MENTOR Program Leaders Listening Team Position

MENTOR is a national nonprofit increasing the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships in places where young people live, work, learn, and play. In partnership with youth-serving leaders, MENTOR helps to address the persistent and growing inequities of access and opportunity threatening a community’s ability to grow and thrive.

Over the next eight months, MENTOR will work with the consulting firm Community Wealth Partners (CWP) to facilitate a Participatory Action Research (PAR) listening process. PAR is centered on the belief that the people who are closest to the issue being researched should be the ones designing the questions, plans, methods, and analysis of the research. This PAR listening process will be with leaders of mentoring programs and other youth-serving organizations leveraging social capital to inform a Philanthropic Agenda. The Philanthropic Agenda will outline recommendations for future investments to advance relationships and expand social capital for young people.

MENTOR is searching for twelve (12) mentoring program staff or leaders to join a listening team. The team will design the listening process, gather the information through methods they choose, and develop the core recommendations for the Philanthropic Agenda. The team will listen to fellow mentoring program leaders, funders, youth, and other partners to answer two core questions:

1. What are the most under-resourced and overlooked opportunities that show significant promise for increasing social capital for youth?
2. What types of investments and additional resources would be needed to turn these opportunities into reality, and how should we measure success?

Position Description

Responsibilities and Compensation
This role requires approximately 60 hours of time (paid at $50/hour) between September 2022 and February 2023, which includes the following:

- Attending weekly 2-hour virtual/Zoom team meetings (approximately 18 weeks) at a meeting time that works best for the group (no in-person meetings are required and training and technology to help everyone participate virtually).
- Conducting listening and information gathering with mentoring program leaders/staff in the communities you serve, funders, and youth. Together, the team will decide on what methods it will use for listening; these could include surveys, virtual or in-person focus group conversations, and phone interviews. The team will receive training on any listening methods they decide to use.
- Creating a summary report (in the format of the team’s choosing) of what the listening team learns and recommends for action to be discussed with MENTOR.
- MENTOR will invite 2-3 Listening Team representatives to the National Mentoring Summit on January 26, 2023, in Washington, DC to present the early recommendations to attendees. MENTOR will cover roundtrip transportation to Washington DC, a one-night or two-night hotel stay (depending on length of travel), and registration to the Summit.

Stipend payments can be made directly to the individual serving as a listening team member or the individual’s organization. If offered the position, the finalist must clearly state if payments should be directed to them as an individual or to their organization.

Qualifications

- Applicants must be 18 or older and legally able to work in the U.S.
- Applicants must have active or recent (within the past 2 years) experience working in a youth mentoring program or initiative. By “youth mentoring program or initiative” MENTOR is referring to the wide range of program models that effectively serve young people in diverse and meaningful contexts. These models may include (but are not limited to) 1:1 mentoring, group mentoring, peer mentoring, community-based mentoring, school-based mentoring, workplace mentoring, and
mentoring that happens outside of formal structured mentoring programs (such as in neighborhood clubs, faith communities, and others).

- Additional experience working collaboratively in groups – PTA, place of worship, neighborhood group, etc. – is desired
- We especially want to center people who have faced barriers to opportunity and funding in their program or whose voices are historically excluded because of racial identity, zip code, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or other reasons.
- Listening Team meetings will be in English, with English proficiency required for participation. We do encourage people who speak multiple languages to join the team. We are eager to have team members who can communicate and listen in a variety of languages.

**Benefits of Participation**

- An opportunity to learn more about and build relationships with other mentoring program leaders from across the country and those who share common experiences.
- A chance to gain listening and information gathering experience, knowledge, and skills.
- An opportunity to offer your talents and personal experience to address the inequitable access young people have to mentoring relationships across your community
- A chance to shape the priorities of MENTOR, the youth mentoring movement and funders who are interested in investing in social capital for young people over the coming years.
- An opportunity to apply what you learn in your organization.

**Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion:**
MENTOR and CWP are committed to fostering an environment of diversity and inclusion for all. We embrace our differences and celebrate our common humanity in advancing the need and transformative power of supportive relationships for our young people. We believe that varied perspectives, experiences, and opinions are central assets in our mission to close the mentoring gap.

**How to Apply**

The application is via email. By **Friday, September 2, 2022**, please email the following application information to Walter Howell at whowell@communitywealth.com (click on the email address to create your email application, copy the and paste the information below, and in your message fill in your information and send)

- Name, phone number, email address
- Town/city and state where you live
- Brief response to the following two questions:
  - Why do you want to be part of the MENTOR program leader listening team? (1 - 2 paragraphs)
  - What are the most significant barriers to opportunity you or your community have experienced in expanding mentoring and social capital programs? (1-2 paragraphs)

**Community Wealth Partners**, who will be facilitators of the listening team process, will follow these steps and general timeline to select the 12 members of the listening team:

- August to September - phone calls with finalist candidates to learn more about interests and review the expectations of the position.
- Mid-September - email notifications of final selection of the 12 team members. All applicants will receive a notification.

Thank you for your consideration!

---

1 Mentoring and other youth-serving programs play a critical role in connecting young people to the social capital necessary for healthy development and connection to opportunity. MENTOR recognizes social capital as an individual's access and ability to mobilize relationships that help them further their potential
and goals, both as those goals and respective circumstances emerge and inevitably shift over time. Emerging research continues to confirm the link between social capital and positive outcomes for youth in school, work, and life. However, philanthropy and the youth development field agree: social capital and relationship-centered initiatives have historically not been funded intentionally, consistently, or proportionally to potential impact. Over the past several years, MENTOR has seen a significant increase in interest from the philanthropic community centered around how to better invest in and support the programs and initiatives that prioritize, integrate, and expand relationships to build real-time and lasting social capital for young people. There has also been an expansion of organizations building off the mentoring field’s foundation and centering relationships in their program models through a range of modalities and intensity levels.