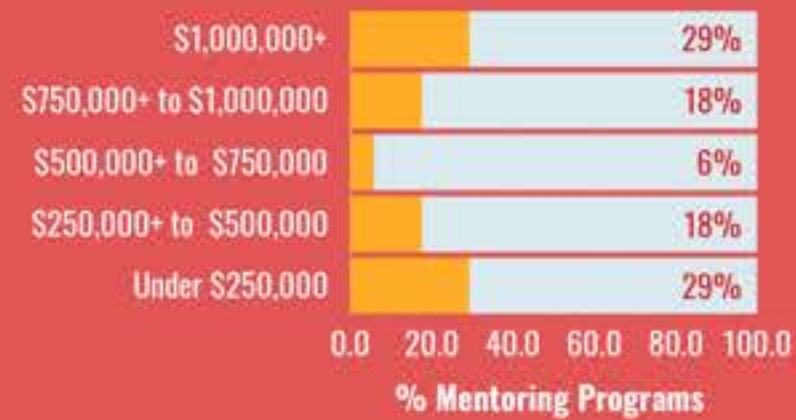


PROGRAM OVERVIEW

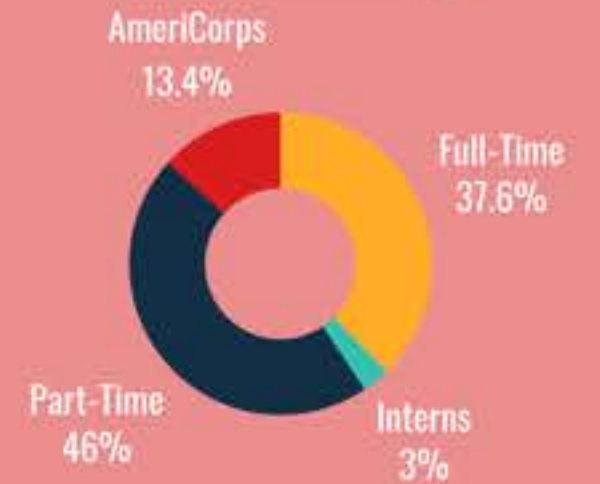
Mentoring Models



Program Budget

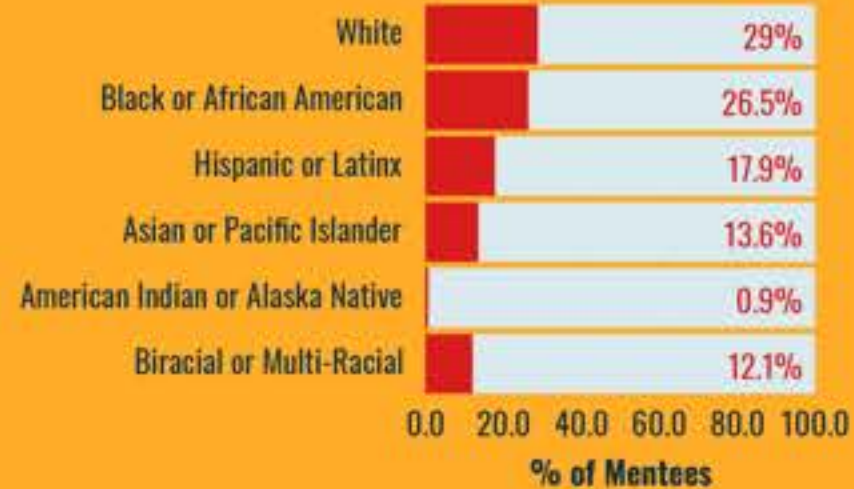


Staffing

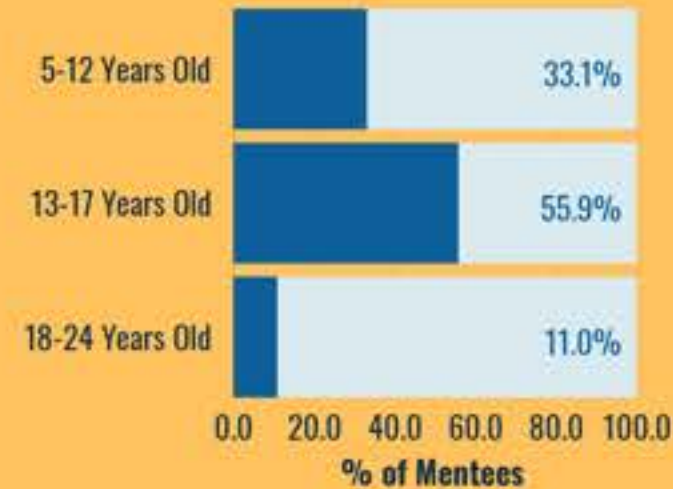


MENTEE OVERVIEW

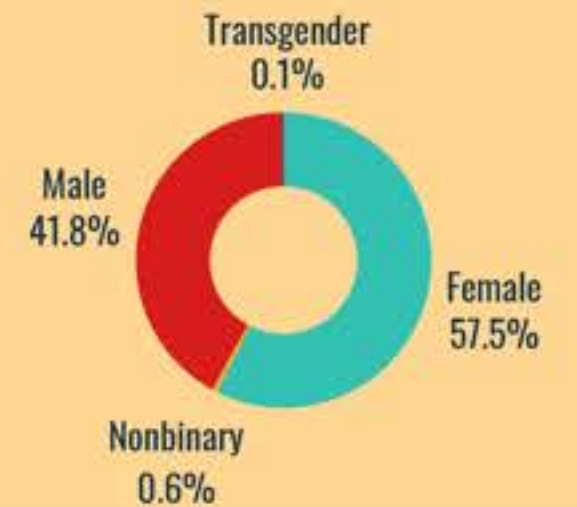
Mentee Race



Mentee Age

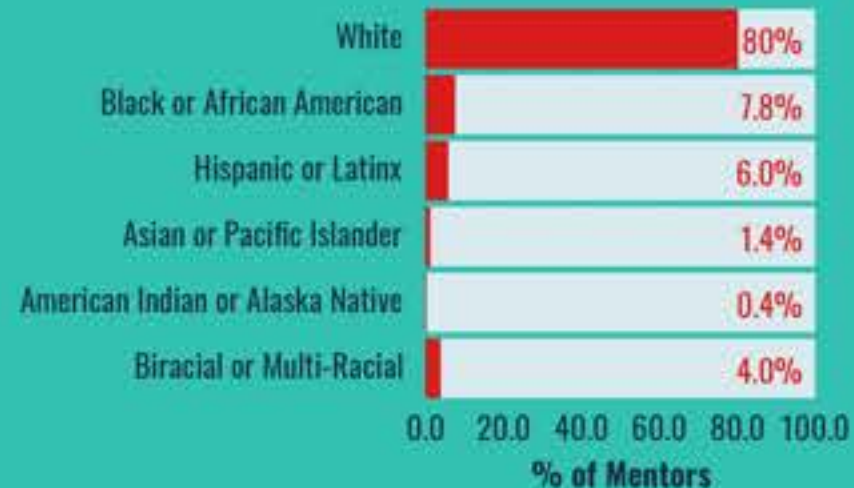


Mentee Identity

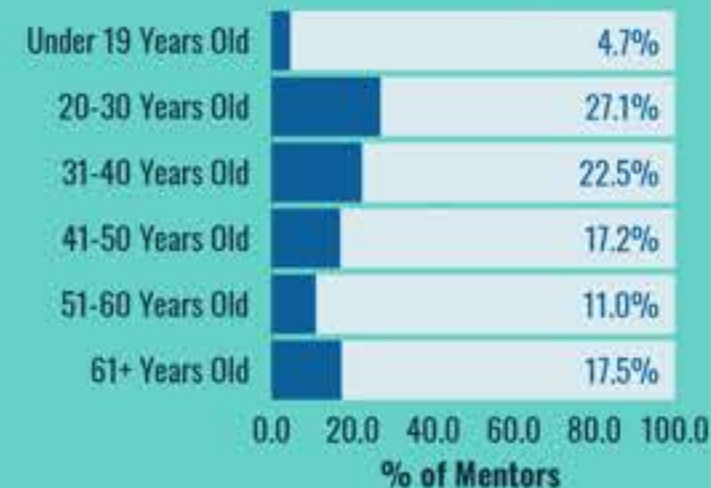


MENTOR OVERVIEW

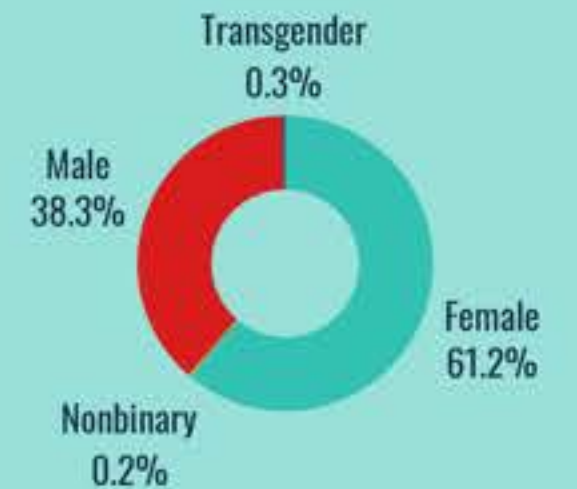
Mentor Race



Mentor Age



Mentor Identity





MENTOR
NEBRASKA



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

and strengthening the field



EXPANDING THE MOVEMENT

We motivate civic leaders, employers, and individual stakeholders to prioritize and invest in ensuring all young people have access to mentoring relationships.

EXPANDING THE MOVEMENT

INFLUENCING SYSTEMS

INFLUENCING SYSTEMS

We create and guide innovative solutions that integrate relationship-centered practices and policies while driving resources for the adoption of mentoring structures and mindsets within youth-serving systems.

ADVANCING THE MENTORING SECTOR

MISSION

Close the mentoring gap for the 1 in 3 young people growing up without a mentor.

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

We identify, promote, and drive the implementation of evidence-based practices combined with community wisdom to increase the quality of mentoring relationships for young people.

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

ADVANCING THE SECTOR

We support the effectiveness of new and existing mentoring programs to deepen the impact of the mentoring field for Nebraska's youth.

YOUTH VOICE | EQUITY & INCLUSION | LEARNING & INNOVATION

Since the launch of our [2023-25 strategic plan](#), we have advanced our mission to close the mentoring gap through four strategic pillars.

HOW WE DO IT



EXPANDING THE MOVEMENT

through advocacy & policy



We shape public policy through advocacy and drive public awareness on the impact of mentoring for young people.

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

We teamed up with the Department of Administrative Services to connect state employees with mentoring opportunities and launched a statewide campaign to raise awareness for the need for mentors.

We awarded \$4,450 in grants to help programs boost local mentor recruitment efforts.

Thanks to these initiatives, we helped over 240 Nebraskans find mentoring opportunities through the [Mentoring Connector](#) - the only database of mentoring programs across the country.

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

Our team played a pivotal role in securing funding for mentoring programs by helping our partners obtain 10 out of 11 READ Nebraska grants, part of the Governor's \$4.8 million initiative to improve elementary literacy across the state. We provided technical assistance sessions and submitted letters of support to ensure our partners had the tools they needed to succeed.

EMPOWERING LEADERS

This year, we strengthened mentoring advocacy by building relationships with policymakers and amplifying our voice. Governor Pilleen appointed our Executive Director to the Serve Nebraska Board of Commissioners, and we conducted a power mapping survey to deepen ties with local and state representatives.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY

We coordinated Capitol Hill Day, where mentoring leaders met with Sen. Fischer, Sen. Ricketts, Rep. Bacon, Rep. Flood, and Rep. Smith to champion mentoring legislation and advocate for increased funding for Nebraska's youth. Our efforts secured bipartisan support for key initiatives, including Rep. Bacon signing on as Lead Sponsor for the Foster Youth Mentoring Act and the National Mentoring Month resolution.



ADVANCING THE SECTOR

through capacity building



We enhance the capacity of new and existing mentoring programs by providing no-cost resources, quality improvement systems, and networking opportunities.

PARTNERSHIP EXPANSION



We expanded partnerships across the state by organizing 15 outreach events and holding 40 one-on-one meetings with mentoring programs to grow and strengthen our network. We facilitated eight collaborative member network meetings, creating opportunities to share ideas and tackle challenges together.



Additionally, we guided seven mentoring programs through the membership onboarding process, ensuring a smooth integration into our growing network.

DATA COLLECTION



We teamed up with Inclusion Analytics to take a closer look at our Annual Data Collection process, which helps us spot trends and gaps in mentoring. Through focus groups with 16 mentoring programs across Nebraska, we discovered some great strengths - like effective surveys, clear communication, and solid data for reporting. Moving forward, we're excited to build on this foundation, tackle challenges, and make our data collection even more useful for our partners.



SUPPORT FOR PARTNERS

759+

NO-COST BACKGROUND CHECKS
to 14 partners to ensure youth safety

\$46,550

PASS-THROUGH FUNDING
to 17 partners for mentor recruitment and technical assistance

\$118,973

GRANT FUNDING
from Nebraska DHHS to support Afghan refugee mentoring

6+

SOFTWARE LICENSES
to help 5 programs track data and monitor matches

ADVANCING THE SECTOR



NATIONAL
QUALITY
MENTORING
SYSTEM

QUALITY IN ACTION

Mentoring is most effective when programs meet high-quality standards. Our members undergo a comprehensive assessment every three years using the National Quality Mentoring System, a research-based tool that gauges program's adherence to the best practices in mentoring and provides a process for continuous program improvement.

In FY24, we guided four programs through the NQMS process:

- Girls Inc. of Omaha
- TeamMates Lincoln Public Schools
- TeamMates Millard Public Schools
- TeamMates Omaha Public Schools



Kris Morgan

Grants Writer & Mentoring Specialist
TeamMates Millard Public Schools

The NQMS process is essential for mentoring programs as it serves as a checks and balances opportunity for both new and long standing programs. It provides a way to view the program through a standardized lens and identifies blind spots in management, operations, and evaluation.



Jim Bennet

Coordinator | TeamMates of Lincoln

The NQMS process reinforced that our program is doing many things well, but it also allowed us to strategically implement ideas to strengthen some aspects of our programming. Specifically in the area of Match Support, we have created new, and more efficient ways to enhance communication within our matches and with the Match Support Specialists on our team.

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

Through no-cost training



We empower mentoring programs to create meaningful, evidence-based mentoring relationships through our hands-on training.



100%

Participants said trainings were engaging



Michaela Atkins

Youth Voice Panelist

I love the way MENTOR Nebraska invests in the young people in their communities because they understand the value and leadership that young people bring.



95%

Participants would recommend MENTOR Nebraska's trainings



4.8/5

Average satisfaction rating



**TRAINED
332 YOUTH-SERVING
PROFESSIONALS**

.....

15+ UNIQUE TRAININGS

- Amplifying the Voices of BIPOC Women & Girls
- Becoming a Better Mentor
- Building Bridges of Support for LGBTQIA2S+ Critical Mentoring
- Elevation of Scholar's Voices from a Moment to a Movement
- Mentoring Mindset
- Mentoring Through Athletics
- Omaha Emerging Mentoring Leaders Institute
- Recruiting Diverse Mentors & Volunteers
- Supporting Young People from Immigrant & Refugee Populations Through Mentoring

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

Through no-cost training



TRAINING IN ACTION

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As the leading experts in mentoring, we equip mentoring professionals, mentors, and educators with training rooted in evidence-based practices and real-life experience.

This year, we partnered with the Nebraska Department of Education to guide educators in embracing culturally competent mentoring to foster meaningful connections with refugee students.

Over 78 NDE employees statewide completed our comprehensive three-part training series on cultural competency.



Mariella Resendiz Alvarado

Director School Mental Health | NDE

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) received superb, culturally appropriate training from qualified MENTOR Nebraska trainers, offering valuable insights into supporting Afghan refugees. **This impactful training enhanced NDE staff's understanding of how to work effectively with and mentor new American students and how to support their families.**

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

through no-cost consulting



We build capacity in the mentoring sector by providing customized, no-cost consulting services that meet the unique needs of programs.

1,006
HRS

Through the National Mentoring Resource Center, we provided a **RECORD-BREAKING 1,006 HOURS** of technical assistance

WE PROVIDE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



NATIONAL
MENTORING
RESOURCE CENTER
A Program of OJJDP

TOP REQUESTS FROM PROGRAMS

Programs requested our expertise on:

- Developing Logic Models
- Revising Handbooks & Policies
- Developing Training for Mentors
- Improving Mentor Recruitment
- Streamlining Matching & Monitoring Procedures

93
RESOURCES

We increased the **QUALITY & SAFETY** of mentoring relationships by creating 93 custom resources for programs

We provided no-cost consulting to 17 PROGRAMS

All in the Family | CASA of Gage County | Code Black Tech | Emerging Ladies
The Friends Program of Kearney | Girls Inc. of Omaha | Go Beyond | Horizon Middle School
LFC International | Mentoring Plus | Ollie Webb Center, Inc. | Omaha Skills Connection
Our Dream Achievers | TeamMates Lincoln | TeamMates Millard | TeamMates OPS | Youth for Christ YRTC

HERE'S WHAT PROGRAMS
THINK ABOUT OUR
NO-COST CONSULTING:



Satisfaction

4.93/5



Provider
Knowledge

4.73/5



Provider
Effectiveness

4.73/5

PRIORITIZING QUALITY

through no-cost consulting



CONSULTING IN ACTION

THE FRIENDS PROGRAM OF KEARNEY

At The Friends Program, a key organizational need was updating essential governance documents like the board manual, by-laws, policies and procedures. MENTOR Nebraska stepped in, providing no-cost consulting to guide them through this process. Through several tailored sessions, we helped their team refine and implement their new and improved board documents—ensuring the organization operates at the highest standards.



Jalin Gerdes

Executive Director | The Friends Program

The experience of MENTOR Nebraska's consulting has elevated our agency to higher standards. If your agency is considering technical assistance support, please act on it excitedly, as their amazing services will help you achieve your goals with support and care throughout the process!



INFLUENCING SYSTEMS

through intentional mentoring initiatives



We integrate mentoring mindsets into schools and youth-serving organizations, addressing inequities and increasing access for underserved youth.



\$127,070+

PASS THROUGH FUNDING TO SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS



SUCCESS MENTORS

We partnered with Millard Public Schools and Omaha Public Schools to implement our Success Mentors model. This evidence-based initiative connects chronically absent students with mentors right in their schools. By providing no-cost consulting and mentor training, we helped these schools build stronger relationships with students and boost attendance.

2 DISTRICTS 24 SCHOOLS 155 STUDENTS



STRIVE REFUGEE MENTORING

Through our STRIVE Mentoring initiative, we teamed up with organizations in Lincoln and Omaha to provide funding and training to help connect newly arrived refugee students with mentors.

- International Council for Refugees and Immigrants, Inc.
- Lincoln Public Schools
- TeamMates of Lincoln
- Engaged Leaders
- Lincoln Asian Cultural and Community Center

5 ORGANIZATIONS

157 STUDENTS



MENTOR
NEBRASKA

INVESTMENTS

in our sector



INVESTMENTS

in our sector



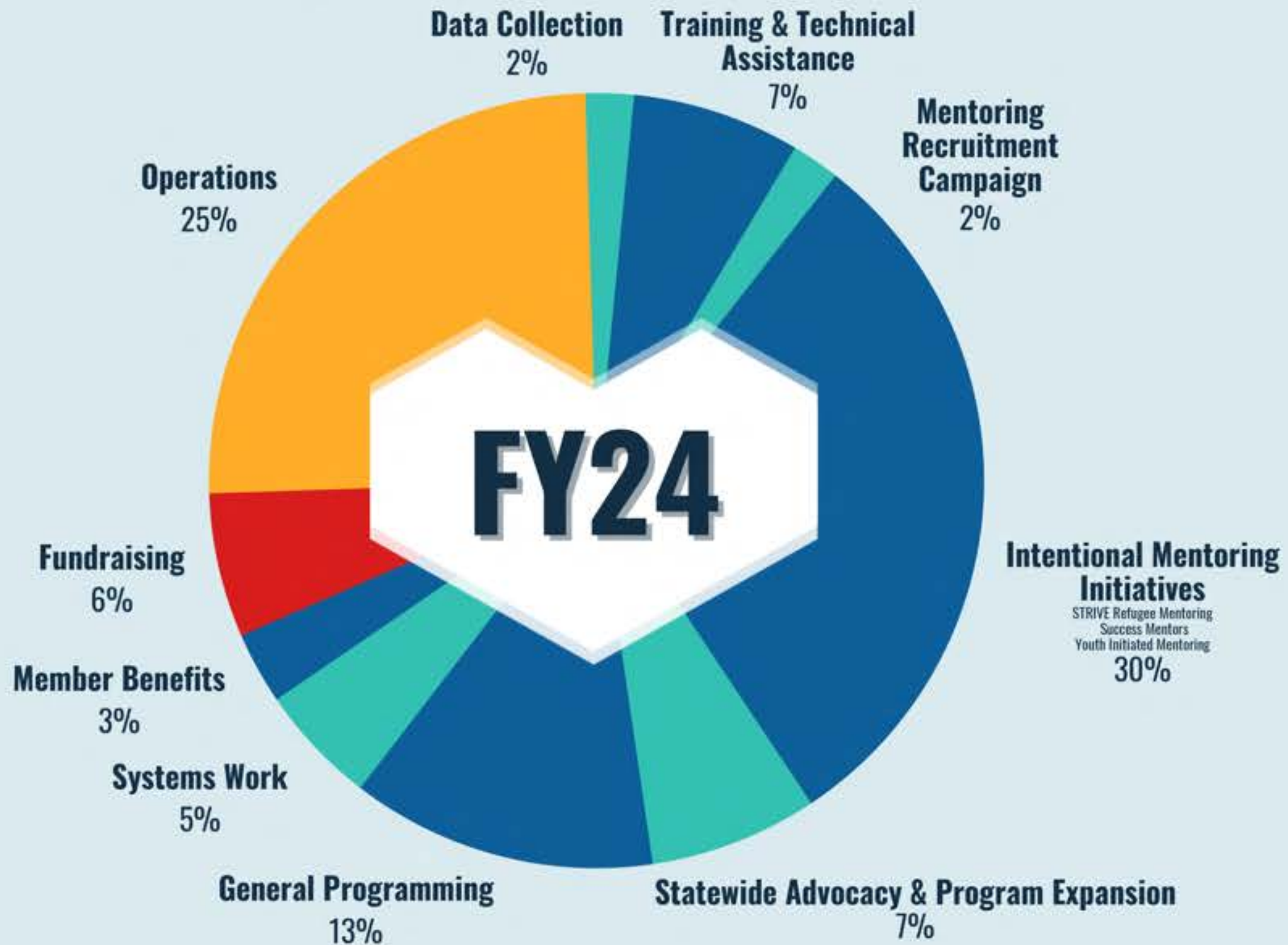
69% PROGRAMMING



25% OPERATIONS



6% FUNDRAISING



INVESTMENTS

in our sector



DONORS \$20K+

Lozier Foundation
MENTOR National
Nebraska Dept. of Economic Development
Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services
Omaha Community Foundation
Peter Kiewit Foundation
Sherwood Foundation
Weitz Family Foundation
William & Ruth Scott Foundation

IN-KIND DONORS

Bland & Associates
Fun-Plex
Lamar Advertising
Luminarium
Trader Joe's

\$1K - \$19,999

Ameritas
Baird Holm
Bland Cares Foundation
Burlington Foundation
City of Omaha
Clough Family Foundation
Matthew and Laura Enenbach
Farm Credit Services
First National Bank of Omaha
FNBO
Fraser Stryker
Justin and Fran Frauendorfer
Halal Transactions of Omaha
Julie and David Hefflinger
Valerie Houchin
Kutak Rock
McGrath North
Millard Foundation
Metropolitan Utilities District
Mutual of Omaha Foundation
Mutual Of Omaha
One Source The Background Check Company Charitable Fund
Kari O'Neill Potts and Tre Brashear
ONEOK
Omaha Public Power District
Peter Kiewit Corporation
QuikTrip
Rick and Carol Russell
Schneider Electric
Annette and Paul Smith
United Way of the Midlands
Valmont Foundation
Walmart
Woods Charitable Fund

UP TO \$999

Karima Al-Absy
Anonymous
Karla Benton
Bruce Broussard
Gregory and Theresa Bryant
Moniki Cannon
Jeremy Christensen
Don & Millie's
Trevor L. Hansen
Carol Houchin
Amari Johnson
Joseph Kohout
Kroger
Catherine Leazer
Amanda Levos
Lutz
Nebraska Bank of Commerce
Juan Padilla
Scott Focht
Elizabeth Seacrest
Seacrest Foundation
M J Shogren
Chris and Barb Stratman
Target
Tim and Beth Wilson
Betsy Vidlak



MENTOR
NEBRASKA

LEADERSHIP

in our sector



LEADERSHIP *Team Members*



MELISSA MAYO

Executive
Director



KARIMA AL-ABSY

Associate Director of
Advancement & Org Strategy



ALISA MOORE

Associate Director of Education
& Program Development



SAFARI ONYX

Training & Capacity
Building Intern



SUSIE OWENS

Deputy
Director



TERESA RIESBERG

Associate Director of
Marketing & Communications



HAJI SALAD

Program
Coordinator



MELISSA WESTBROOK

Associate Director of
Member Engagement & Learning

LEADERSHIP *Board Members*



EXECUTIVE

Kari O'Neill Potts, President
Scoular

Dr. Amanda Levos, Vice President
Grand Island Public Schools

Daniel Gutman, Secretary
Law Office of Daniel Gutman

Moniki Gunn, At-Large
Boys Town

Juan Padilla, At-Large
LendingLink

Matthew Enebach, Past President
Kutak Rock LLP

Peter Ferguson
Lincoln Public Schools

Scott Focht
Omaha Public Power District

Angelica Morrow
The Bosselman Enterprises

Tim Wilson
FORVIS LLP

Betsy Vidlak
Community Action Partnership
of Western Nebraska

EMERITUS

Josh Barte

John Ewing

Julie Hefflinger

Daniel Padilla

Ashley Robinson

Chris Rodgers

Rick Spellman

Mike Yanney



A heartfelt thank you to
Jeremy Christensen,
Carol Russell &
Elizabeth Seacrest

for their incredible dedication and
service as they wrap up their time
on the MENTOR Nebraska board.
Your impact will be felt for
years to come!

LEADERSHIP *Partner Members*



CERTIFIED PARTNERS

100 Black Men of Omaha (Omaha)
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Nebraska (Grand Island)
Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln (Lincoln)
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands (Omaha)
Big Pals Little Pals (Columbus)
Community Connections (North Platte)
Girls Inc. of Omaha (Omaha)
International Council for Refugees and Immigrants (Omaha)
The Keys Foundation (Omaha)
Kids Can Community Center (Omaha)
MentoringWorks (Hastings)
Partnership 4 Kids (Omaha)
Release Inc. (Omaha)
TeamMates of Lincoln (Lincoln)
TeamMates of Millard (Millard)
TeamMates of Omaha (Omaha)

PARTNERS

ACE Mentor Program (Omaha)
Astute Coffee (Omaha)
Engaged Leaders (Omaha)
The Friends Program (Kearney)
Visionary Youth (Lincoln)

EDUCATION PARTNERS

Lincoln Public Schools - STRIVE
Millard Public Schools - Success Mentors
Omaha Public Schools - Success Mentors



Brenna Poindexter
Executive Director | Big Brothers
Big Sisters of Central Nebraska

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Nebraska is grateful for the support and community that the team at MENTOR Nebraska provides. We are all invested in mentoring because we understand the vital importance of community and healthy relationships, and being a member of MENTOR Nebraska gives access to the mentoring community across the state, best practice resources, and cutting-edge training for mentors and professionals. We also love how they center youth!



MENTOR
NEBRASKA



MEMORIES

over the year



**YOUNG LEADER
OF THE YEAR**
Alejandra Wells



**MENTORING PRACTITIONER
OF THE YEAR**
Andrew Alemán



Excellence in Mentoring
AWARDS ▶▶▶

ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR
Dr. Marquisha Frost



MENTOR OF THE YEAR
La'Ron Jones





MEMORIES

Team





MEMORIES 
Impact



MEMORIES

Partners





MEMORIES
Community





CONNECT WITH US!



info@mentornebraska.org



402-715-4164



MENTORNebraska.org