

Retention – Helping mentors thrive in their roles

Strong and clear communication

- Set clear expectations with mentors when they begin volunteering
- Interview and get to know mentors using the Mentor Information Form – Make a note of strengths and areas of interest. Try and use mentors in roles that highlight their personal interests and strengths.
- Try and reduce “surprises” - Make sure to give mentors a tour of your building and the areas where they will be serving students (be sure to include bathrooms they can use, lockdown and alarm procedures, etc).

Empower Mentors

- Make sure all mentors complete Mentor Training: The Basics and encourage them to attend ongoing training – [Fall Conference](#) and/or monthly [Mentor Connections](#)
- Mentors don't have to “know it all” – Encourage mentors to use ASPIRE mentor toolkit, checklists, ECMC Workbook and partner/college websites to find answers to questions
- Ask questions

Feedback and Support

- Make sure you regularly check-in with your mentors.
- Develop a team environment - When you can, allow mentors to give feedback and share ideas.
- Listen to mentors' ideas and build an environment that supports this open communication.
- As you implement ideas/suggestions from your mentors identify and praise their contributions.

Build Community

- Building a strong morale among your mentor team is important. A connected mentor team can be their own support
- Provide opportunities for mentors to get to know one another – make sure you introduce new mentors, and consider 1-2 times a year a “mentor training/gathering” to build community
- ASPIRE Ambassadors: Identify your mentors as “ambassadors” and encourage them to share ASPIRE with their friends, business colleagues, and civic organizations where they are members to encourage others to join the team.

Share the Success Stories

- When you hear stories of success...be sure to share with your mentors. WHY

Empower Your Mentors

- Collaborate with mentors to find ways they can utilize their strengths to assist students and/or serve ASPIRE in new ways
- Consider an ASPIRE Volunteer Team Lead Role for assisting with projects
- They can review student essays, help with ASPIRE newsletter, etc.
- They can create a CCR display in ASPIRE center/hallways, design posters for events, etc.

Recognition

Nonverbal communication should let them know you are happy to see mentors –

- Physically get up and greet mentors when they arrive
- Smile and give positive nods – encouraging mentors as they meet with students

Communicate Appreciation – Every time you see a mentor you should communicate appreciation and gratitude

- Verbal appreciation and gratitude (thank you, I'm glad you are here, etc.)
- Written notes of appreciation - 1-3 times a year send them a personalized thank you note
- Look and find ways to compliment mentors and the way they are supporting students

Include Students – encourage students to show their appreciation to their mentors at least once a year

- Thank you notes
- Mentor appreciation party/event that students assist/serve mentors

End of Year Appreciation Thank you note/gift

- Doesn't have to be big – but something to say “thank you” for ongoing work with students
 - o Thank you note from ASPIRE Coordinator/Administrator
 - o Thank you note from ASPIRE students
- Examples some sites have used:
 - o Site/School Swag (gifts with MS/HS/CBO branding) – stickers, hats, t-shirts, travel mugs, etc.
 - o Gift Cards (local coffee shop, etc.)
 - o Items made by students at your school – CTE Classes (culinary, construction, graphic design, business, etc.)
 - o Flowers, balloons, cards, etc.