

## **MENTORING PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

**Who:** Cumberland County District Court with the Reclaiming Futures Communicare mentoring program in partnership with the Cumberland County public school systems.

**What:** Mentoring program benefitting Cumberland County Public Schools. Previously, our request focused on high schools but we would like to be able to focus on all levels, as modifying behaviors at the elementary and middle school levels is critical.

**Purpose:** Mentoring provides youth with mentors who can develop an emotional bond with the mentee, have greater experience with the mentee by providing support, guidance, and opportunities to help youth succeed in life and meet their goals.

**Benefits for youth:** Mentoring is often one component of a program that involves other elements, such as tutoring or life skills training and coaching. The supportive, healthy relationships formed between mentors and mentees are both immediate and long-term and contribute to a host of benefits for mentors and mentees.

- Increased high school graduation rates
- Healthier relationships and lifestyle choices
- Higher college enrollment rates and higher educational aspirations
- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved behavior, both at home and at school
- Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Improved interpersonal skills
- Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use (MENTOR, 2009; Cavell, DuBois, Karcher, Keller, & Rhodes, 2009)

**When: Beginning 2025 – 2028**

**Process:** Chief District Court Judge Toni S. King assisted Sarah Hallock, Director of Cumberland County CommuniCare created the Reclaiming Futures Mentoring Program. The mentoring program hosted an interest meeting and marketing campaign to the parents and kids being served by Communicare and those children involved in the juvenile delinquency courts. The program hosted its first meeting with mentors/mentees in August 2021 and has continued to meet each month since the inception.

The program conducts criminal background checks on all mentors and hosted multiple training sessions for mentors on how to engage mentees by Ms. Alberta Lampkins, National Cares Mentoring Movement, Incorporated.

Mentors and Mentees attend an orientation, where we provided the attendees with a meal, as food is the universal language. In addition, the mentors and mentees were able to engage in icebreakers and had an opportunity to talk with mentors to facilitate in the matchmaking. The overall group meets once a month every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 5:30pm in the Communicare building, where a dinner meal is provided and mentors receive 30 minute mentoring tips prior to the arrival of the mentees. The meeting brings together all of the mentees in efforts to allow them to connect as a community and engages everyone in teambuilding activities during the meeting.

Understanding that our children are spread throughout the county and consistent transportation can be a challenge for many of our families, the program and mentors attempt to fill-in the gaps when able to do so. However, in efforts to have a greater impact, Chief District Court Judge Toni King proposed expansion of the mentoring program into the actual schools making it easier for the children to meet with their mentors on a more regular basis. In addition, the children associated with the Reclaiming Futures mentoring program would still participate in the monthly meeting held at Communicare.

On August 15, 2022, a meeting was held at the Cumberland County Public Schools' Administrative office with Toni S. King, Chief District Court Judge; Dr. Connelly, Superintendent; Dr. Chalmers, Assistant Superintendent, Attorney Sojka, School Board attorney; Jason Hunter, Chief Court Counselor and Daisie Thorne, Court mentoring program project manager, regarding the expansion of the mentoring program, as well as the travel component. Those in attendance were in agreement to establish the programs and 4 schools, where our juveniles were in attendance and schools were identified as pilot schools for the mentoring program held at CommuniCare

Throughout the program, the Court has determined the need for expanded programs and has requests sent in from elementary and middle schools in need of assistance to redirect the behaviors of the students. The current programs have requested additional support due to the effectiveness of the mentoring programs implemented.

To offer effective mentoring programs, there is a need for continuing funding to support any component of the mentoring programs except through their own personal finances. Chief District Court Judge Toni King requested a meeting with the Honorable Mayor H. Mitch Colvin to give details of the programs' effectiveness.

**PROGRAMS HOSTED over two years:**

Dinner for the mentees for 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday night meetings at CommuniCare  
Lunch and Snacks during mentor monthly meetings at schools  
Shirts for the mentees  
Dress for Success Symposium – Mens Warehouse  
Mental Health and You - Samuel McKenny  
Entrepreneurship – Kwame Andrews  
Entrepreneurship – T-shirt design process tour – Kurin Keys  
Break the Pipeline to Prison – Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.  
Gardening 101 – Alberta Lampkins  
What's on My Heart – Jacqueline Washington  
What's My Future Look Like? – Judge Toni King  
Mentor/Mentee Team Challenge Game – Judge Toni King  
Fireside Chat – J. Cole & Dreamville Foundation, Inc.  
Paint & Snack  
Entrepreneurship and You – Kwame Andrews  
Woodpeckers Game  
Charlotte Hornets Game  
Carolina Panthers Fan Appreciation Night  
Carolina Panthers Practice Camp  
Summertime Celebration BBQ  
Family Night Bowling  
Time Management – Jacob Silverman  
Back to the Basics Camping Trip – Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc  
Woodworks & Building – Marcus Washington  
Speak To Me Parent/Child Activity – Judge Toni King  
Gender Wars – Group divided amongst mentors  
Round-About Skating Family Night  
Fayetteville State Sports programs  
Fayetteville State StepShow  
College Tours  
Attendance at various community programs

Wilderness Camping Trip  
End of Year Celebration

**Budget Request**  
**\$150,000.00 for TWO YEARS for the entire program**

**Communicare Program - \$150,000 (\$75000 each year)**

A general proposed budget would be as follows with the request for each to be able to reallocate categories, as needed to continue to conduct the mentoring programs through Communicare. These funds will be used to support programs in our public school and to provide the enrichment activities.

**Holder of the grant money:**

Cumberland County Communicare, Inc., a non-profit agency will hold the money and maintain accounting of the money. Communicare will submit reports to the appropriate agency.

**Success Stories:**

We have empirical data to submit, but to highlight 3 of our shining stars. S.E., A.C., T.C. are all juveniles and two appeared before the council. They have all been charged with felonies and some with firearm charges. They have attended the program and have excelled.

A.C. – 17 years old – graduated high school, has his own apartment, works two jobs and is scheduled to attend NC A&T in the Fall. He is wanting to come speak to the council again.

S.E. – 16 years old – graduated high school, employed and attending FTCC for HVAC and serves as one of our youth mentors.

T.C. – 17 years old – graduated high school with honors, the principal of his school stated at graduation that she was uncertain that he could make up for the time lost in order to graduate on time. He promised me in court that he would and did it. Once he was certified to graduate, this juvenile appeared in court with his cap & gown. He went on to find his own paid internship, and is now employed with two jobs and his own apartment. I have recently referred him to a friend to possibly become an apprentice in his construction company.