

The U.S. Department of Education Mentoring Resource Center e-Newsletter is a monthly resource created specifically for ED-funded youth mentoring agencies. It previews upcoming events, announces grant-specific information, and provides resources and helpful advice to those running mentoring programs. It is disseminated via the ED Mentoring Forum Listserv. If you wish to add or delete members from the listserv please contact Michael Garringer of the MRC at: [garringm@nwrel.org](mailto:garringm@nwrel.org).

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## NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 1. Make Sure You are Signed Up for The Upcoming Events!

The initial Grantee Trainings are quickly approaching for those in Regions I and II, so please make sure you and any other appropriate staff are signed up for the event for your region (a state breakdown of the regions appears below; the Region III folks received their training back in January in D.C.). Please keep in mind that these events are for 2004 ED grantees only.

#### San Antonio/Region II Training—

When: March 29th-31<sup>st</sup>

Where: La Mansion del Rio Hotel, San Antonio, TX

Who: Grantees from Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin

What: A sample agenda and registration information can be found at:  
[http://www.emt.org/ed\\_mentoring/centralregistration.htm](http://www.emt.org/ed_mentoring/centralregistration.htm)

If you have not received a registration confirmation for the San Antonio event from Shelly Boehm, please contact Shelly at [shelly@emt.org](mailto:shelly@emt.org) to verify your registration. If you have not registered, you can do so by using the link above.

The rooms at the La Mansion del Rio Hotel are sold out. If you do not have hotel reservations, the following hotels are within walking distance of La Mansion: The Sheraton Gunter (just 2 short blocks away); The Valencia (less than 2 blocks); The Westin (located on the River Walk about a 5 minute walk); Hilton Palacio Del Rio (located on the River Walk--5 minutes away); and the Hyatt located minutes away. These are all good hotels—all within 5 minutes walking (and in safe areas).

Another option for finding a hotel is the San Antonio Texas Hotels Discounts Reservations website at <http://www.san-antonio-texas-hotels-discounts-reservations.com/>.

San Diego/Region I Training—

When: May 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>

Where: Wyndham San Diego at Emerald Plaza, San Diego, CA

Who: Grantees from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

What: A sample agenda and registration information can be found at:

[http://www.emt.org/ed\\_mentoring/westregistration.htm](http://www.emt.org/ed_mentoring/westregistration.htm)

The hotel reservation deadline for this event is Saturday, April 9, 2005. Visit <http://www.wyndham.com/hotels/SANEP/main.wnt> to learn more about the Wyndham San Diego at Emerald Plaza.

We look forward to meeting the new grantees at these events!

## 2. Publications Update

As you may be aware, the MRC is in the process of developing several publications that will be useful to you as you administer your grants. While there have been descriptions of the tentative topics for these on the MRC website, there has been a slight shift in the content areas we'll be writing on. The current slate of publications we're developing is as follows:

“Making the Grade: A Guide to Incorporating Academic Achievement Into Mentoring Programs and Relationships”— this publication will help programs take the best ideas from the worlds of tutoring, service learning, career exploration, and learning facilitation and apply them to the mentoring relationship context.

“The ED Mentoring Guide to Screening and Background Checks”— this publication will help grantees solidify their screening and background check systems while offering expert advice on what to do when difficulties arise in the process.

“Going the Distance: Making Mentoring Relationships That Last”— this one will focus on strategies that will help you meet your GPRA indicator of 12-month-minimum matches.

Beginning next month, we will also begin disseminating a monthly “fact sheet” that will provide an overview of, and advice on, a topic relevant to your mentoring projects.

### 3. Timeline of ED-related Deadlines and Events Now on the Website

One of the pieces of feedback we received at the initial training event was that grantees were having a hard time keeping track of all the “stuff” related to this grant (“stuff” loosely translating to “deadlines”). To that end, we have expanded the event calendar section of the MRC website, which you can find here: [http://www.edmentoring.org/grantee/event\\_calendar.html](http://www.edmentoring.org/grantee/event_calendar.html). Remember, you’ll need the username “xxxxxx” and the password “xxxxxx” to access this grantee-only resource.

In addition to upcoming training opportunities, it now lists several key dates for the administration of your grants, such as reporting deadlines and program officer checkins. If there are other key dates coming up that we have missed, please let Web Designer Michael Garringer know at: [garringm@nwrel.org](mailto:garringm@nwrel.org).

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## RESOURCES & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### 4. Technical Assistance Form Now Available on Website!

The technical assistance that the MRC provides to ED clients can take many forms. It can be as simple as a question answered in a phone call or as complicated as face-to-face planning as part of a formal site visit. In order to better serve our ED mentoring clients, we have added a new Request Technical Assistance Form to the “grantee resources” section of the website ([http://www.edmentoring.org/grantee/ta\\_services.html](http://www.edmentoring.org/grantee/ta_services.html)). Once again, remember that you’ll need the username and password to access that part of the site...

The form collects some simple information about you and your assistance needs. MRC staff will use the form to begin a dialogue with you about whatever issues you need help with and the best way to meet those needs. The beauty of MRC technical assistance is its flexibility. We’ll work with you to determine the best solution to your problems, be it consultation, the provision of resources, intensive planning sessions, or a combination of many approaches.

So check out the form, even if you're not having any issues or areas of concern at this time. A good understanding of the types of things we will want to know in helping you will come in handy if you do ever need to seek assistance. And if you are "technology challenged" you can still always pick up the phone and contact us directly on the MRC hotline at: 1 (877) 579-4788.

Whether by phone or by form, we're simply here to help...

#### 5. Resource Spotlight: Mentor Recruitment

Effective mentor recruitment is, obviously, a huge factor in your program's long-term success. At some level, it's a task that never ends, constantly driving and impacting every other aspect of your program. Because of this overarching impact on the viability of a program, it is especially important that newer programs really invest time and energy in attracting volunteers during the start-up phase.

This month, we look at a few of the existing resources that can help your program build a solid recruitment plan, as well as some that can aid you in spreading the word about your program.

>>> A great starting point for recruitment ideas and resources is the Energize, Inc. website: <http://www.energizeinc.com/>. This outstanding website offers a variety of free articles, a number of full-text books for download, and a library of links to other recruitment and volunteer management resources. In fact, this month's feature article (<http://www.energizeinc.com/hot/2005/mar05.html>), by the esteemed Susan J. Ellis herself, features her newest "recruitment maxims." There's just a tremendous amount of good content here.

>>> Another great starting point is the volunteer management section of the Management Assistance Program for Nonprofits website: <http://www.managementhelp.org/staffing/outsrcng/volnteer/volnteer.htm>. While this does have several links directly related to recruitment, it also has a wealth of other information on topics that support recruitment efforts: things like volunteer job descriptions, risk management considerations, and the staffing of recruitment and volunteer intake tasks, and other things that often get overlooked in the rush towards PSAs and snazzy corporate presentations.

>>> The ServiceLeader.org website is also packed full of useful tips and strategies: <http://www.serviceleader.org/new/index.php>. Of particular note in the recruitment section is this set of tips derived from the experiences of volunteer coordinators in the field: <http://www.serviceleader.org/new/managers/2004/03/000213.php>.

Specific to mentoring, there are some classic NMC materials that deal with recruitment issues:

>>> Recruiting Mentors: a Guide to Finding Volunteers to Work With Youth (<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/packthree.pdf>)

>>> The July 2004 issue of the NMC Bulletin, which looked at recruiting male mentors (<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/v2n2.pdf>)

>>> Marketing for the Recruitment of Mentors: A Guide to Finding and Attracting Volunteers (<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/marketing.pdf>)

That last topic transitions into a subject that is somewhat tangential to recruitment, and that is marketing. Marketing can serve lots of purposes, from fundraising to advocacy, but it is certainly something that impacts recruitment. The guide mentioned above will give you a great start in applying the concepts of marketing to your volunteer recruitment efforts. The following links will give you a deeper understanding of marketing and some of the specifics around getting your message out:

>>> Getting Your Message On the Air: A guidebook for community nonprofit organizations (available to order for free at: [http://www.nab.org/publicservice/Get\\_Msg\\_on\\_Air.asp](http://www.nab.org/publicservice/Get_Msg_on_Air.asp))

>>> Mentoring: A guide for local broadcasters ([http://www.mentoring.org/mentoring\\_month/files/nab\\_guidebook.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/mentoring_month/files/nab_guidebook.pdf))

>>> Media Outreach Made Easy: An Advocate's Guide to Working With the Press ([http://www.vawnet.org/NRCDVPublications/TAPE/Papers/NRC\\_media.pdf](http://www.vawnet.org/NRCDVPublications/TAPE/Papers/NRC_media.pdf))

>>> Guide to Working with the Media ([http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/filemanager/download/marketing/media\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/filemanager/download/marketing/media_guide.pdf))

As always, the MRC staff is here to assist you in developing volunteer recruitment solutions. Our staff has a wide range of experience teaching folks how to better recruit in a wide variety of program settings, across a broad spectrum of targeted populations, and with a variety of methods. Such as...

## 6. Technical Assistance Question of the Month

\*\*\* “How can I use the internet to more effectively recruit volunteer mentors?” \*\*\*

At some level, it's taken the volunteer field a little while to recognize that the internet can be a very powerful mobilization tool at the local level. While most of us use the web to connect to resources and information from far away that would never have been available to us before, few of us take the time to realize how often we rely on the same technology to manage and find local level information that we use every day? Looking for a job? The classifieds are online. Want to know what time a movie starts, or what people are saying about a new restaurant? There's likely info aplenty on the internet. The “world wide” web is actually a very efficient tool for providing information about one's back yard.

And that includes volunteer opportunities. In today's environment, mentoring programs need to have not only a strong online presence in terms of their own website and e-marketing (listservs, e-newsletters, online donations, etc.) but they also need to make use of some very simple tools that can lead volunteers to their doors.

1) A good starting point is to register your program with the database maintained by the National Mentoring Partnership. This database is free to join, provided your program commits to following the "Elements of Effective Practice" (which I would hope ALL of you are inherently doing) and promises to respond to volunteer inquiries in a reasonable timeframe. Once your program is listed, visitors to the NMP website will be able to locate your program through a zip code-based search. The NMP website is heavily used by people from all over the country, and you'd be surprised at how many folks use this tool to find an opportunity in their back yard. To learn more, and sign up, visit here:

[http://apps.mentoring.org/register\\_your\\_organization/logon.adp](http://apps.mentoring.org/register_your_organization/logon.adp)

2) Another good starting point is the website for your state's mentoring partnership. Not all states have a state mentoring partnership or initiative, but the ones that do usually have a program directory that folks can sign up for. These state-level directories serve many of the same purposes as the national one mentioned above, with the added bonus that interacting with your state partnership is ALWAYS a good thing. Not only will they be able to refer prospective volunteers to your program via the directory, but you may be able to participate in and benefit from larger volunteer recruitment efforts that the state partnership is doing. The bottom line is: they can't funnel people your direction if they don't know about you, so get in touch with them and get listed on their site. A listing of state partnerships can be found here:

<http://www.mentoring.org/leaders/partnerships/index.php>.

3) There are a growing number of websites where local-level agencies can list volunteer opportunities. Some of the major sites include:

>>> <http://www.volunteermatch.org>

Volunteer Match helps individuals nationwide find volunteer opportunities. This online database allows volunteers to search thousands of one-time and ongoing opportunities by zip code, category, and date. Nonprofits can post their volunteering opportunities for free.

>>> <http://www.idealists.org>

Idealist enables organizations—whether they have a website or not—to enter and update information about their mission, services, volunteer opportunities, internships, upcoming events, and any materials or publications they have produced.

>>> <http://www.volunteersolutions.org>

This site offers nonprofits help with recruitment and tracks the success of your web efforts. Go to "Learn About Volunteer Solutions," then click on "non-profits." The rest is very easy.

>>> <http://www.servenet.org>

This site offers various resources both for volunteers and non-profits. Posting your volunteer opportunities is easy. Volunteer search is done by zip code.

>>> <http://www.craigslist.org>

This site offers volunteer opportunities in several of the major cities in the nation. Posting is free and easy.

4) Look into other community-level “bulletin boards,” chat forums, and volunteer coordination efforts. Talk to other volunteer organizations and see what grassroots online resources exist in your area. There’s probably a lot more than you realize.

5) Lastly, this may sound obvious, but make sure that your partners, both formal and informal, provide links to your site or a listing of your volunteer opportunities (and vice versa). At some level the internet is only as good as the connections between bits of information that people intentionally make. So talk with your partners and other youth serving organizations in your area about creating reciprocal links. If you’re partnered with the school district, and they have no mention of you on their site, who knows how many visitors to their site are walking away uneducated about the opportunities you provide. Someone visiting a partner organization’s site may find a better opportunity with you, and you may provide the same in return. Same goes for any corporate sponsors/partners you may have. Other organization’s websites can help spread the word. But it won’t happen unless you and your stakeholders make the logical electronic connections between your opportunities.

As with all volunteer recruitment, you’ll have to properly manage the process in order to be successful. The following tips can help you keep on track with your e-recruitment efforts:

>>> Reply to volunteer inquiries ASAP

>>> Have an email response ready to be forwarded when you receive an email request including: summary of your program and services, catchy and vivid information about your program, information about the next steps, and contact info.

>>> Use your web address in everything you create on the Internet as well as all of your printed materials

>>> Add the web address to your organization's voice mail message

>>> Update your information as often as possible on all your online postings

>>> Add a button to your website that allows others to add your agency as a banner on their site

>>> Announce the launching of your website or any major additions to your site through a postcard, press release, etc.

>>> Create an email with a catchy snapshot of your program for your current mentors to personalize and forward to their friends and relatives

>>> And as mentioned above, when talking to corporations, community service groups, etc. make sure to request a link to your website from any websites they maintain.

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That's it for this issue of the e-Newsletter. As always, stay in touch and let the MRC know if there's anything you'd like to see in the next e-Newsletter.

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