



# 2020 Status Report

## The New York State Mentoring Program

A review of the program's first five years, and a look ahead to 2025



*The New York State Mentoring Program* creates, provides and supports local mentoring programs for youth and young adults who can benefit from a positive connection with a Mentor.

September 2020

Program Founder and Chair: Matilda Raffa Cuomo  
Statewide Director: Brad DiPietro



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor  
Matilda R. Cuomo, Chair

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September 1, 2020

Dear Colleague:

It is with great honor that I present this report on behalf of the New York State Mentoring Program. This report is a collaboration of information compiled by the Mentoring Program team, which consists of Founder and Chair Mrs. Matilda Raffa Cuomo, the 14-member Advisory Council and seven fulltime staff. This team has dedicated their lives and careers to serving New York's families and it has been a privilege to work with them.

Since the re-instatement of the New York State Mentoring Program (NYSMP) in 2015, the team has established hundreds of mentoring programs for thousands of youth and young adults. Our elementary school-based mentoring model quickly grew into an array of program-types and service offerings. We learned that local non-profit organizations and New York State courts needed support in operating their own mentoring programs as they started to contact us for assistance.

To the credit of the staff, we were able to support dozens of organizations and courts with our mentoring services (training, screening, etc.) which are further outlined in this report. Staff members work many hours, including nights and weekends, to support mentoring programs wherever and whenever they are happening. Each staff member covers a geographical territory which can mean several subways in a given day or several hours of driving. This team deserves considerable credit for the work they put in and for the dedication they have to their programs.

This report also outlines our considerable growth as we support each program that contacts us for assistance. We have not turned away any organization or school that has requested our services. This approach has created an impressive portfolio of programs that need the time and attention of our staff. We continue to be contacted by new organizations monthly, and we are proud to help.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the full implementation of a virtual mentoring model that will keep students and Mentors connected until it is safe for school-based interactions to resume. Even after the threat of COVID-19 is minimalized, virtual mentoring can continue to connect Mentors and mentees in a safe environment that is fun and interactive.

In reading this report, you hopefully will develop a full understanding of the NYSMP services, impacts and accomplishments. I also hope it inspires you to get involved in volunteering with New York's youth for a few hours each month. Being a Mentor was easier than I ever thought, and more fun! Thank you for your interest in reading this report.

Sincerely,

*Brad DiPietro*

Brad DiPietro  
Statewide Director

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• Be NY Tough. Be a Mentor! •

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-  1-844-337-6304
-  [@nysmentoringprogram](mailto:@nysmentoringprogram)

The NYSMP is operated out of the New York State Council on Children and Families.

# Program History

The New York State Mentoring Program (NYSMP) originated in the mid-1980s after then-Governor Mario M. Cuomo reviewed statistics on poorly trending student achievement in our state. He asked First Lady Matilda Raffa Cuomo to devise a plan that would prevent students from dropping out of school and give them hope for a bright future.

## 1980s-90s

As a mother of five and classroom teacher, Mrs. Cuomo understood the importance of children having a positive one-to-one connection with an adult role model. Mentors would play a vital role in the development of our youth into strong adults who give back to their communities.

Throughout the late 80s and mid-90s, the NYSMP supported schools and foster care agencies in creating and operating their own mentoring programs. During the initial run of the program, over 10,000 students from Long Island to Niagara Falls were matched with a volunteer Mentor.



**Pictured:** 1992 - Mrs. Cuomo visits with students from Giffen Memorial Elementary in Albany, NY. Giffen still hosts a mentoring program for their students today.



**Pictured:** 2015 - Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announces the reinstatement of the New York State Mentoring Program at his State of the State Address.

## 2015-Present

During his 2015 State of the State Address, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced the reinstatement of the New York State Mentoring Program, which would be chaired once again by Matilda Raffa Cuomo. Since then Mrs. Cuomo, the Mentoring Program Advisory Council and program staff have connected over 6,000 of New York’s youth with a volunteer Mentor across 36 counties at over 280 individual locations.

The NYSMP has added services over recent years in response to requests from schools, non-profit organizations and New York State courts. Along with traditional school-based models, the NYSMP has developed its offerings into individual services. Existing mentoring programs can select any of the NYSMP services to bolster their own efforts including training courses, onboarding applications, volunteer screening, activity resources and ongoing consulting and support. All services are provided free of charge to New York schools, non-profits and courts.

The NYSMP will continue to add services to support and meet the needs of New York State schools, non-profits and courts in maintaining mentoring programs for their communities.

## Mission

“Create, provide and support local mentoring programs for youth and young adults who can benefit from a positive connection with a Mentor. The NYSMP will create programs with schools, organizations and courts. The NYSMP will provide services and consultation to grow mentoring programs and improve sustainability. The NYSMP will support program coordinators and Mentors in any way possible.”

## Vision

The New York State Mentoring Program vision is to support a network of mentoring programs that reach every community of the state. We work towards creating immediate availability to a Mentor when a youth or young adult needs them the most by strengthening local mentoring programs and organizations all across New York State.

## Goals

### Program

1. Partner with New York State schools, courts and non-profit organizations to create effective and sustainable mentoring programs for local youth and young adults.
2. Utilizing volunteer Mentors, develop the confidence and character of our youth while encouraging academic achievements and personal growth.
3. Secure partnerships with companies and organizations to serve as mentor-recruitment sources across the state, and help them to “adopt” a school in their local community.
4. Provide recruiting, screening, onboarding, training, boundaries and continuous support to all Mentors, mentoring programs and program coordinators.
5. Introduce structure, processes and best practices to existing mentoring programs and provide ongoing support in all areas.

### Students

1. Improve a student’s connection to the school and community.
2. Increase a student’s emotional awareness and intelligence through social and emotional learning and development.
3. Create a positive adult relationship based on trust, respect and accountability.

[Consult Appendix A “Student Outcome Statements Grid 2020” for more in-depth review.]

# NYSMP Team

## Founder & Program Chair

### Mrs. Matilda Raffa Cuomo

Matilda Raffa Cuomo began her career teaching in the classroom and saw firsthand the importance of strong adult connections in children’s lives.

She believed that all children needed a one-to-one connection with someone who provided guidance, support and encouragement. Teachers were overwhelmed with growing class sizes that were also becoming more diverse.

Mrs. Cuomo knew that an army of volunteer Mentors was going to be instrumental in developing our youth into strong adults. The NYSMP was launched in the mid-1980s with Mrs. Cuomo - New York’s First Lady - serving as the Chair under Governor Mario M. Cuomo.



Mrs. Cuomo has brought mentoring around the world through organizations such as Mentoring USA and Mentoring Italia in Italy. Several European countries adopted mentoring programs based on the Mentoring Italia program created by Mrs. Cuomo in the late 1990s.

In 2017, Mrs. Cuomo was inducted in the National Women’s Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, NY, for her achievements and lifetime commitment to serving children and families all around the world.

Mrs. Cuomo continues to lead the NYSMP providing direction, vision and resources that grow the program every month.

*“I am so proud of our Mentors and program coordinators who do so much for their students. They volunteer their time, they come with energy and the students benefit so much from the experience. Mentoring works and I thank everyone that makes it happen across our great state.”*



*~ Matilda Cuomo*

## Advisory Council

The NYSMP Advisory Council is a dedicated group of 14 volunteers who meet monthly via conference call and occasional meetings with Program Chair Matilda Cuomo and the Statewide Director. They provide leadership, resources, time, vision and accountability to the NYSMP and staff.

Members of the Advisory Council volunteer their time creating community partnerships, publicizing the program, recruiting Mentors and even serving as Mentors. This group has produced training guides and manuals, operating procedures, and has used their networks to bring the NYSMP to new corners of the state. The NYSMP has been extremely fortunate for the time and efforts of this council.

**Mitchell Auslander**

New York City

**Charles Lesnick**

Mid-Hudson

**Deborah Benson**

Capital Region

**Kevin Leyden**

Capital Region

**Judith Beville**

Mid-Hudson

**Susan Murante**

Adirondacks

**Betty Jean Carter**

New York City

**Terry Paladini-Baumgarten**

New York City

**Frank P. Di Berardino III**

Mohawk Valley

**James Quail**

New York City & Mid-Hudson

**Donald Distasio**

Central New York

**Patricia Reilly**

Capital Region

**Sandra Gallo**

Long Island

**Robert Samson**

Capital Region



Thank you, Advisory Council members, for the last 5 and next 5 years!

## Staff

**Name** Title (year hired)

**Brad DiPietro** Statewide Director, Interim Eastern New York Regional Coordinator (2015)

**Melinda Sanderson** Upstate Director (2015)

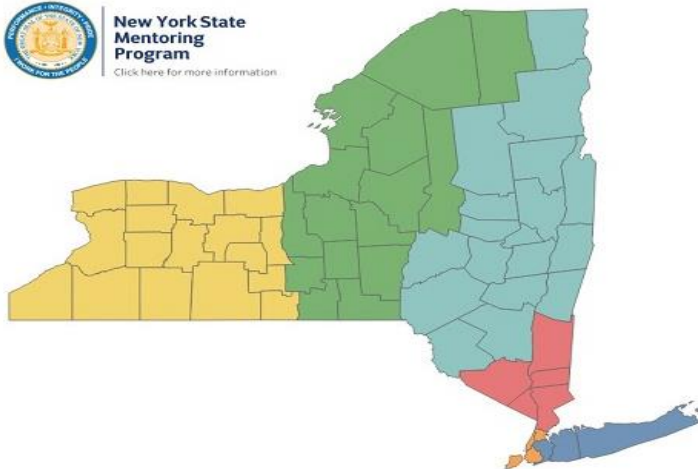
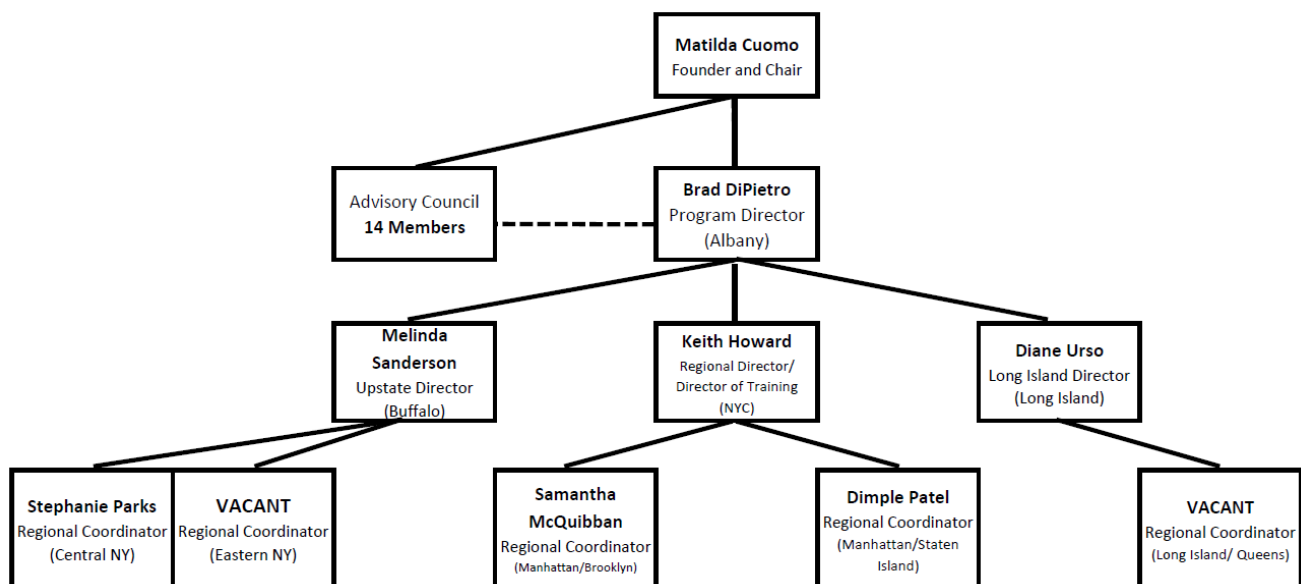
**Keith Howard** New York City Regional Director, Director of Training & Capacity Building (2016)

**Diane Urso** Long Island/Queens Director (2017)

**Samantha McQuibban** New York City Regional Coordinator (2018)

**Dimple Patel** New York City Regional Coordinator (2018)

**Stephanie Parks** Central New York Regional Coordinator (2019)



## Regions

1. Western New York - Melinda Sanderson
2. Central New York - Stephanie Parks
3. Eastern New York - Brad DiPietro
4. Bronx/Mid-Hudson - Keith Howard
5. New York City - Dimple Patel & Samantha McQuibban
6. Long Island/Queens - Diane Urso



## Staff- Job Responsibilities

The NYSMP staff consists of seven staff members as of September 2020. Each staff member is responsible for supporting all mentoring programs in their territory. Staff must be able to travel, deliver presentations to large audiences, recruit volunteers and support local program staff indefinitely.

Due to the growth and variety of programs supported, the NYSMP has developed a need for additional positions within the program. A Program Administrator would serve the entire NYSMP team while a Court Program Coordinator would specialize in supporting court-based programs.

### Program Director

Current: 1 position

The Program Director oversees the mentoring program staff to ensure best practices and standards are being maintained. The Program Director leads statewide collaborations and partnerships to benefit all regions while collecting program data and feedback.

### Regional Director

Current: 3 positions Requested: 0

Regional Directors serve two functions for the NYSMP. The first is being a Supervisor and support system to NYSMP Coordinators in their region. This duty includes training, weekly supervision of tasks and providing any necessary assistance to their colleagues.

Additionally, Regional Directors work with a portfolio of mentoring programs in their own geographical regions. These responsibilities include providing local programs with assistance in recruiting, screening and training Mentors, while continuously helping programs develop structure, boundaries and best practices.

### Regional Coordinator

Current: 5 positions\* Requested: 2 additional (Mid-Hudson and NYC)

Regional Coordinators are responsible for developing and supporting mentoring programs in their geographically assigned regions. These responsibilities include providing local programs with assistance in recruiting, screening and training Mentors, while continuously helping programs develop structure, boundaries and best practices.

\*Two Regional Coordinator positions (Albany and Long Island/Queens) are vacant with estimated hire dates in 2021.

### Court Program Coordinator

Current: 0 Requested: 1

The Court Program Coordinator is a new position being requested by the NYSMP. This position would support New York State courts in the creation and development of mentoring programs for the youth and young adults brought before the courts for a variety of reasons. Mentees in court programs are at higher risk levels which require strong programs and Mentor support systems.

### Program Administrator

Current: 0 Requested: 1 (Albany)

The Program Administrator is a new position being requested by the NYSMP. This position would be the main point of contact for initial inquiries from schools, organizations and volunteers. This position would support all NYSMP staff in the maintaining of Mentor rosters/onboarding status, the distribution and collection of surveys, and keeping NYSMP social media accounts updated.

# Services

The NYSMP provides free support services to schools, non-profit organizations and courts across the state. School-based programs typically need assistance in all areas, while non-profit and court programs will request specific services needed to complement their own efforts.

## Mentor Recruiting

The NYSMP staff works to create business partnerships that provide volunteer Mentors to local programs each school year. Partnerships range from private companies to faith-based organizations to non-profits, all willing to oversee the recruitment from within their organizations.

The NYSMP also accepts applications from the community-at-large. Volunteers must be over the age of 18 and submit to a background check process. Volunteers from the community are placed in the program that best fits their availability and interests. These volunteers join school-based programs or are referred to local organizations in need of Mentors.

## Mentor Screening and Onboarding

The NYSMP offers access to an online application for all new Mentors that includes the collection of contact information, character references, hobbies and availability. School-based programs have access to New York State Criminal History Information on all volunteers via fingerprinting at local locations across the state.

## Mentor Training

The NYSMP staff delivers a two-hour New Mentor Training course to all Mentors for each type of program. This training covers best practices, tips, listening techniques, handling of sensitive information, having difficult conversations and program boundaries. Trainings are delivered in-person, over the phone or through virtual video conferences. Additional training courses are available upon request and range from goal-setting, to developing leaders, to supporting literacy.



## Program Coordinator Training and Continuous Support

NYSMP staff supports school-based program coordinators (often guidance counselors or teachers) and non-profit organizations with ongoing training and support.

Program coordinators are the “face” of their programs and are vital to the week-to-week success of local mentoring programs.

## Professional Development Course

The NYSMP staff offers up to six hours of Professional Development coursework for educators. The course utilizes mentoring strategies and best practices to help educators maximize the impact of their everyday interactions with students.

All trainings/courses can be delivered on-site or virtually and are free of charge to all participants.

# Models

The NYSMP staff is able to provide guidance and resources to support each of the program models listed below. Once a model is selected, the NYSMP staff will help create specific boundaries and programming for each location.

## Elementary School Programs

School-based programs utilize six to 12 adult volunteers who are matched one-to-one with a student for the academic year. These programs have a school faculty person present to supervise and facilitate the weekly or bi-weekly mentoring sessions. Mentors focus on relationship-building, encouraging student interests and offering guidance.

## Middle School/High School Programs

These programs use the same structure as elementary programs with the additional components of career exploration, goal-setting, leadership development and academics.

## High School Mentors Program

High school students are selected to serve as Mentors to younger students. Programs range in frequency, length and content of discussions. High school Mentors receive a letter of appreciation and recognition for their work in volunteerism from NYSMP Chair Matilda Raffa Cuomo.

## Court Programs

New York State courts, both family and criminal courts, have implemented structured mentoring programs to support the youth and young adults that come before the court. Family courts have created mentoring programs for PINS cases (Persons In Need of Supervision) and youth living through the complex foster care system. The city courts use Mentors to help young adults navigate the court system, fulfill probation requirements and get them on track for a successful future.

1. Cohoes City Court - young adults appearing before the court for low-level or first offenses.
2. New York City Family Court - young adults in foster care or receiving foster care services.
3. Schenectady Family Court - juvenile PINS cases with mentoring at the public library.
4. Warren County Family Court - juvenile PINS cases using community-based mentoring in partnership with the non-profit group Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Adirondacks.

## Virtual Mentoring

Programs using electronic means or video conferencing platforms fall under the virtual mentoring model. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased demand for virtual mentoring boundaries, recommendations and best practices. Virtual mentoring can still allow for on-site interactions; however, the majority of virtual mentoring will be over the computer/smart phone or via e-mail. Schools use their video conferencing platforms to connect matches from the school or from home. Quality-control measures are in place to ensure safe and comfortable interactions for all participants.

## Mentoring Services Network

The NYSMP provides its services to non-profits, courts and organizations operating their own mentoring programs. Many local mentoring programs have inadequate funding for comprehensive screening and training of Mentors and program coordinators. Upon request, the NYSMP provides all services (listed on Page 9) to support local mentoring programs at no expense.

# Resources

The NYSMP team has created a wide range of resources for Mentors and program coordinators. These resources are developed in an effort to help Mentor-mentee conversations and to assist the program coordinator in running efficient and impactful programs.

Program resources can be found online at: <https://www.ny.gov/nys-mentoring-program-resources>.

## Elementary School Activities

The NYSMP staff provides over 50 classroom-friendly activities that help create natural, fun and challenging interactions between the Mentors and mentees. The focus in this age range is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) with relationship- and character-building as the key components. Discussion topics, team-building exercises, board games and small projects comprise the recommended activities for elementary school programs.

## Middle School/High School Activities

Activities for these grades begin to introduce career pathways, goal-setting, leadership and academics. Programs are provided with detailed exercises that are used throughout the year and help guide Mentors through the topics and conversations.

## Program Coordinator Resources

Program coordinators are often guidance counselors, teaching assistants or teachers with full work days and dozens of students to manage. The NYSMP staff provides as much support as possible to program coordinators to make their weekly mentoring programs seamless.

Parental consent forms, program calendars, the activities, surveys and training materials are provided to the program coordinator to assist in the implementation and maintenance of the program week-to-week. Coordinators and Mentors often bring their own ideas and activities to the sessions as well.

## Manuals and Guides

The NYSMP team has developed a portfolio of manuals and guides to assist Mentors and program coordinators. These resources give in-depth information and recommendations in specific areas including but not limited to:

- Mentoring Program Manual
- Mentor Manual
- Site Coordinator Manual
- What You Need to Know About Nutrition and Staying Healthy
- Reading Guide for Mentoring
- Goal Setting Guide
- Guide to Promoting Your Program
- Match Closure Guide



# The First Five Years (2015–20)

| School Year | Programs Supported | Mentors | Mentor Growth | Full-Time Staff | Mentor to Staff Ratio | Programs to Staff Ratio |
|-------------|--------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2015-16     | 7                  | 75      | N/A           | 2               | 37 to 1               | 3 to 1                  |
| 2016-17     | 67                 | 880     | 1073%         | 5               | 176 to 1              | 13 to 1                 |
| 2017-18     | 132                | 2,307   | 162%          | 7               | 329 to 1              | 18 to 1                 |
| 2018-19     | 192                | 2,860   | 24%           | 6               | 476 to 1              | 32 to 1                 |
| 2019-20*    | 216                | 3,210   | 12%           | 7               | 458 to 1              | 30 to 1                 |

\*School year shortened due to COVID-19.

## 2015-16

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced the reinstatement of the NYSMP during his January 2015 State of the State Address. The focus was to support New York schools with programs utilizing volunteer Mentors from the business community and the community-at-large. The NYSMP would recruit, screen and train volunteer Mentors while the schools would provide the room, supervision and week-to-week support of the program.

In March 2016, the NYSMP had started elementary school mentoring programs (seven total) in Buffalo, the Capital Region and Long Island with 75 volunteers. Mentor training was provided by outside organizations that were reimbursed by federal program funding. Fingerprinting was collected at Mentor-training courses on fingerprint cards with wet ink pads.

**Successes:** Launching seven programs in the initial year was more than expected. Organizations like SEFCU (Albany), MVP Healthcare (Schenectady) and Calvary Episcopal Church (Buffalo) quickly partnered with the NYSMP to provide the needed volunteers.

**Discoveries:** (1) Relying on external organizations for Mentor training was going to be a continuous scheduling challenge. (2) Matches during the sessions needed conversation topics and basic activities to generate natural conversation for 45 to 60 minutes. (3) The use of “ink and roll” fingerprinting was difficult to schedule with mobile units coming to Mentor training classes.



## 2016-17

During this academic year the NYSMP full-time staff grew from two people to five, and programs created grew from seven to 67. Positions were added in Albany, Long Island and New York City in response to requests for the mentoring program. Several requests came from middle and high schools, which the NYSMP began to serve in the spring of 2017.

**Successes:** Program growth was managed well, and all staff began delivering their own New-Mentor Training. Fingerprinting became digital, and volunteers could visit a local site on their own schedules.

**Discoveries:** (1) The discussion topics and activities designed for elementary students were not as effective with middle and high school students. More age-appropriate discussion topics were needed that focused on career paths and leadership. (2) Also, supporting upstate New York with one staff person in Buffalo and one in Albany was going to vastly limit the program reach upstate.

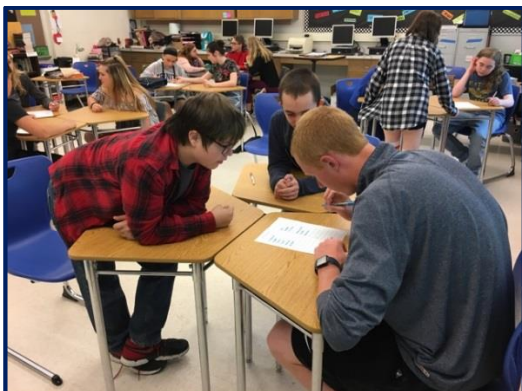
## 2017-18

The 2017-18 school year was a significant turning point for the NYSMP in terms of program models being delivered and supported. NYSMP staff (now at seven) were consistently being requested to deliver New-Mentor Training courses and consulting services to existing mentoring programs and non-profit organizations. Staff began delivering formal training and providing program boundaries to these organizations in the evenings and on weekends.

This school year saw the launch of a peer mentoring model with high school students mentoring freshmen and middle-school students. This year also saw the launch of the first court-based mentoring program in the Cohoes City Court, with Judge Andra Ackerman presiding, for young adults brought before the court with first-time or low-level offenses.

**Successes:** Statewide growth was managed well, the delivery of mentoring services to organizations developed quickly and the High School Mentors model added hundreds of high school Mentors.

**Discoveries:** (1) High school Mentors needed support and guidance far beyond what is generally needed for adult Mentors. Program coordinators for high school Mentors also needed additional support, guidance and resources when managing peer Mentors. (2) Even without needing to recruit and screen adult volunteers, High School Student Mentoring Programs can be as equally time-intensive as adult programs. (3) Supporting up to 30 school-based programs (spread over 20 counties) resulted in extended work hours for staff that included nights and weekends. Capacity to support our programs became a concern for the first time in 2017-18, with each staff supporting over 300 Mentors.



## 2018-19

The 2018-19 school year showed continued growth and the mentoring services being offered to non-profits and courts became fully developed and functional. The Mentoring Services Network (MSN) was created to assist mentoring programs taking place outside of schools. The number of programs being served by six staff people was at a challenging level. Some schools (less than ten) did not launch programs due to the lack of Mentors/recruiting. The NYSMP staff was not able to meet all requests for programming or individual services for the first time in 2018-19 due to volume.

**Successes:** Three more New York State courts launched mentoring programs in partnership with the NYSMP. Three family courts and one criminal court were running 52-week programs with a total of 18 youth and young adults. Also, a third staff person was added to the program in Syracuse to help divide the upstate territory further.

**Discoveries:** (1) Court programs need additional attention in the creation phase and the first 12 to 24 months of their programs. Each court is unique in the structure of its program, making it more difficult for staff to manage uniformly. (2) The NYSMP staff lacked basic marketing materials to explain its services and program models efficiently and consistently.



**Pictured:** High school students take a picture after their NYSMP New Mentor Training course. Older students are trained as Mentors and matched with younger students to promote a connected school community.

## 2019-20

The number of programs and Mentors continued to grow, while staff size remained steady for three years. Occasionally, requests for services were not met due to scheduling constraints and prioritizing school-based program needs. The school year was shortened due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the abrupt disconnection of over 3,000 matches in school-based and community-based programs. The program year ended with a few schools trying virtual mentoring.

**Successes:** The NYSMP staff created a virtual mentoring model in response to social-distancing needs during the pandemic. The model will make mentoring available to many more volunteers who could not commute to a school. During the 2019-20 school year, the staff created a Professional Development (PD) course for educators. A Long Island school district administrator participated in the NYSMP New Mentor Training course, and asked that it be provided to the entire faculty. Mentoring strategies and approaches are being delivered to faculty and staff who interact with students daily. The PD course, *A Mentoring Approach for Educators and Staff*, was rolled out in the summer of 2020.

**Discoveries:** (1) The need for virtual mentoring programs is becoming mainstream. Youth use this technology regularly; mentoring programs therefore must adapt and consider virtual mentoring models. (2) Schools are looking for additional training programs for their districtwide staff in the form of PD and Continuing Education courses.

# The Next Five Years (2020–25)

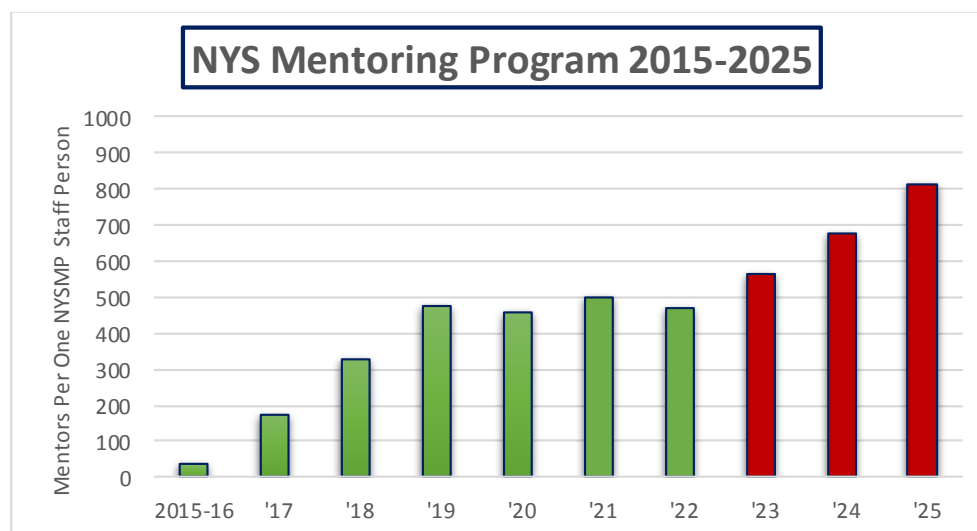
The NYSMP has seen steady growth each year since re-instatement in 2015. The 2017-18 school year had each NYSMP staff person responsible for supporting 329 Mentors and 18 programs. This was the first year the NYSMP staff had concerns with how to adequately support this number of volunteers.

## Projections 2020-25

Current projections have each staff person supporting between 450 and 800 volunteer Mentors each school year. The quality of attention and support staff can provide mentoring programs will start to decline significantly as staff approaches a 450 to 1 ratio of Mentors to mentoring staff.

| School Year | Programs Supported | Mentors | Mentor Growth | Full-Time Staff | Mentor to Staff Ratio | Programs to Staff Ratio |
|-------------|--------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2020-21     | 190-230            | 3,560   | ± 10%         | 7**             | 500 to 1              | 30 to 1                 |
| 2021-22     | 250                | 4,250   | 20%           | 9               | 472 to 1              | 27 to 1                 |
| 2022-23     | 280                | 5,100   | 20%           | 9               | 566 to 1              | 31 to 1                 |
| 2023-24     | 320                | 6,120   | 20%           | 9               | 680 to 1              | 35 to 1                 |
| 2024-25     | 360                | 7,350   | 20%           | 9               | 816 to 1              | 40 to 1                 |

\*\* Two additional staff approved and awaiting final hiring, scheduled for spring of 2021.



The NYSMP Staff size will expand to nine in 2021, therefore helping stabilize 2021 and 2022 temporarily.

## Plans

Handling this volume increase must include a more efficient process of recruiting, onboarding and training Mentors. Local program coordinators will be trained to run programs more autonomously.

Additional staff to cover the vast territory of upstate New York and the dense populations of downstate will also be necessary. Proper staff levels for the next 5 years would include four new positions. One new Regional Coordinator each in the Mid-Hudson and New York City regions, a Court Program Coordinator and a Program Administrator (outlined on Page 9).

This request would bring the NYSMP fulltime staff total from 9 to 13 positions.



# Survey Results & Feedback

From 2015 to 2019, the NYSMP has provided end-of-year surveys to students, Mentors and program coordinators. Those surveys provided a platform for participants to be heard and has been vital in identifying program strengths and weaknesses.

Student surveys do not include personal information such as grades, attendance or other measures that could compromise the privacy of the student. Student feedback comes from the student directly.

In the spring of 2020, the NYSMP partnered with the non-profit Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS) headquartered in Tampa, Florida, to create a pre- and post-program survey that collects data on the impact of mentoring while protecting the privacy of the students. The new surveys will help us measure the impact on the students with questions developed by BBBS for use in their own programs.

### What Mentors Say

I love this program. Over the years I have watched children grow and change. I have seen the amazing relationships and bonds that have been formed.

**We've been matched for a few years now and I think we have a great relationship.**

**The child I was assigned to is a really sweet child. We had a lot in common. She lost her mom at a such a young age. I too lost my mother when I was young. We connected immediately.**

**It has made me more compassionate, empathetic, and understanding. Seeing him smile and "just have fun" for the time we had together was fulfilling.**

Being able to listen and learn from my mentee, as she is from Nepal, was great. I learned many different customs and lots about food!

I love and believe in this program wholeheartedly.

**Excerpt:** 2019-20 Mentor Survey Responses - NYSMP.csv

| How many school years have you been a Mentor with this program | The mentoring program happened exactly how it was described to you and was what you expected. | Additional Comments on Expectations:  |
|--|---|---|
| 2  | Completely Agree  | It was much better than I expected. Being a retired teacher who taught 38 years in this district, and now an author of children's books, I was very excited to see how well-planned and how well implemented this program was. I am proud to be a continuing member of the Brentwood Family and hope that God willing it will continue. |
| 1  | Completely Agree  | I am saddened that the experience ended early due to Covid-19 but I look forward to participating again when the program is reinstated. Thank you for the opportunity.  |
| 2  | Mostly Agree  | WOULD HAVE ENJOYED MORE TIME EACH WEEK TO CONNECT WITH THE YOUTH.   |

### Sample Questions

- Do you feel you had an impact?
- How long did it take to establish a connection with your student?
- Did the Mentor Training Class prepare you for the program?
- Were you provided continuous support by a program coordinator?
- What factors will impact your decision to return next year?

**To see the excitement on my students' faces when it was time for the Mentoring Program warmed my heart!!**

(NYSMP) paired us with some wonderful mentors! Thanks.

I've seen many positive relationships come out of the mentoring program. Our students love to participate and every year I have several kids pleading with me to be in the mentoring program.

**What Program Coordinators Say**

I enjoyed the program even though it was short due to COVID-19. The training was very helpful and they provided many activity ideas.

The older students were trained on how to properly mentor younger students. The idea of actively listening and building bridges is so important.

It is unbelievable the difference it makes for our students.

### Sample Questions

- Did the NYSMP team provide you with training and support?
- What factors helped your matches build a relationship?
- Were you satisfied with your program?
- What suggestions could improve the program for next year?
- How many of your matches are paired together for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year or longer?

**Excerpt: 2019-20 Program Coordinators Survey Responses - NYSMP.csv**

| Program/School                 | Job Title                             | City/Town  | How many years has your school had the NYS Mentoring Program? | How many school years have you been the Site Coordinator for the mentoring program? | How many Matches (Mentor-Mentee) do you have at your school/site? |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|
| John Glenn HS-Freshmen Buddies | School Counselor                      | Elwood     | 4 Years   | 1   | 65  |
| Red Mill Elementary School     | School Social Worker                  | Rensselaer | 4 Years   | 1   | 6   |
| P.S. 111                       | Associate Director, Talent Management | New York   | 3 Years   | 1   | 10  |

Full surveys available upon request.

### Additional Feedback

Feedback from Mentors and program coordinators generally fit into a few categories, such as session structure, availability of activities and the general environment of the classroom. Each program is unique in how it is operated week-to-week so this feedback helps us identify specific areas and programs that need attention.

Mentors prefer to have someone (program coordinator) facilitate a group activity while they sit one-to-one with their students and work on that activity together. Without a clear activity to start the session and someone leading it, students can become distracted and more challenging to engage.

Meaningful activities and discussion topics are always in demand as some students spend 4+ years in the program therefore needing new and age-appropriate content to assist conversations.

**I like having my own mentor just for me and I liked the games.**

**More snacks and pizza parties.**

My favorite part about mentoring is that there are some of the best activities! And I love being with someone to talk to about what I did in school.






**Bring more mentors so my friends can come.**






**What Students Say**






My favorite was when me and my mentor went to the gym to play basketball.

**I would like mentoring twice a week instead of once.**

Excerpt: 2018-19 Student Survey Responses - Elementary and Middle Schools - NYSMP.csv

|   |    | Q1: I enjoy being in the Mentoring Program  |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mentee Survey Responses<br>2018-2019 School Year<br>Elementary and Middle School Programs |    | Strongly Disagree   | Disagree  | Neutral   | Agree   | Strongly Agree  |
|   |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| Totals by Percentage (%)  |    | 3%  | 1%  | 8%  | 20%   | 68%   |
| Bellvue Elementary (Syracuse)   | 6  |   |   | 1   | 1   | 4   |
| Benjamin Franklin Elementary (Binghamton)   | 19 |   |   | 3   | 9   | 7   |
| Calvin Coolidge Elementary (Binghamton)   | 13 | 1   |   | 1   | 2   | 9   |
| Carroll Hill Elementary (Troy)  | 6  |   |   |   | 2   | 4   |

| Q2: I like having my own Mentor   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree   | Disagree  | Neutral   | Agree   | Strongly Agree  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1%  | 4%  | 9%  | 18%   | 68%   |

| Q7: I enjoy coming to school  |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree   | Disagree   | Neutral   | Agree   | Strongly Agree  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 10%   | 7%   | 29%   | 20%   | 34%   |

Sadly, only **54%** of our elementary/middle school students enjoy attending school (Q7). However, **88%** enjoy being in the mentoring program (Q1).

# Appendix A: Mentoring Statements Outcomes Grid- 2020

| Outcome Statements  | Student Outcome  | Mentor Training Inputs  | Survey Questions<br>(10 & Under)<br>(11 & Up)  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Increased Connection to School</p> <p>Improve student's connection to their school by providing a caring adult that offers guidance, support and encouragement in a safe space.</p>  | <p>I. Increased attendance rates</p> <p>II. Increased enjoyment of school</p> <p>III. Increased effort academically</p> <p>IV. Increased self-confidence at school</p> | <p>a. Mentors are a consistent presence for their student that provides a positive connection to the school.</p> <p>b. Mentors can provide encouragement and suggestions to resolving student conflicts, concerns and/or questions.</p> <p>c. Mentors engage in goal setting activities; which include academic achievements, navigating school social life and utilizing existing school supports.</p> <p>d. Mentors promote diversity and celebrate all cultures, ethnicities, gender identities, and personal liberty in the classroom and community</p> | <p>1. I work hard at school</p> <p>2. I enjoy being at school</p> <p>3. I get bored in school a lot</p> <p>4. I do well in school</p> <p>5. I feel good about myself when I am at school</p> <p>6. Doing well in school is important to me.</p> <p>(11 &amp; Up)</p> <p>1. I work hard at school</p> <p>2. I enjoy being at school</p> <p>3. I get bored in school a lot</p> <p>4. I do well in school</p> <p>5. I feel good about myself when I am at school</p> <p>6. Doing well in school is important to me.</p>   |
| <p>Develop Emotional Growth</p> <p>Increase student's emotional intelligence and awareness, healthy decision making and critical thinking.</p>  | <p>I. Increase in ability to control emotions</p> <p>II. Decrease in duration of negative feelings</p>   | <p>a. Mentors demonstrate emotional control and empathy/sympathy, and provide encouragement and support.</p> <p>b. Mentors 'point out' emotions as students display them (frustration, anger, etc.).</p> <p>c. Mentors are non-judgmental and let students lead interactions</p> <p>d. Mentors are trained to promote "growth mindset" and reflective thinking</p>  | <p>(10 &amp; Under)</p> <p>1. I can relax when I feel tense</p> <p>2. I can keep my feelings from getting out of control</p> <p>3. I can make myself feel better when I am worried</p> <p>4. I can control myself when I get angry</p> <p>(11 &amp; Up)</p> <p>1. I can relax when I feel tense</p> <p>2. I can keep my feelings from getting out of control</p> <p>3. I can make myself feel better when I am worried</p> <p>4. I can control myself when I get angry</p>   |
| <p>Creating Healthy Relationships</p> <p>Create a relationship for a student based on trust, respect and accountability.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">8/2020</p> | <p>I. Can identify a healthy and trusting relationship</p> <p>II. Has a healthy and trusting relationship with someone outside the home.</p>                           | <p>a. Mentors are encouraged to build a relationship with a student through consistent attendance, support and undivided attention.</p> <p>b. Mentors are focused on the student's interests and goals.</p> <p>c. Mentors are provided with active listening strategies and techniques.</p> <p>d. Mentors respect confidentiality, holding mentees accountable and promoting honesty.</p>   | <p>Sometimes people your age have an adult in their life that is ALL of these things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone they've known for a while;</li> <li>• Someone they often spend time with;</li> <li>• Someone they can really count on when they need help; and</li> <li>• Someone who cares a lot about what happens to them.</li> </ul> <p>1. Is there an adult who you live with (for example, a parent or someone else who takes care of you) who is ALL of these things for you?</p> <p>2. Is your Mentor through this program ALL of these things for you?</p> <p>3. Is there another adult who you do not live with who is ALL of these things for you? Please describe who this person is.</p> |

Discussion topics, character-building activities and other resources are provided to Mentors/coordinators to reinforce program outcomes.

# Appendix B: Successful Partnerships

A very large “thank you!” to...



...and “thank you!” to the numerous companies and organizations across the state that we could not fit on this page. Every Mentor matters, and we appreciate you all.