

THE MENTOR PROGRAM MICHIGAN YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

What is mentoring?

“Making a difference for Michigan’s youth one life at a time.”

Mentoring involves a one-on-one relationship between a youth and an adult over a 14 month period, providing consistent support and guidance. This responsibility is increasingly important, especially when the youth goes through a difficult and challenging situation or period in life. The goal of the mentor is to aid the cadet in attaining, as well as maintaining, the skills and confidence needed to become a responsible young adult. This will culminate in the youth’s desire and ability to succeed in educational and employment opportunities. Following this rationale, the primary goal of the Mentoring Phase is to assess and match each cadet with an unrelated adult in the community in an effort to develop a sustained relationship. This adult serves as a companion, supporter, teacher, challenger and role model to the cadet, while engaging in activities of mutual interest.. Although they have acquired new and useful skills during the residential phase, cadet’s will have difficulty in maintaining their newly acquired lifestyle without appropriate support systems. This is where the help of the mentor is needed, not only to reinforce the new skills of the cadets, but also to serve as a catalyst to personal achievement.

Role of the mentor in the Residential Phase

During the five month resident phase, the cadet’s are introduced to a very structured and disciplined lifestyle. The days are long, mental and physical activities are rigorous and personal time is limited.

They are evaluated on eight core components throughout the residential phase. These components are: academic excellence, job skills, physical fitness, health/nutrition, life coping skills, responsible citizenship, leadership/followership and community service. Each cadet will go through approximately eight hours of training on working with a mentor to help establish the cadet’s role in the relationship. During the residential phase the mentor will also go through a five hour training session which helps establish the mentor’s role in the relationship and gives the mentor guidance they need to be an effective mentor for the cadet. Then the cadet and the mentor will go through a formal matching ceremony. After the cadets’ prospective mentor has been screened, interviewed and trained, the cadet will begin reporting to their mentor on a weekly basis by phone or by mail. This begins the last two months of the resident phase. The cadet’s will start to establish goals with the mentor that they want to achieve once they complete the residential cycle.

They will complete a life plan with their mentor after the matching ceremony. This will give the mentor a better understanding of what their cadet wants to do after graduation. It will also help the mentor with establishing the contacts the cadet needs to achieve these goals and allows the mentor to help break down barriers that the cadet may have in attaining these goals. The contact between the mentor and the cadet during the residential phase is essential to help keep the cadet motivated during the process of their growth and development in an environment that they are learning to change their habits and the way they react to conflict, teamwork and leadership.

Role of the Mentor in the Post Resident Phase

The role of the mentor in the post resident phase is the most important part of the 17.5 month program. During this twelve month period, the cadet is executing the life plan that they developed with their mentor during the resident phase. The cadet is striving to go to college, vocational training, high school, joining the military or working in the local community that they reside in. They need the support of the mentor to help them attain their goals. The mentor meets with the cadet two times a month face-to-face, and twice a month by either phone or mail. These contacts are essential in the continued development of our graduates.

The mentor will report once a month to Michigan Youth Challenge by mail, email or phone the progress of the cadet they are mentoring. These reports are necessary for the Academy to ensure that the cadets are continuing on in their development into productive members of society. These young adults are our future. We need your support to assist them in their success. The time that you invest with them will last a lifetime.

How to become a Mentor

Eligibility

1. 21 years of age or older (if not a relative of the applicant)
2. A resident of Michigan and a citizen of the US, or legal resident
3. Employed, a full time student or retired.
4. Reside within 50 miles of the cadet
5. Same gender as cadet
6. Not living in the same household as applicant
7. May be aunt or uncle (depending on gender of the applicant) – 30 years old or older
8. Willing to agree to the following:
 - Sign a mentor contract & agreement.
 - Agree to a criminal background check.
 - Attend mentor training & matching ceremony at the Academy.
 - Attend a community service project with your cadet near their home.
 - Make weekly contacts with your cadet during their post-residential phase, after you have been trained and matched during their residential phase.
 - Report to MYC Academy monthly on the progress of your cadet.

If you meet these eligibility requirements and would like to become a volunteer mentor for MYC Academy, or would like more information please call us at:

1-800-372-0523 or **1-269-968-1203**.

Web: www.NGYCP.org/mi

You can also write to us at:

MYC Academy

Attn: Mentor Department

5500 Armstrong Rd. Bldg. 13

Battle Creek, MI 49016-1099