

# Grand Area Mentoring 2012/2013 Annual Report

## *Executive Summary*

In May, Grand Area Mentoring completed its eighth year of service to Grand County, exceeded all goals for the year, served a total of 65 at-risk students, worked weekly with more than 50 volunteers, and nourished partnerships with stakeholders – schools, citizens, foundations, businesses, nonprofits, and more. A summary of results:

Measure >>	Reduce disciplinary actions	Increase core academic performance	Reduce unexcused absences	Sustain relationships >12 months
Goal	40%	35%	35%	55%
<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>59%</b>

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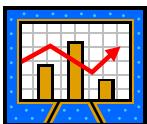
### Match Highlight

Jim and Taylor, matched for two years, have developed an exemplary mentoring relationship that helped Taylor find focus. With encouragement from Jim, Taylor turned his love of reading and video games into a productive intellectual outlet: writing reviews for *The Devil's Advocate*. Though Taylor was still enrolled at Grand County Middle School this year, he published two articles in the high school paper, and thanks to support from Jim, he signed up for Honors English. Taylor hopes next year to branch out to writing book reviews, and he has registered for SpyHop's Film Making Workshop this summer.



**Encouragement... Support... Goal Setting... This is mentoring.**

#### Contemporary Mentoring Research



“Findings in this investigation provide support for the effectiveness of youth mentoring programs... Favorable effects of mentoring programs are similarly apparent across youth varying in demographic and background characteristics such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, and family structure and across differing types of outcomes... not only outcomes that tend to be seen as ‘soft’ or subjective (e.g., attitudes) but also those typically regarded as ‘harder’ or more objective (e.g., behavior, academic performance).”

–DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn, and Valentine (2011)

## **Developmental Mentoring**

Developmental relationships focus on trust, fun and reciprocity, understanding, and slowly building toward setting goals or pursuing projects. Developmental mentoring and activities lead to increased student confidence, higher attachment to school, better grades, and longer lasting matches.

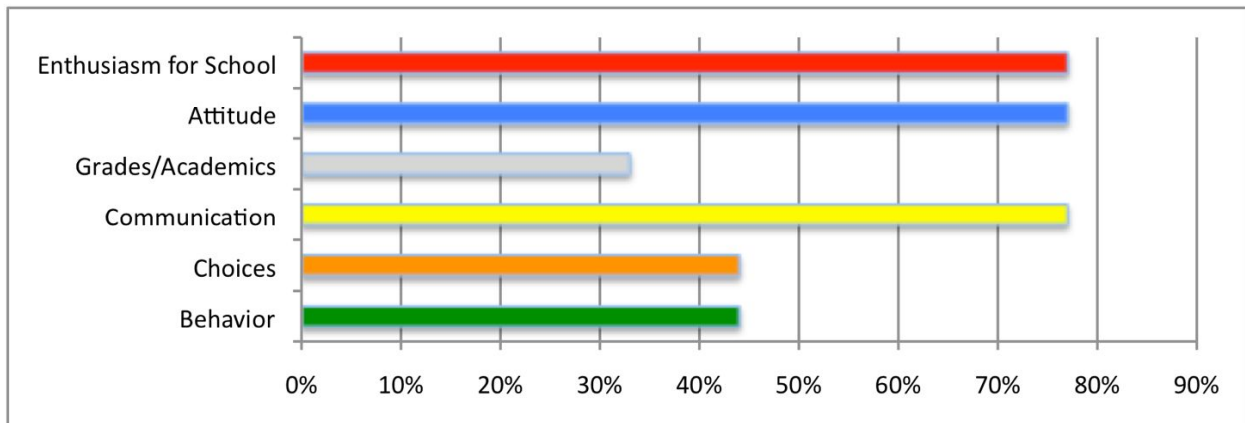
### **The Effects of Long-Term Mentoring**

Matches that last longer have more positive outcomes. Therefore, Grand Area Mentoring asks volunteers to commit to relationships that last at least 12 months. Many of the program's participants have been matched for more than three years. The average duration is two years.

Students who have been mentored for more than one year have often performed better than their peers mentored for fewer months. Grand Area Mentoring fosters developmental relationships, which help matches persevere through challenges faced by the student and the mentor.

### **Perceived Impact on Students**

Surveys show parents believe their sons and daughters benefit from mentoring in a variety of ways. However, *communication, attitude, and enthusiasm for school* stand out as highlights:



Also, 77% of mentors believe their mentees have improved in the communication, attitude, and behavior spheres. Perhaps due in part to bolstered communication skills, 75% of students reduced their number of discipline problems, and 91% of teachers agree that mentoring improved student relations with peers and adults.

### **MENTOR SURVEY QUESTION: DO YOU THINK MENTORING HAS IMPACTED YOUR MENTEE? IF SO, HOW?**

*“My mentee is slowly developing better social skills. It seems like being exposed to different social situations, while being guided, has been helpful.” (GrandAM Mentor)*

*“My mentee has gained a level of maturity and confidence.” (GrandAM Mentor)*

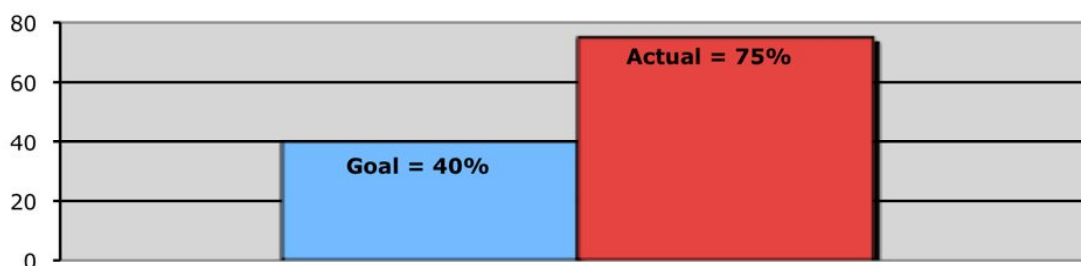
*“I have seen improved schoolwork, attitude, and feelings about herself. Improved behavior too.” (GrandAM Mentor)*

*“My mentee is more likely to think of others and is more sharing.” (GrandAM Mentor)*

## *Student Behavior*

Of Grand Area Mentoring's student participants for which GrandAM had baseline discipline data, **75% decreased their discipline referral rate or maintained it at zero.** The graph below illustrates the success GrandAM has achieved in reducing discipline problems for mentored students:

### **Percentage of Students with Reduced Discipline Referrals** **(Goals vs. Performance) 2012/2013**



Parent surveys also support the link between mentoring and improved behavior. ***One parent said***, “My daughter is more confident with others, and she now has friends.” Another wrote, “Mentoring has helped my daughter by teaching her how to socialize better and make friends,” and “mentoring has helped my son learn to talk to people.”

Student surveys give some insight into how mentoring impacts feelings of positive change, levels of self-confidence, and use of social skills. Studies suggest that there is a link between improved social skills and a reduction in discipline problems at school and in the community. Here is a selection of direct quotes:

### **QUESTION: DO YOU THINK HAVING A MENTOR HAS CHANGED THE WAY YOU GET ALONG WITH OTHER PEOPLE? IF SO, HOW?**

#### **ANSWER: A selection of student quotes:**

*“Yeah, when I get frustrated, I think: well if I get suspended for getting into a fight, I won’t get to go to mentoring this week.”* (student who struggled with behavioral issues)

*“Yup, because me and my sister used to fight a lot and now we don’t – we figure it out and take turns. It also helped me with my dad a lot.”* (student who’s father is incarcerated)

*“Yeah, if someone were to bump into me at school, I’d get mad at them, but now that I have a mentor I don’t do that anymore. She’s kind of like a big sister to me.”* (student who suffered from abuse)

*“Yes, I’ve been more social.”* (student who spent time in foster care, has no contact with biological mother, and struggles with health issues)

*“My mentor has encouraged me to talk to people more.”* (student who suffered physical abuse)

### **MENTOR SURVEY:**

***“It has been fun to work with my mentee. He seems to have become more aware of others and is more confident in his own abilities. Furthermore, I think I have seen an increased ability to work with others and be a good team member.”***

**QUESTION: DO YOU FEEL MENTORING HAS CHANGED HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF? IF SO, HOW?**

**ANSWER: A selection of student quotes:**

*“When I get home after seeing my mentor, my grandma says I’m not as grumpy and irritable.”* (student who has been removed from parental care, struggled with anger issues)

*“Yeah, sort of, I’m not as afraid to talk to people any more.”* (student who suffered from depression/self harm)

*“Yeah, it makes me feel like there is someone there that understands me.”* (ADHD student who struggles socially and was consistently bullied)

*“Yeah, sometimes I’d have bad memories and feel like I didn’t really want to live, but I think about my mentor and I don’t really feel that way anymore.”* (student who was sexually abused)

*“Yes, because now I do my homework and pay a lot of attention. He’s taught me to not be as scared to put on my glasses.”* (second language learner who struggled with low academic performance, behavioral issues)

*“It makes me feel happy.”* (student who had a parent commit suicide)

*“Yes, I felt happy when I got a mentor. When she wasn’t in my life, I felt mad, but she talks to me about manners and stuff.”* (student who struggled with behavioral issues and emotional outbursts).

*“Yes, I’m a lot more confident.”* (student who was abused)

*“Yeah, it makes me feel a lot better.”* (student who spent time in foster care)

*“It’s made me feel better. It doesn’t matter what you wear, it matters who you are.”* (student who suffered from physical abuse, spent time in foster care).

**Teacher Survey – Social Competency:**

92% of teachers agree that mentored students got fewer behavioral referrals since being matched with a mentor.

**Mentee Reflections:**

*“Mentoring helped me get friends this year.”* (3<sup>rd</sup> grade girl)

*“Mentoring is important because I have somebody I can talk to and somebody I can be good friends with.”* (6<sup>th</sup> grade girl)

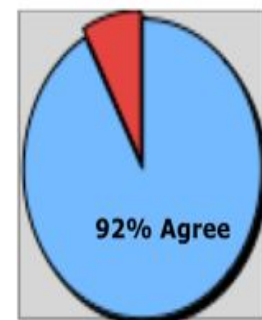
*“It’s something for me to do and I need friends – I don’t have that many.”* (5<sup>th</sup> grade boy)

*“I didn’t get any friends last year and now I’m getting friends this year.”* (3<sup>rd</sup> grade girl)

*“Mentoring gives me a chance to have someone to be with, someone to trust. It’s fun because we understand each other and we’re best friends now.”* (4<sup>th</sup> grade girl)

**TEACHER SURVEY**

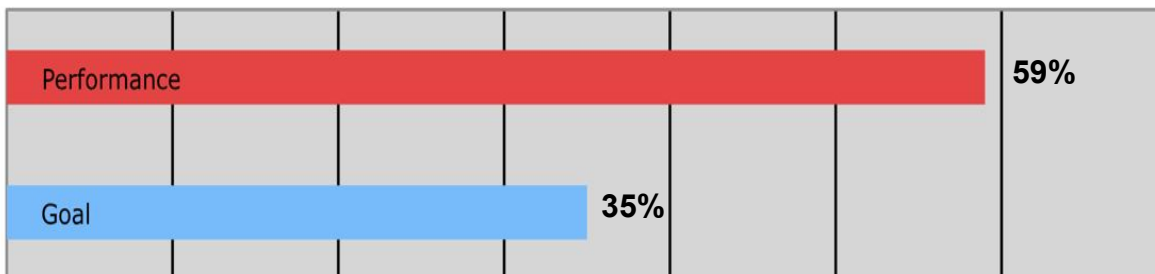
**“Since being matched with a mentor, the mentored students in my class have improved social competency.”**



### *Student Academic Performance*

Improvements in student academic performance are based on report card scores from this year compared to last year. Grand Area Mentoring met the goal of 35% of mentored students improving their academic score since 2011/2012. Of the students for which baseline academic data was available, **59% improved their overall academic score.**

#### Percentage of Students with Improved Academic Performance

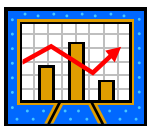


(Flat academic performance is not counted as improvement.)

#### **Teacher Survey – Academics:**

Many teachers agree that mentoring had a significant impact on student academic performance. In a survey of educators in kindergarten through eighth grade, **83% of teachers felt that mentored students had improved grades.**

#### **Contemporary Mentoring Research**



“Mentoring programs can work for different types of outcomes. Programs often focus on improving outcomes related to education, risky behaviors, or social skills and relationships. For those that focused on education, ten out of fifteen had a statistically significant impact for at least one outcome. For those that focused on risky behaviors, seven out of nine worked for at least one outcome. For those that focused on social skills and relationships, four out of five worked.”

–Lawner, Elizabeth; Beltz, Martha; Moore, Kristen. *What Works for Mentoring Programs*

#### **PARENT SURVEY QUESTION: DO YOU THINK MENTORING HAS MADE AN IMPACT ON YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER? IF SO, HOW?**

*“My son looks forward to mentoring on Wednesdays. He hasn’t been in as much trouble this year and is doing much better in his classroom.”*

*“Mentors provide positive activities after school.”*

*“My son tries harder at school.”*

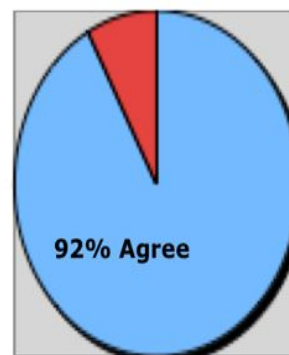
*“My kids learn a lot through mentoring.”*

*“I liked knowing each session was spent in worthwhile activities like reading or swimming, not napping or watching television.”*

*“Mentoring is a safe and fun activity for children after school.”*

#### **TEACHER SURVEY**

*“Since being matched with a mentor, the **mentored students in my class have greater self confidence.**”*



## *Student Unexcused Absences*

In 2012/2013, Grand Area Mentoring aimed to reduce unexcused absences for 35% of mentored youth. **68% of mentored students had fewer unexcused absences this year compared with student attendance in 2011/2012.** Students reported greater affinity for school in end-of-year interviews, and both parents and teachers noted the same.

### **Teacher Survey – Attachment to School:**

100% of teachers surveyed agreed that “mentoring is a good strategy to prevent antisocial behaviors, unexcused absences, and academic decline among at-risk youth.”

#### **Contemporary Mentoring Research**

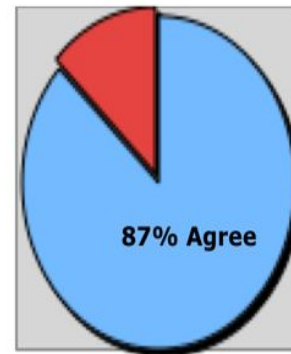


“This study demonstrated how natural mentors within the school context can support pro-social behavior, particularly school engagement, and deter risk behaviors amongst adolescents. School is a place where various aspects of development beyond academic learning can occur. Caring teachers and other adults at school can facilitate socio-emotional, cognitive and identity development. The study’s findings have implications for formal mentoring programs. School-based mentoring programs and researchers alike can consider ways to better integrate mentors into the school structure in ways that encourage school attachment and reduced problem behaviors.”

–Jean Rhodes on 2010 attachment research by Black, Grenard, Sussman, and Rorhback.

### **TEACHER SURVEY**

“Since being matched with a mentor, the *mentored students in my class have seemed to like school better, especially on mentoring days.*”



### **MENTEE INTERVIEW QUESTION: DOES HAVING A MENTOR MAKE YOU FEEL ANY DIFFERENT ABOUT SCHOOL?**

*“Yes, because my mentor actually helps me. He says, “Think before you do or say.” If I needed help with homework, he would help me.”* (student who struggles with behavioral issues, ADHD)

*“Mentoring makes me want to come to school.”* (student who struggled with death of sibling and low school attachment)

*“If I have a bad day, there is still something I can feel good about.”* (student who struggled with social isolation and was bullied)

*“Mentoring makes me look forward to the day. It makes me happier and work harder. Mentoring helps me have fun.”* (student who suffered abuse and considered suicide)

*“I come to school excited.”* (student who was removed from parental care)

*“I really don’t like school that much, but I’m starting to like school more.”* (student who suffered from social isolation, depression, low school attachment, abandonment by mother)

*“Yes, I feel like I need to work more because she said good grades make a happy life.”* (special education student who deals with bullying issues)

*“It made me feel happier on the days I have mentoring.”* (victim of physical abuse)

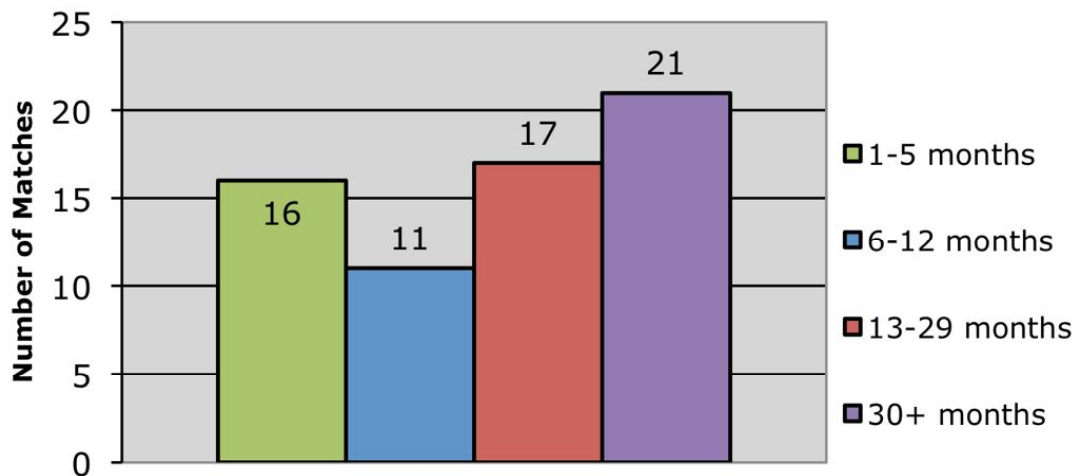
### *Sustained Relationships*

Lasting matches are a sign of robust program health and effective mentoring, and longer matches show more positive results for mentored youth.

Grand Area Mentoring surpassed the key goal of 55% of relationships sustained for more than 12 months. A sustained relationship is defined as a match of student and mentor that meets consistently for 12 consecutive months, not including June, July, and August.

Of all 65 matches in the 2012/2013 school year (including those closed and those expected to continue), **59% of Grand Area Mentoring matches were sustained for more than 12 months**. Of those, 26% were sustained between 12 months and 2.5 years, and 32% were sustained for more than 2.5 years. The longest match has lasted 6.6 years.

**Matches by Duration, 2012/2013**



8 or 12.5% of GrandAM matches were closed during the 2012/2013. Of these, 6 lasted more than 12 months, which means these students met the program goal of 12 months participation. Five of these matches closed due to student emigration.

#### **MENTEE INTERVIEW QUESTION: WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED OR GAINED THROUGH MENTORING?**

*“That it’s really good to have friends because if you have more friends, it’s like you’re not all alone when you are being bullied and stuff.” (6<sup>th</sup> grade boy)*

*“My depression is gone.” (5<sup>th</sup> grade boy)*

*“Not to give up, I always try. Before I started mentoring in fifth grade, I didn’t try as hard.” (7<sup>th</sup> grade boy)*

*“I’ve gained not only her as a friend, but other friends because of her encouragement. I’ve gained self confidence.” (8<sup>th</sup> grade girl)*

*“I learned to have respect for other people.” (5<sup>th</sup> grade girl)*

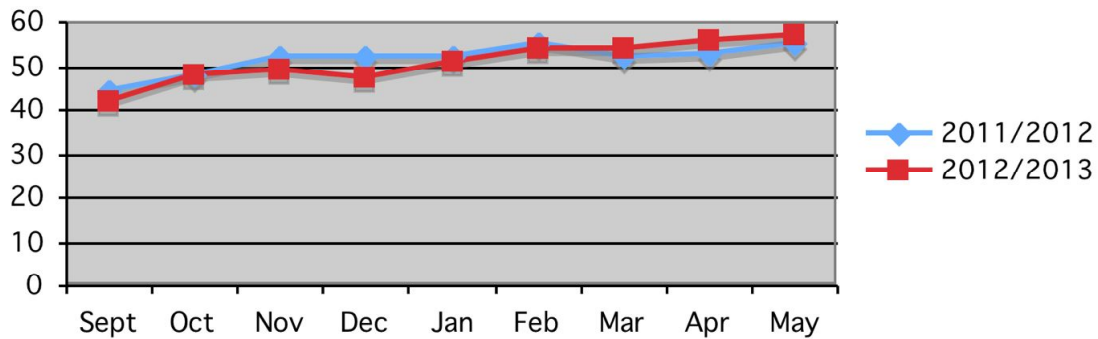
*“My math facts. I was having a hard time learning them and we went over them.” (5<sup>th</sup> grade boy)*

*“Be nice and be truthful.” (4<sup>th</sup> grade boy)*

### *Number of Matches*

Grand Area Mentoring reached capacity of 65 matches during the 2012/2013 school year. Maintaining this size gives the program optimal support for its mentors while serving a significant portion of the district’s at-risk population. Keeping fewer than sixty-five matches allows closer contact with each mentor and student, which assists in relationship oversight and troubleshooting.

**Number of Matches, 2011/2012 vs. 2012/2013**



BBBS Lone Star’s report, *Getting to Ready*, explained, “quality of match support is positively related with match duration and quality.” As such, Grand Area Mentoring keeps the ratio of support staff to students below 1/50. Consequently, Grand Area Mentoring matches last longer than many matches elsewhere; for example, Grand Area Mentoring matches last 400% longer than matches surveyed in a Department of Education study.

#### **Contemporary Mentoring Research**



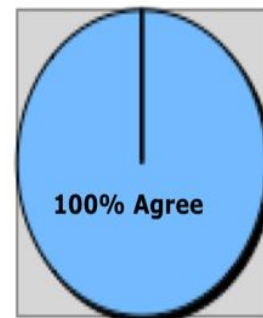
“Mentoring relationships can vary considerably in their effectiveness, depending on the match length. However, at least for school-based mentoring, it is not just the number of weeks that is important, but also the integrity of the match. The patterns of impacts for intact matches, when compared to broken matches, might also help to explain the

relatively disappointing small effects from large-scale, random assignment evaluations of youth mentoring (Bernstein et al., 2009; Herrera et al., 2007). When impacts from all of the matches are combined, positive outcomes can be masked by the neutral, and even negative, outcomes associated with early terminating and reconfigured matches.”

—Jean Rhodes on 2012 match duration research by Grossman, Chan, Schwartz, O., Rhodes, and E.

#### **TEACHER SURVEY**

“I am supportive of the mentoring program, and mentors are well trained and effective.”



#### **FACULTY SURVEY:**

***“My perception is that mentoring is THE best way for Grand County School District to help some of our students.”***



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### *Administrative Performance*

Grand Area Mentoring surveyed teachers, administrators, parents, and mentors about staff performance to provide guidance for program improvement and staff professional development. A mean response of 8 is the goal for each question.

PROGRAM SURVEYS (2012/2013)	AVERAGE SCORE on a scale of one to ten (ten being highest):
Communication with <b>parents</b> :	<b>9.1</b>
Response to <b>parent</b> questions or concerns:	<b>9.1</b>
Communication with <b>volunteers</b> :	<b>9.8</b>
Response to <b>mentor</b> calls and concerns:	<b>9.75</b>
<b>Teachers and administration</b> believes that staff are easy to reach and knowledgeable:	<b>8.9</b>
<b>Teachers and administration</b> supportive of the program:	<b>9.4</b>
<b>Teachers and administrators</b> believe that mentors are well trained and effective:	<b>9</b>
<b>Teachers and administrators</b> understand how mentoring works in Grand County:	<b>8.9</b>

#### **Faculty, parents, and mentors noted:**

*"I think Grand Area Mentoring is fantastic."*

*"Grand Area Mentoring is a wonderful program that benefits the children in our schools."*

*"My favorite thing is the sense of community between staff, mentors, and mentees."*

*"Grand area Mentoring is very well organized, and staff & mentors are professional."*

*"I am proud to be part of this impactful program."*

*"I think Grand Area Mentoring is very well run. I am very happy with the program."*

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### *Successes*

**Recruitment & Training** – Seven sessions throughout 2012/2013 trained 24 volunteer candidates in mentoring theory, best practices, program policy and procedure, youth development, and roles and responsibilities. This is a mentor recruitment record in Moab, which speaks to the effectiveness of the program's services and public outreach.

**Webinars** – In lieu of live trainings, program staff attended 6 webinars on program development and the latest research in the mentoring field.

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### *Opportunities*

**Advanced Training** – To boost program performance that leads to better youth outcomes, Grand Area Mentoring will invest in development for its volunteer mentors. In a survey, volunteers asked for information on working with troubled youth, child psychology, and communication.