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Mentoring, Marketing, and the Media

Working effectively with local news outlets can pay big dividends

By Dr. Susan G. Weinberger

As soon as most mentoring program coordinators are hired for the important task of establishing a quality mentoring program, they feel like they have to “hit the ground running.” Their myriad responsibilities include recruiting and screening mentors, training volunteers for their roles, recruiting mentees and matching them with mentors, monitoring and supervising matches, working with an advisory board, measuring outcomes, and ensuring that there will be ongoing funding. A daunting set of tasks, indeed!

It seems as if there is hardly enough time to think about anything else. Nevertheless, whether for the purposes of successful recruitment of mentors, raising the level of awareness about the need for mentoring in the community, or finding funding for program sustainability, a marketing effort that can successfully promote a mentoring program is critical.

Marketing, as defined by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, is the process or technique of promoting, selling, and distributing a product or service. It is a deliberate, planned opportunity for companies who want to move their goods from producer to consumer and sell what they produce in the most effective way. Nonprofits often wonder, given their non-business nature, if they can really market or sell their “product.” Nonprofits, including mentoring programs, need to understand that they do have consumers (youth, volunteers, parents, educators, etc.) and they do have a product (mentoring relationships and their outcomes). Thus, the choice facing those

that manage mentoring programs is not whether to market or not, but rather, whether to do it well or poorly. Mentoring practitioners who understand and accept the concepts of marketing have an advantage in the strategic planning, implementation, and management of their mentoring programs.

A marketing plan should not be launched as a solution to a crisis. When funding is drying up or additional mentors cannot be found is not the time to plan a major campaign. Rather, marketing is a long-term effort, designed to send a message about the need for mentoring, and the value of your program, 365 days each year. This article will examine the ways in which your program can improve its marketing strategy and, specifically, ways in which you can use the media to help reach your marketing goals.

How well are your current efforts to reach your “consumers” working? Here's a quick quiz to gauge how effective your mentoring program is from a marketing perspective.

A Mentoring Program Quiz

1. Does the average citizen in your community know about the goals of your mentoring program?
2. Does your program regularly provide a comprehensive and informative newsletter to all citizens

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OJJDP

Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention



Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory

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in the community as well as to staff, mentors, and mentees?

3. Do local businesses in your community support your program with mentors and/or financial donations?
4. Do the local news media routinely provide time and space for mentoring news?
5. Are Letters to the Editor written often about your mentoring program?
6. Are the schools in your community familiar with the mentoring program, even if it is not a school-based initiative?
7. Are members of the media invited to become mentors in your program?
8. Do your written program goals include reaching out to the media with a clearly defined action plan?

How to score the quiz: If you answered “yes” to seven or more questions, you have an effective mentoring program from a marketing perspective. If you answered “no” to five or more of the questions, your program is either ineffective or the “best-kept secret!”

The Relationship Between Marketing and the Media

Typically, a marketing plan involves identifying all the internal and external “publics” that a mentoring program must view as their regular customers. These include staff, youth, school or agency personnel who assist with programming, volunteers, funders, parents, business leaders, educators, clergy, politicians, real estate agents, and others who have a vested interest in youth in the community you serve. However, no external public is more important to your marketing efforts than the media. The journalistic community is the key player for any program that wants to

get the message out to all its constituents about the importance of mentoring and the value of its services.

You can be sure that you have a great deal of competition from other programs wanting the attention of the media. But know that working well with the media will be worth the effort. Doing this well produces interest in your program, helps to recruit mentors, highlights special grants and events, and offers general information that can help keep a mentoring program in the public eye every day. Working well with the media makes it much easier to reach out to all those who are viewed as regular customers by a program. Best of all, much of the information that appears in the media is usually without cost to mentoring programs. Thus, a policy of total openness and solid one-to-one personal relationships with media contacts is extremely important.

There are a number of different ways to interact with the media. Methods will vary depending on whether the focus is print (newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and bulletins) or broadcast media (television and radio). The most popular ways to get your message out effectively include writing news releases about your program, fact sheets, backgrounders, press conferences, public service announcements, editorial review boards, personal interviews, appearances on talk shows, Letters to the Editor, op-ed pieces, cable television, the Internet, guest editorials, and weekly columns and newspaper inserts. These varied methods of communication are discussed in detail below.

Rather than considering one method of communicating over another, make sure that all available avenues are pursued. Remember that some members of the community who need to hear your message only listen to radio; others only watch television; still others only read the newspaper (both weekly and daily) or get their news via the Internet. This makes it vital to use many different methods to communicate on a regular basis.

Methods for Media Outreach

News Releases

These call media attention to special and important events taking place in your mentoring program. Practitioners often expect that every story told will be covered in person by members of the press and

will appear the next day in the local newspapers. That is not always the case. For instance, you feel that an event where mentors and mentees are playing a competitive game of basketball at the Boys and Girls Club is worthy of special attention, so you notify the press. But if on that particular day there is also a breaking news story in the community such as a fire, political scandal, or other event that will be of great interest to readers (and sells even more papers!), then your coverage may end up on the back burner. Obviously, this is a great disappointment. If that is the case, however, you can always hand deliver a media release the next day and ask that it be published in the newspapers. Take some photos that can accompany the release. Be persistent in your efforts to get the coverage you feel your story deserves.

Attractive news releases have a better chance to grab the attention of reporters. The days of mailing releases are pretty much in the past. Secure the e-mail addresses of the local media and send your stories in a timely fashion over the Internet.

The most popular press releases are those that tell of something that is going to happen rather than something that *has already happened*. Also keep in mind that you have a better chance of getting your story told if it has local interest (such as your program's efforts) but is also connected to a national story (such as the Department of Education recently announcing \$50 million for mentoring in FY 2004). When writing press releases, follow these guidelines:

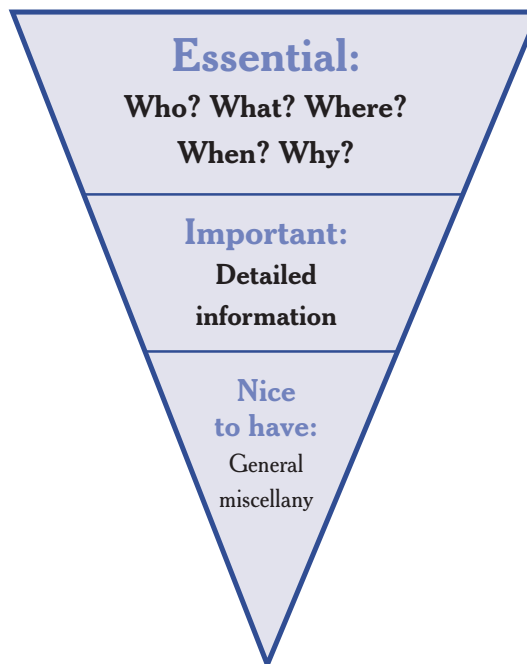
Writing Style

- **Always write in the active voice.** The difference between the passive voice and the active voice is the difference between, "It should be played by you once more, Sam" and "Play it again, Sam."
- **Avoid jargon.** In general, educational or mentoring jargon is simply not understood by others. So keep it simple and understandable.
- **Use short words in place of long ones.** Long words are no better than short ones, and often serve only to make the writer sound

pompous (e.g., "called" instead of referred to; "enough" rather than sufficient; "visit" instead of visitation, etc.) Keep sentences and paragraphs short, as well.

- **The release should read like a newspaper story**, complete with catchy headline in capital letters. It should always contain the answers to the essential five words that begin with "w" (who, what, where, when, and why).
- **Follow a format known as the inverted pyramid or triangle**, which reflects what is most important in the story. It begins with a first paragraph that contains the lead (a strong opening sentence), followed by a bridge (a transition from the lead to more detailed, less important information). Your first sentence—the lead—is critical. It must capture your readers' attention and entice them to keep on reading. The "body" or remainder of your story contains further details in order of descending importance. The graphic below summarizes your priorities in writing a news release.

Story Order



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Stories should be written in an objective manner. Words like “successful” and “entertaining” reflect personal opinion and should not be used except in a direct quotation. If you follow this format, you will have clear, clean, and concise press releases.

Document Specifics

- **Prepare your story on one side of the paper only (if you are providing print copies), using 8-1/2" x 11" paper.** At the upper right- or lefthand corner of the release, give the name of the organization, date, and telephone number of a contact person to call for more information.
- **Double space your release.**
- Be sure to **completely identify every person mentioned** (including first and last name, title/program role, etc.).
- **If the release is longer than one page, type the word “more” at the bottom of each page.** End the release with ####, -30-, or END. These are press terms.
- **Send black and white glossy or color photographs.** Providing a high-resolution digital photo (JPG or TIFF format, usually) is standard. Color is more difficult for some of the media to reproduce so ask in advance what they prefer. Include a caption with the photograph that has the names of people from left to right, and a few short lines of information.
- **Mail date is no later than three weeks prior to the event.** You may have a “release date,” so labeled, at the top of the page telling when to start publicizing the information. This is also called the embargo date, which the media will honor.

Fact Sheets

These documents, known also as media advisories, contain all the main facts of your story and allow reporters to develop stories in their own style. If you are not accustomed to writing press releases and are still uncomfortable about doing so, send a fact sheet about your program (or particular newsworthy event). Share all the appropriate information about

the program’s goals and leave the rest up to the reporter.

Backgrounders

Also known as “pitch letters,” these are different from news releases and fact sheets. Simply stated, they explain the background of a story idea or situation and can be attached to the fact sheet as additional information, if needed. Sometimes, the backgrounder serves as an advance to a face-to-face meeting between reporters and mentoring staff. The media often request information in advance of covering a story or event and this is a perfect solution.

Press Conferences

Press conferences should be saved and scheduled rarely and only for special occasions. If you have just received a \$250,000 award for your mentoring program, this is one of those events. Make sure that the organization’s key Board members and Director along with local politicians are on hand for such an event.

Members of the media are not particularly fond of press conferences and they take a great deal of time and energy to schedule. Don’t call one unless you have something very significant to share. The location should reflect the information you are announcing. If the award is going to a school-based mentoring program, hold the conference at the school and make sure that the principal and students participate in some way. Remember to provide each member of the press who is attending with a press kit that includes the announcement and other background information.

Press conferences should be relatively brief, with each member of the media invited to ask questions at the end of your prepared statements.

PSAs

Public service announcements (commonly referred to as PSAs) are required by law to be offered publicly to nonprofit organizations by local radio and most television stations. These are a wonderful way to get the message out to your public. They are offered free of charge and are usually 10 seconds (about 25 words), 30 seconds (about 75 words), or 60 seconds (about 150 words) in duration. Programs should schedule a time to talk with station managers and program directors to discuss their general policies about free PSAs, and how often

you can take advantage of them. Since youth are the basic beneficiary of mentoring, their voices in a PSA are very effective. The message must be simple, short, and easy to understand.

Below is an example of a brief message, less than 60 seconds in length, that can have enormous impact. Since many mentoring programs struggle to recruit sufficient male mentors, consider inviting a well-known male in the community to record your PSA.

“ This is John Smith, CEO of Jones Bank and a mentor in our local XYZ Mentoring Program. Do you have an extra hour a week to spare? Consider being a volunteer mentor to a youth in one of our schools. Here is the best news of all. I am having as much fun with my mentee as he is with me. In fact, it is one of the best hours of my week. Mentoring is a wonderful way to give something back. Call 1-800-222-2222 to learn more about how you can make a difference to a child who is not your own.”

Editorial Review

Editorial review boards of larger newspapers and television stations schedule staff meetings on a regular basis. This is an opportunity for media members to examine a community issue or new initiative in depth. For example, if a mentoring program has just received a large grant to begin a program focusing on the children of prisoners, the editorial review board might want to know about the size of the grant, the purpose of the program, how the youth will be identified, the potential impact on the community, and other important information. It is difficult to secure an appointment with an editorial review board but if the topic is significant, the meeting will be well worth the preparation and effort. Your program may end up appearing in several stories that the newspaper feels are important locally (perhaps nationally, as well), and may even, in their minds, warrant the treasured editorial.

Personal Interviews

These take place when a member of the media wishes to conduct a live interview with a staff member of a mentoring program. When this is the case, it is a good idea to have decided in advance who the spokesperson is for your mentoring pro-

gram. If you have time, prepare for the interview. Sometimes, that may not be possible as personal interviews often take place “on the spot” without much warning. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to be prepared at all times. Have sufficient background information on hand to back up your responses and respond to all questions with short answers. The

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Additional Reading and Resources

The following resources may help your program in the areas of media outreach, marketing, and program promotion.



Getting Your Message on the Air: A Guidebook for Community Nonprofit Organizations—A brief, yet very informative guide to getting PSAs on the air, getting local media coverage, and other strategies for media outreach. Published by the National Association of Broadcasters; available online at:
www.nab.org/publicservice/Get_Msg_on_Air.asp

Media Outreach Made Easy: An Advocate's Guide to Working With the Press—Originally developed for domestic violence advocacy work, this guide can easily be adapted for use with other issues. It contains very good tips and suggestions on a wide variety of media relations topics. Published by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence; available online at:
www.vawnet.org/NRC_DVPublications/TAPE/Papers/NRC_media.pdf



A Guide to Working With the Media—This useful guide was developed by the Corporation for National and Community Service for use in AmeriCorps and other programs. It contains very good information on a variety of media strategies. Available online at:
www.nationalservice.org/resources/cross/media_guide.pdf

Senior Tech Center's Marketing Learning Path—This useful learning path, one of many produced by the Corporation's Senior Tech Center, focuses on program marketing and public relations. Especially valuable are the many planning tools, worksheets, and templates included on the site. Available online at:
www.seniortechcenter.org/learning_paths/marketing/

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best person to answer press questions is a staff member who is deemed the most knowledgeable about the program or a particular issue. Remember, what you say in the interview will be quoted directly!

Local/Regional Talk Shows

Talk show appearances are additional opportunities to tell your story. Radio talk shows are easier than television because you can use and refer to your prepared notes as background for some of the answers. Regardless of whether the talk show is radio or television, be a good listener when the caller speaks; be candid; if you do not know the answer, say that you will find it out and get back to them in a timely fashion; be interesting and enthusiastic and thank callers for their ideas and questions.

Letters to the Editor

These are usually positioned on the editorial page of the newspaper. You can count on that page being widely read by citizens in a community. Program directors should resist writing letters themselves (it can come across as self-serving, rather than heartfelt). Rather, encourage board members, mentors, and mentees to do so. It is one of the best ways to attract attention to the need for mentoring and the value of your program.

Op-Ed Articles, Guest Editorials, and Weekly Columns

Op-ed pieces are essay-style articles that usually appear opposite the editorial page and receive lots of attention from readers. They are an ideal way to respond to a previously-run article or letter to the editor. These are sometimes referred to as guest editorials.

This approach can be utilized not only in newspapers, but on radio and television news programming as well. These editorials may only run 60, 90, or 120 seconds on radio and TV, but the value and impact is tremendous. While a guest editorial may be a good one-time opportunity for practitioners to express their thoughts, keep in mind that the media sometimes invite community leaders to contribute guest editorials on a regular, ongoing basis. A weekly or monthly Op-Ed column (or television/ radio appearance) can be the chance to highlight the impact of mentoring and share stories from the mentors, youth, and other community members who benefit from your pro-

gram's services. A regular column can also focus on issues of concern to the community and show how the mentoring program is addressing community problems. If done well, weekly columns can guarantee that your program and its services will remain on the "front burner" for a long time.

Cable Access Television

Cable and public access television are perfect public relations tools to tell your story. Often programming on public access channels is taped in advance, and shown more than once over the network. Community service programming is welcomed by all cable television providers and public access channels. You should contact your local public access channels to see what is involved in getting information about your program on the air.

The Internet and the World Wide Web

These days, the Internet is another excellent way to get your message out. This is particularly true if your mentoring program has a Web site or listserv that can make it easy for the press to find information about your program's history, current recruitment efforts, upcoming events, and other significant developments. See "Reaching Out to the Media (and Other Clients) Electronically" on page 10 for more details on virtual media outreach.

Newspaper Inserts

Inserts in the local newspaper are often a neglected opportunity. If mentoring programs prepare a four-to-six-page piece in a newsletter style about the focus and benefits of the program (complete with photos and awards) it can be distributed through the local print media. Keep in mind that there is a charge for this but it is often much cheaper than the nonprofit rate through the local post office for a self-mailer. If your program wants to reach the entire community for purposes of recruitment or funding, inserts are the way to go. The newspaper can even determine what zip codes should be targeted. The flexibility with these inserts is tremendous. If cost is a concern, many mentoring programs garner corporate support (usually by including a corporate logo and "message" in the insert) to offset the cost.

Developing Positive Working Relationships With the Media

Needless to say, all the methods above are more easily accomplished if you have a good relationship with the media in your community, region, and even state. Here are some tips and suggestions to guide you toward a positive working relationship with the media.

- Get to know the news editor or news director personally. Ask for their suggestions and advice.
- Treat reporters with respect.
- Be honest and objective.
- Respond promptly to all inquiries from the media and check their deadlines. If you do not answer the question promptly, the reporter will get the story elsewhere.
- Deliver information to the media the next day if they cannot cover the story in person.
- Avoid mentoring jargon.
- Prepare for interviews in advance.
- “No comment” and “off the record” should not be part of your vocabulary.
- Admit when you make a mistake and correct it quickly.
- Learn the deadlines of your media representatives and always honor them.
- Don't play favorites. Notify *all* representatives of news stories, features, and special events.
- Establish a centralized communications program.
- Never ask a reporter to show you the story before it is published.
- New reporters join the media all the time. Educate them about your program often.



Additional Reading and Resources (cont.)

Developing Media Messages for Volunteer Programs—This Points of Light Foundation publication was released as part of their “Working Solutions” series for POL members. We’re listing it here because the POL will soon be undergoing a fairly extensive Web site revision and we’ve been told that this publication, along with others from the series, will be made available to the general public in a reworked publications section. Should be available in late February or early March at: www.pointsoflight.org/

Mentoring: A Guide for Local Broadcasters—Another NAB resource, this guide was developed in conjunction with the Harvard Mentoring Project for use during National Mentoring Month. However, the guide has great information and story ideas that can be used year-round. Available from the National Mentoring Partnership Web site at: www.mentoring.org/mentoring_month/formedia/index.adp?

Youth in Action... “Working With the Media” Issue—The March 2000 issue of this National Network for Youth newsletter offered a nice primer on media relations and strategies. Available online at: www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojdp/178998.pdf

Creating an Online Press Room—A brief, yet informative, look at one of the least understood areas of effective Web-based public relations. Available online at: www.ddj.com/documents/s=2781/nam1012432234/index.html

Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide—This publication, developed by the National Cancer Institute, offers a very thorough guide to planning and implementing a media public awareness campaign. While obviously originally designed for things like anti-smoking campaigns, many of the ideas and strategies in the book are relevant to the process of showing the public the need for mentoring in their community and the value of your program. Available online at: www.nci.nih.gov/pinkbook/

The Jossey-Bass Guide to Strategic Communications for Nonprofits—A comprehensive and indepth guide to all aspects of communication and public relations. Available from Jossey-Bass: www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/

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Special Considerations for the Mentoring Trade

Now it is time to discuss some important policies as they pertain to working with the media and your mentoring program. Some of these have been touched on earlier in the article, but they warrant mentioning here as well, since they are critical aspects of good media relations.

Once youth are labeled “at risk” in their schools and communities by the media, they are labeled for life. The media use the term “at-risk” far too frequently. You should not.

1. Describe young people in mentoring programs as on the “brink of success” and remember that mentoring directors are in the business of positive youth development. For many reasons, youth enrolled in mentoring programs are often called “at risk.” While that description is correct for securing state and federal funds from grants, on the local level, the term is very damaging. Once youth are labeled “at risk” in their schools and communities by the media, they are labeled for life. The media use the term “at-risk” far too frequently. You should not.
2. Selection of youth for a mentoring program should, ideally, include the most diverse population possible. That is, we must dispel the myth that the only youth who could benefit from mentors are poor, minorities, and those from single-parent families. Meeting the needs of a diverse pool of youth helps the youth and it also helps the media to understand the overall need for mentoring.
3. Secure parental permission in advance for youth to appear in the media. Often the photographing, filming, and interviewing of young people in mentoring programs is prohibited by local or state law without written parental permission (and, obviously, the authorization of those in charge of the program). Be extra cautious regarding youth who are enrolled in special education programming; they often have greater restrictions on these things than students in the general population. Ask parents of under-age youth to sign a Media Access Policy Permission Form when they enroll their child in the program. If your program has not developed such a form, do so! It will make your media work much easier as time goes on.
4. Use appropriate language when describing the needs of youth in your program by accentuating the positive benefits of mentoring, not the negatives in their lives. It is best to describe young people as “needing an extra little push,” “likely to benefit from a big friend in their lives,” or “wanting to improve their academic performance.” Never use phrases like “no support from home,” and be careful about breaching the confidentiality of any youth in the program.
5. Mentoring program directors are responsible for enlightening the press. You are the experts and know your subject well. In this time of trouble in public education, newspapers have an obligation to help readers understand what is going on. Take the time to discuss the benefits of mentoring and the research to back it up at the early stages in the development of your program. Be a true spokesperson for mentoring.
6. Get to know the members of your local press personally. Schedule a time for lunch (members of the press do not expect that you will pay and, in most cases, are not allowed to be “treated” by you) or a special meeting to brief them on the goals of your program and timeline for activities and events. Always be prepared, honest, and brief. Make sure you know all the facts about mentoring. Develop a written statement to be handed out at this awareness meeting.
7. As noted earlier, avoid using the “jargon” of the trade. The press may not understand this terminology. Keep information simple and understandable. If there is a need for a glossary of terms, you have not explained your program in terms that are easy to comprehend.
8. Develop attractive news releases. Learn the correct way to write a release (which we covered earlier) and send them often. Find reasons for ongoing releases, including special events, recruitment of new mentors, year-end receptions and awards, and to highlight special accomplishments and individual volunteers.
9. Respond promptly to all inquiries in a timely manner. Double check, and always respect, the deadlines of the press you are working with. If a member of the media calls with a question about your program, make yourself available and

respond promptly. Remember, if you do not have the answer or cannot get the answer quickly, the press will get the answer elsewhere. It may not be the one you wanted to give in the first place. If you do not have the answer, don't make one up. Simply say that you do not know but you will find out and get the answer back to the reporter in 15 minutes to an hour.

10. If the print media, radio, or television do not cover your request for a story, be persistent in your follow-ups. Drop off a new press release if you have to. A story after the fact is better than no story at all.
11. Know what is public information and what is not. The names and addresses of youth in programs are usually not permitted for benefit of the press.
12. As mentioned previously, avoid "off the record." Most likely, you will find your statement published anyway. It just won't have your name connected to it but the damage is done. Never say "no comment." It looks like a cover-up. If you do not want a statement quoted, do not make it in the first place.
13. Hold press conferences only when necessary. Make sure there is something of great importance to announce. These events usually relate to a crisis, or because you have been the recipient of a very large grant. State the most important fact at the beginning of the conference. Make comments briefly and honor press deadlines (never schedule a press conference at deadline time). Have a press packet to hand out to all in attendance.

14. Never ask reporters to show you a completed story before it is published. It is their story, not yours. Never argue with a reporter or lose your cool.

15. Thank reporters for a job well done. The media receive lots of complaints, requests for corrections, and negative Letters to the Editors. They rarely get a thank-you. Your appreciation will go a long way. Press will remember you the next time that you request coverage for your mentoring program.

Covering the news, good or bad, is the job of a journalist. But *you* are the key to getting good news out often and accurately about your mentoring program. What we've covered here should help you get started in improving the media coverage of your program. Always remember, if you can get the media to provide significant help in the marketing of your program, then all those other program goals and responsibilities that rest upon your shoulders will be that much easier to achieve.

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Reaching Out to the Media (and Other Clients) Electronically

By Michael Garringer, NMC Resource Specialist

We've written before in the *NMC Bulletin* about the need for mentoring programs to utilize electronic communications tools, such as the Web and e-mail, in their marketing, public relations, recruitment, and fundraising efforts. No longer are Web sites or electronic mailing lists considered superfluous program luxuries. Our society is becoming increasingly reliant on getting information through these still relatively new means, and mentoring programs need to take advantage of the resulting opportunities for getting information out to clients and constituents, including members of the media.

Let's take a quick look at a few methods and strategies for doing electronic outreach:

A Strong Program Web site

Having a quality, well-designed Web site can be a tremendous boon to your program. Conversely, having a poorly designed and organized site can really sabotage many of your efforts, especially in the areas of marketing and public relations. Remember that your Web site may be the most widely visible promotional resource you have, even more so than a brochure or flier. You can be sure that every prospective volunteer, every parent, every potential funder will be looking at your site, so make sure you give it the time and energy it deserves.

But what to include on the site? What are some of the common elements of an effective, media-friendly Web site? Many programs choose to organize their media-related content into...

The Online Press Room

A common feature of many for-profit business Web sites that is being co-opted by mentoring programs is the "press room," a one-stop section of your Web site where members of the media (and others) can find out all the pertinent information about where the program has been and where it is going. The purpose is to make it easy for members of the media

to write a story about the program; no one will give you coverage if it seems like it will be a lot of trouble. The press room streamlines the process and encourages interaction between your program and the media.

Common content for a press room includes:

- An archive of past press releases that visitors can peruse
- Detailed contact info (this means a name, title, phone number, and e-mail) for those in the program responsible for fielding media (and other) inquiries
- A calendar of upcoming events
- An archive of, or links to, any previous coverage in the media
- Agency/program background information such as history, mission/vision statements, annual reports, public records, etc.
- Evaluation reports and outcome data
- Links to partner organizations/schools and financial contributors such as businesses and government agencies
- Links to research and coverage of youth mentoring in general
- High-resolution, "print-ready" photos of staff, events, etc. (often agency logos and other promotional materials, as well)

If some of this content is already housed elsewhere on your Web site, make sure that you at least include links to it in the press room. Remember that this should be a place where a reporter can

either find information directly, or find the person who can tell them everything they want to know.

In general, you'll want to make sure that the press room is easy to find from anywhere on the site (don't assume all visitors will begin their visit to your site starting on the home page). Too often I see the link to the press room buried in tiny font way down on the footer of a home page—if it's even there at all. Also make sure that the documents you put in the press room are in an easily downloadable format. This usually means Word documents and PDF files. And as mentioned in Dr. Weinberger's article, if you have other downloadable files such as photos, event summaries, and evaluation data, make sure that their content does not violate the confidentiality of any of your youth participants or volunteers.

Be sure to include language that encourages the press to contact you in person if they have any questions or interest in pursuing a story about your program. Make it clear that you want coverage. You may also want to include a sign-up for e-mail alerts that let interested parties know when new content has been added to the press room or Web site.

Which brings us to our next topic...

Using Listservs and E-mail

While almost everyone reading this will have e-mail in use in some capacity in their program, I still find this to be an underutilized strategy for doing outreach, public relations, and marketing. Reaching out to your clients via e-mail can have tremendous benefits in terms of flexibility, timeliness, and cost.

Your program may want to consider developing a virtual mailing list, or many separate lists for different "customer" groups. Obviously, one such group is your local media contacts. You can use your e-mailing list to inform the media of:

- Upcoming events
- Significant evaluation findings for your program
- Grant awards you receive
- New partnerships and collaborations you form
- Fun and inspirational stories about your mentor/mentee matches

- Staff changes
- Your program's stance on/response to local issues and community needs
- Other significant program news

Taking the time to set up such a list can streamline the process of sending out press releases, improve the timeliness of the information you're providing, and make it much easier to keep those who can help you spread the word informed about your program's progress and activities.

Even if you don't have any big news to share, sending out an "update" e-mail at regular intervals can keep your program in the back of peoples' (and reporters') minds. Some programs choose to incorporate content from their program's print newsletter into these e-mail updates. Some even choose to make their newsletter a fully electronic publication that is sent out to clients via e-mail. Going the "e-newsletter" route can save on printing costs for programs with tight budgets. And as mentioned previously, it can improve the timeliness of your information as well.

Most of the widely used e-mail software packages (such as Outlook and Eudora) can handle mailing list tasks fairly effectively for a small, local program. Chances are, you will have only a handful of media contacts that will comprise your "media e-mailing list." However, if your program has a plethora of media contacts, or has many different client groups (such as funders, volunteers, parents, youth, Board members, community partners) that it wishes to send information to on a regular basis, it may want to consider purchasing some low-end listserv software. Your Internet Service Provider may even already have some kind of Web-based listserv software that you can use as part of your account with them.

While this type of software is most often used for more "conversational" message boards and such, it can also be used in a "broadcast" sense, in which you send out information unilaterally to your various lists of clients. Using listserv software will allow you to better manage unwieldy and very lengthy lists of names and e-mail addresses, and make it easier to

No longer are Web sites or electronic mailing lists considered superfluous program luxuries.

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keep track of the messages that go to your different client groups. As stated earlier, a listserv may be overkill for a smaller program, but for larger mentoring efforts a broadcast listserv will be much better than pulling hundreds (if not thousands) of e-mail addresses from a database of contacts or someone's personal address book each time you want to get the word out about something.

Be judicious with the volume messages you send out. You don't want anyone, especially your media contacts, to feel badgered or overwhelmed by the volume of messages; they'll simply start tuning them out. Hey, no one likes spam, so don't be a supplier of it! And make sure to remove individuals who ask to be taken off the list. It sounds obvious, but people can get very feisty about unwanted e-mail, so keep in mind that this is all about positive public relations and "selling" your mentoring program to

your "customers." Along those same lines, be sure to get some very good anti-virus software before you start sending out those e-mails!

These electronic forms of outreach will never fully replace good old fashioned face-to-face networking and personal relationships, but if your broadcast messages are full of useful and informative content, and sent out on a consistent, manageable schedule, these e-mail lists can be a great way to keep the media and other groups informed of your activities while keeping the virtual lines of communication between yourself and your media contacts continually open.

For more resources on "virtual marketing," see the Additional Reading and Resources section for this issue starting on Page 5.

Don't Go It Alone: Approaching Local Business

Coalitions of local programs can find large-scale success

By Katie Swartz, Executive Director, Oregon Mentors

Recruiting mentors is an enormous, ongoing challenge for most mentoring programs, which often have to employ many diverse, time-intensive strategies to attract, recruit, and enroll enough quality volunteers. Media campaigns, newspaper ads, word-of-mouth techniques, and recruitment presentations are all strategies individual programs use to recruit mentors. While those strategies are fine for reaching out to the general community, mentoring programs are increasingly targeting very high-yield or "volunteer-rich" environments, such as churches, fraternal organizations, and universities. Perhaps the ultimate recruitment prize, however, is the involvement of large-scale local businesses and corporations. Nothing can help a local program reach its recruitment goals like the creation of a formal partnership with a leader in the local business community. It enhances the stature of the program and provides access to a substantial number of potential volunteers.

There's much to be gained for the business, too. Today, businesses are looking for ways to enhance their public image, increase employee satisfaction, attract new customers, and prepare their future workforce. Becoming involved in mentoring is an excellent way for businesses to achieve those goals.

The unfortunate reality is that it is very difficult to garner this type of corporate support. Competition for volunteers is fierce, and local companies are constantly bombarded with requests for employees' time, financial support, and event sponsorship. Even if you are fortunate enough to secure some time to do a presentation for a business, chances are that your program may be following in the footsteps of perhaps dozens of other youth service programs. Your targeted company has likely heard the mentoring pitch many times before you arrive. That deck may be stacked against you from the beginning.

But what can a local program do to get a leg up? Perhaps it's time to consider going beyond the stand-

alone, one-time recruitment presentation. You may want to explore the increased opportunities that can come from partnering with other local mentoring and youth service agencies. Often a coalition of local programs is better suited to recruiting those large numbers of mentors and helping targeted businesses fulfill their goals and enhance their community involvement.

Let's explore some strategies for forming such a coalition and initiating and maximizing relationships with local businesses.

There's Strength in Numbers

If done well, linking with similar mentoring or youth service organizations prior to approaching local businesses helps all the individual programs involved accomplish more than they could alone. Connecting with other mentoring programs in your area actually creates more opportunities for company involvement. Consider the following example:

The Corvallis Mentoring Program (CMP) works with youth in grades eight and nine to help with the transition from middle to high school. Last summer the CMP approached a local corporation on their own to ask for employee involvement as volunteer mentors. After struggling to even get in the door, they finally got buy-in and launched an extensive partnership with the company that included recruitment presentations, CEO endorsement of the program, financial support, and a corporate goal of involving 10 percent of their employees in the mentoring program.

After the launch of the recruitment campaign several employees, who originally wanted to become mentors, are expressing disappointment. One was more interested in mentoring an older high school student who needed help making post-high school career plans, than working with a middle school

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student. She had received similar assistance from her mentor and had a desire to do the same for someone else. Another really wanted to work with youth of that age, but felt that the program was too focused on the needs of male youth and didn't offer enough to girls or female volunteers. Still another wanted to volunteer, but lived in the suburbs. Another wasn't able to meet during the designated times, but would have relished the opportunity if the program was structured just a bit differently.

The end result? CMP did get some mentors, but not as many total volunteers as if they had approached the company with a group of diverse programs and a variety of volunteer options. In some ways the company is limited in future mentoring involvement due to its formal relationship with CMP, but the youth in the community only got a handful of mentors out of this volunteer-rich environment. CMP might not have gotten these mentors if it had approached the company as part of a coalition, but someone would have.

By approaching business as a consortium, you provide the company and individual employees with a full range of mentoring options. You create flexibility for them that cannot be matched by going it alone. This flexibility makes it easier for the company to find a good fit in volunteering options for their employees. Joining forces with other programs also enhances your ability to do many of the other things that can pique a local business's interest in participating, such as increased promotion and exposure of the company's involvement in the community. You are also better able to pool dollars and program staff time to create a truly top-notch recruitment presentation.

The Oregon Mentors Model

When we first formed Oregon Mentors back in 2001, we decided early on that we wanted to offer some kind of "group recruitment" activity that would benefit all the programs in the state as part of our core services. It took some time to do the initial planning, develop a recruitment model, and get buy-in from local programs, but we have been running our Employer Recruitment Campaign for about a year now.

As part of the campaign, Oregon Mentors is responsible for making initial inroads and contacts at local businesses throughout the state. Local programs are still encouraged to develop and implement their own customized recruitment efforts, but

Oregon Mentors makes an effort to do significant outreach to large-scale corporations and businesses that can yield high numbers of volunteers. In this sense, our efforts augment programs' local efforts by going after the "big fish" in the recruitment pond.

We also periodically do follow-up presentations at businesses that are already participating to make sure that we keep mining the places where we have already found success. We also identify appropriate programs that would be a good match for a company's staff and the goals of their employee volunteer program. Once we get the company's buy-in, we funnel their volunteers into appropriate local programs.

Because we are a statewide organization, businesses really listen when we approach them. We are able to leverage the business contacts and influence of our Leadership Council and Board members. And because all our programs are operating under the Oregon Quality Assurance Standards, we are also able to easily convince businesses that we are representing quality programs, which can reduce some of their fears about participating.

We currently have more than one dozen large-scale statewide employers participating in this campaign. As a result, over 25 percent of the potential volunteers that used Oregon Mentor's Web site (www.oregonmentors.org) to find a mentoring opportunity were referred there by their employer. So far it seems to be working pretty well and we're convinced that this approach will greatly expand the total number of mentors serving in matches, which benefits all mentoring programs in the long run.

Getting a Coalition Started

There are a few things you can do if you want to participate in something like what we've put together out in Oregon. Often the first step is to contact your state or local mentoring partnership to see if anyone is already adopting this approach. You can visit www.mentoring.org (the National Mentoring Partnership Web site) to find out if your state or community has a mentoring partnership. Many state and local partnerships actively work with the corporate community to encourage involvement in member mentoring programs.

If there is no state or local partnership in your area, you may want to consider creating your own mentoring consortium. Not all the programs in your area will

want to be involved, but chances are that you can find a number of similar youth mentoring or other volunteer efforts that would be interested in giving it a try. Keep the following in mind while forming your coalition:

- Launch the consortium with the specific and explicit focus of recruiting volunteers jointly. This isn't about funding streams or "turf" in the community.
- Do a thorough inventory of those organizations in your area that operate mentoring, youth-focused, or other volunteer programs in the community, including schools.
- Once you have a list of interested programs, set a firm date and location for an initial meeting, which should incorporate a roundtable discussion about the specific goals of the joint recruitment effort and initial ideas for the strategies you have as a group to approach businesses. Chances are that the diversity of the programs, and the experience of the individuals, in the room will yield a number of fruitful, creative ideas.
- Keep the goals of the first few meetings simple. This focuses the group's energies around the set of specific shared goals (perhaps something like recruiting 100 volunteers from three targeted local companies).
- Over time, hold monthly meetings face-to-face, electronically, or by phone. Each team member should be assigned a specific task to ensure that your goal of recruiting mentors from local businesses is being accomplished.
- The consortium will also need to determine the specific methods for getting the recruitment message out, such as developing a recruitment video, PSA, or consortium-specific print materials. This is an area where the pooling of resources and talent can pay huge dividends.
- Enjoy networking with each other! Groups often feel engaged and revitalized by working together, taking on new goals, and shifting their focus. These coalitions can help participating agencies gain some internal energy.

Asking Businesses for Support

Once your coalition is established and ready to begin approaching businesses, you'll need to do some prep

work to get organized. Be sure to answer the following questions before launching your campaign:

- **Are your consortium's mission, objectives, and outcomes clear?** Develop a one-page description of your consortium's efforts; be sure to include all the partners.
- **Have you agreed on an intake process to handle the volunteers?** Determine the process for the company's volunteers to get connected with an individual mentoring program, perhaps sharing a common mentor application.
- **Is the group prepared to make a formal presentation to the company?** Agree on format, agenda, and presenters before making the presentation.
- **What is it about the company that makes you think they are a good partner for your organization?** Research the company's values and other community service activities. See if they are a good match. And always remember that companies benefit from involvement in mentoring programs in many ways: good PR, employee retention and satisfaction, and preparing a future workforce. Be sure to highlight any natural connections you see between what a company may need in these areas and what you can offer.

When the group is ready to approach a local business to ask for support, be sure to include the following elements in your first meeting. Elements of an effective initial "pitch" include:

1. Mission of the program (or goal of the consortium)
2. Benefits to the employees and benefits to the companies
3. Address the company's concerns:
 - a. Why should my company invest time, money, and people in your program?
 - b. How much time will it take?
 - c. Who are the kids in the program?
 - d. What is the screening and training process?
4. The benefits that your coalition provides over partnering with a single program

By approaching business as a consortium, you provide the company and individual employees with a full range of mentoring options. You create flexibility for them that cannot be matched by going it alone.

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5. Be sure to close the meeting with a clear understanding of the next steps in the process of forming a partnership and leave materials with the “point person” at the company.

Elements of an Effective Employer Recruitment Campaign

If all goes well in your initial meetings with a company, do not assume that the hard part is over. Keep in mind that you still have to launch the campaign itself! Coalitions often stumble once they have their foot in the door. At Oregon Mentors we’ve found the following campaign components to be very effective in maximizing your impact once you have access to these volunteer-rich environments.

Executive Call to Action—The key to long-term success of a mentor recruitment effort is approval and support by top management. Visible and active support across the organization is critical. Management can promote the program by volunteering themselves, or by speaking to employees about why the company is involved. This call to action may be as simple as a letter from the president in the company newsletter, via company e-mail, or an insert with employee paychecks, or as complex as an official companywide challenge/contest among departments to recruit mentors.

Identification of a Visible Champion—This person may or may not be the person who makes the executive call to action, but it should be someone who is positive, upbeat, and creative in utilizing both your and the company’s resources to recruit employees to be volunteer mentors and who can keep the momentum behind the campaign going within the company.

Assign a Point Person—Appoint an employee or team of employees to assume internal coordination of the campaign. Once again, this may or may not be the “champion” or the executive leader. Typically, this person is part of the Human Resources or Community Relations staff. This person (or team) handles coordination between employee volunteers and the programs participating in your consortium.

Establish a Corporate Policy or Official Incentive for Employee Volunteers—Encourage the company to reiterate, revisit, or create a new corporate policy for employee time off (or paid/flex-time) for volunteering. These types of incentives are

key for getting buy-in from employees, especially if most matches will be meeting during weekdays. At the very least, explore options such as allowing employees to use accumulated sick or vacation time toward volunteer mentoring activities.

Establishing a corporate recognition event at the worksite can show appreciation to those currently involved, continues your internal awareness campaign, and encourages potential employee mentors. Accumulation of “points” toward perks such as concert tickets, restaurant gift certificates, and “get-away” weekends for those involved in the program helps in both recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Internal Marketing Campaign—Develop a set plan to generate awareness for mentoring and your participating programs within the business. Have your point person and champion implement strategies such as use of promotional pieces including posters, banners, and table tents in lunchrooms, bulletin boards, reminders in employee paychecks; articles in company newsletters; mentoring “stuffers” in company-sent invoices or notices.

Appropriate Company Recognition in the Community—When first approaching businesses, it is vital to clearly communicate what your consortium can do to promote the company’s involvement in mentoring. One of their big reasons for working with you is positive press in the community. As the program develops over time, don’t forget to feature their involvement as promised. This recognition may include press releases, acknowledgments on your Web site, letters announcing the partnership to your volunteers and other stakeholders, special public recognition events, using their logo on your materials, etc.

We hope the coming years will see an increase in the level of collaboration at the local, regional, and even state level. These collaborations are a way of increasing the sheer number of volunteers engaging youth in a community while strengthening the stability of all the participating programs. Best of luck to you as you seek out partners in your community in an effort to give your local corporations (and other volunteer-rich organizations) large-scale, innovative, and effective mentoring options that they can really throw their support behind.

Persistence and Research Pay Off

How one rural program coordinator managed to turn a “no” into volunteers

By Michael Garringer, NMC Resource Specialist

While the “strength in numbers” approach to volunteer recruitment highlighted in this issue is a wonderful option for local programs, the reality is that it can often be difficult to form those types of fruitful partnerships. Programs may be in smaller communities where there simply aren’t many other agencies to partner with. Sometimes programs in an area are too focused on fighting over scarce resources and volunteers to notice the potential benefits of collaboration.

Whatever the reasons, that type of coalition building is not always possible. Your program may be forced to go it alone. If so, the following story of one local program’s recruitment journey illustrates some of the approaches your program might take and the importance of persistence and customization when approaching local businesses.

I recently interviewed Pat Whitaker, program coordinator for a JUMP program in South Carolina. Pat had recently had some success in local “volunteer-rich” settings and I asked her to share some of her tactics.

NMC: Hello, Pat... Maybe we could start with a little background about your program, and where you were as a coordinator, when all this started...

JUMP Lancaster is located in a rural community in upstate South Carolina. JUMP Lancaster currently serves all the middle schools (five) and one high school. Our mentors meet with mentees on school grounds, during the school day, at least one hour per week, following the school calendar. And during the summer months, matches meet at scheduled group events.

Our initial goal was the outline set forth in our JUMP grant, which was 25 working matches in the first year. This was going to be a real challenge right from the start. Obviously, during this chaotic start-up phase, recruiting mentors to get the program rolling was an immediate concern.

I was hired about two months after receiving the JUMP grant. I hit the ground running and I’ll let you know when I feel caught up! I spent the first three months writing rules, regulations, policies... in general, creating the program. Then it was time to begin implementing our plans.

NMC: Can you talk about how/why you targeted particular companies and how you initially went about approaching them?

I decided to contact all the large employers in our community, starting with the ones everyone in town could name: the phone company, power, gas, insurance, banking, and large manufacturing (such as Duracell). I chose these few to start with because they had contact with the majority of the population in Lancaster. I started by calling and asking to speak to the person in charge of employee affairs, community relations, or the person who scheduled employee events. Sometimes they were not the right person to talk so I had to keep being transferred around until I spoke with the person who could actually make things happen for me. Once I got the correct person on the phone I told them who I was and all about the mentoring program. I explained how I wanted to work with them, and give their company an opportunity to be directly involved with helping shape the lives of today’s youth in Lancaster. After all, today’s children are tomorrow’s future. I asked to come and make a presentation to the employees at their next meeting. I also put together and dropped off information packets, as well as sending an e-mail about youth mentoring and our particular program that each of these companies could forward to their employees.

NMC: What was their initial response to your request?

Some were fairly open from the start, others not so much. One targeted company in particular was very resistant: our local phone company. Initially they said “I don’t think we can.” I decided to recruit others from another large company and then go

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back to them and use this as ammo. The next time I called I was told it would be too difficult for the employees to leave in the middle of the business day. I asked, “Do your employees eat lunch?” I reminded them that our program had many options for employees to meet with youth during lunch or other breaks in the day. This was also shot down.

The business felt that if the employees were to leave in the middle of the workday they would be less productive and it would cause scheduling problems. I suggested that such problems were rarely an issue for employers and that I could prove it to them. I asked for one more chance to make my case. (As you can tell by this point I have a problem taking NO for an answer when kids are involved!)

NMC: How did you go about addressing their concerns? Where did you find data? And, how did you present it to them?

Well, fairly early on I got the buy-in of one of the key contacts at the company (I found out later that his wife told him he had to do it!). He was sold but did not have the final say. He would have to get approval from the vice president, which would be difficult. He suggested putting together a formatted report that he could present at an executive meeting the next Monday. He was willing to go to bat for me but he was skeptical that it would work.

Putting together a quality report that addressed their concerns proved to be a great challenge. I had told them that I could prove employees are more productive when they mentor. I had no data in my possession to prove that! And I had six days to get it.

I called everyone I knew who might have information. I called National Mentoring Center, surfed the Internet for facts and results of previous efforts, contacted other successful programs... and the most helpful was Dr. Susan Weinberger, who graciously sent me statistics and some real examples of mentoring having a positive impact on employee satisfaction. I compiled all the data I could find that was backed up by research or was included in known publications. I wrote a letter about the program and included a copy of our program policies and procedures (so that they would see that we were a quality program), a brochure about mentoring, and an offer to come present further information. They must have liked what they saw, because it worked!

NMC: How many employees did they initially offer and did they soften on some of their concerns, such as employee time off?

In the end they offered six employees to use on a trial basis for the first year, with a promise that if all went well, they would expand it into a companywide program. They were paid for the time it took for training and, since the matches are meeting in the middle of the day, they are even paid for the travel and time spent mentoring in the local schools. The initial six are working out great and we’re gearing up to take on even more mentors from their employees.

NMC: What do you think convinced them to say “yes” and support your program? Do you think it was more your persistence and determination, or the hard data you provided to them?

I believe the final approval to allow phone company employees to mentor came from

- The program being backed by one of their own (my “point person”)...
- My persistence and refusal to take “no” for an answer...
- The abundance of data to back up the claim that allowing employees to volunteer in the community results in more productive employees...
- The fact that other companies in the community, and around the country, were doing it. Showing them that there were huge Fortune 500 companies investing in mentoring really opened their eyes.

I am not sure if there was anything specific in the data that helped change their mind, but clearly they were swayed by the volume of evidence and the way it was packaged for them.

NMC: What’s the one piece of advice you’d give to someone who feels like they’re struggling to get commitments from businesses and other volunteer-rich environments?

Be persistent! Advocate for the children in your program as if they were your own...

Library Resources To Help Strengthen Your Board

One of the often-overlooked keys to doing effective recruitment, public relations, and marketing is the involvement of a program or agency's board of directors. Board members often have strong ties to the business community and other local institutions, such as schools, social services, and government agencies. Their community connections can significantly increase the scope and effectiveness of a program's outreach.

The unfortunate reality is that many mentoring programs suffer from poor relations with, or a lack of support from their board. The NMC Lending Library has recently added some items to the collection dealing with board development that can help programs strengthen the quality and impact of their board.

Nonprofit Board Answer Book

This comprehensive guide to board development covers nuts-and-bolts issues such as the duties of the board, board structure, and board-staff relations. It is a very good starting point for any kind of examination of your own agency's circumstances.

Creating Caring and Capable Boards

This resource focuses on creating philosophical changes in the board's role and duties. It examines how to foster a spirit of trusteeship among board members so that their involvement extends beyond simple financial and management activities to include an overarching commitment to and involvement in the agency's mission and goals.

The Board Member's Book

Another good general resource for board development. This one features helpful chapters on doing community outreach and fundraising with board members, as well as a checklist to determine the "health" of your board.

The Governance Series

This collection of smaller (30–50 pages) resources, which can be borrowed individually, covers a wide range of board roles and responsibilities. Titles in the series:

- *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*
- *Financial Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*
- *Structures and Practices of Nonprofit Boards*
- *Fundraising Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*
- *Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*
- *The Nonprofit Board's Role in Setting and Advancing the Mission*
- *The Nonprofit Board's Role in Planning and Evaluation*
- *How To Help Your Board Govern More and Manage Less*
- *Leadership Roles in Nonprofit Governance*

As always, books may be borrowed from the NMC Lending Library via interlibrary loan at your local public library. Consult your local library for more details on interlibrary loans. The collection can be searched on the NMC Web site at <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/library.html>.

Please contact Resource Specialist Michael Garringer (garringm@nwrel.org; 503-275-9647) if you have questions about these or any other mentoring resources.

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News Briefs

■ OJJDP Announces New JUMP Grants

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has announced a new batch of grantees for its Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). The 32 new grantees were chosen from the top unfunded, yet highly rated, applications remaining from the 2002 solicitation process. The grantees are spread across 22 states and the District of Columbia, and represent a wide variety of community, school, juvenile justice, and faith-based projects. The National Mentoring Center will be conducting the initial orientation for these programs at a special “cluster meeting” in Washington, D.C. in late February.

A full listing of the grantees can be found on the OJJDP JUMP Web site at:

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/jump/03grantees.html>

■ NMC Releases New Program Development Tool

For those of you who haven't seen it already, the NMC released a new publication back in late October designed to help programs manage one of the more complicated aspects of setting up and running a program: the development of policies and procedures.

The *Generic Mentoring Program Policy & Procedure Manual* offers everything a program will need to create a sustainable set of program rules, guidelines, and procedures. Packed with advice, sample forms, policy examples, and other tools, this resource can help your program produce a strong manual that serves as a guiding document and mitigates many of the problems associated with frequent staff turnover and inconsistent delivery of services.

The manual is available in many different formats, including an editable template version, on the NMC Web site at: www.nwrel.org/mentoring/policy_manual.html



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