

Urbana School District 116

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Urbana School District Celebrates Mentors *January is National Mentoring Month*

January is National Mentoring Month, and Urbana School District #116 is taking the time to recognize current mentors and looking to recruit new mentors for students.

“The district’s goal is to provide students the support they need to be successful in school and in life. Mentoring is one strategy toward that end. We would love to provide every student who requests a mentor or is referred for mentoring with a caring adult to meet with them weekly at school,” says Barbara Linder, Urbana Middle School Volunteer Coordinator.

And, Linder says mentoring works. “We are able to see that in the data that was collected over the past three years. We saw academic gains, attendance gains, and behavioral improvements in mentored students. Our belief is that those gains can be attributed to the relationship the student has with an adult who believes in them and provides them with someone they can trust, someone who helps them see and access their own strengths,” she says.

Linder says District 116 is always looking for volunteers to be mentors, especially men. Linder comments, “The qualities we look for in mentors are: flexibility, patience, good listening skills, and a genuine interest in youth. We also need adults who are good role models and who expect to be in the community for the foreseeable future. Mentors make a one year commitment, but know that at the end of the year they will be asked to recommit for the following school year. Our goal is for mentors to stay with their student through high school graduation.”

Mentors have to pass a security check and undergo training before being paired with a student.

Members of the media wishing to do a mentoring story should call Linder at 337-0853.

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