



# Mentoring Mentors Incorporated



Mentoring Mentors

~Engaging-Encouraging-Empowering to Inspire~

Prepared February 2016

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
• Organizational description	2-3
• The Problem	3
• Mentoring Mentors defines trauma	3
<b>Mentoring Mentors Strategic Blueprint</b>	<b>4</b>
• <i>Community Serve</i>	4
• <i>Mission</i>	4
• <i>Values</i>	4
<b>Board Members</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>Core Programs</b>	<b>6-7</b>

## Executive Summary

### **Organizational description:**

Mentoring Mentors INC is a nonprofit Mentoring program intended to strengthen teens and young adults in Baltimore, Maryland. Mentoring Mentors will work with teens and young adults to help them challenge obstacles like poverty, violence, gang affiliation, and educational adversities. By successfully developing relationships within the community, Mentoring Mentors will partner with schools, churches, colleges, universities, and other community organizations to enhance the learning experience for teens and young adults in Baltimore City. The objective of Mentoring Mentors is to link each mentee to resources that support and encourage academics, career-building, goal setting, planning, and post-high school planning. The goal is to have each Mentee become a Mentor within their individual communities.

In 2013, Founder Alphonso Mayo started coaching high school football for Glen Burnie High School. Alphonso was invited to coach by his high school coach Eric Woodson. As a volunteer assistant, Alphonso learned that his role was to physically train the players while getting them to envision themselves in a positive light and motivate the students to seek higher education. Following a short stint with a few of the players, Alphonso recognized a gap in the coaching space. Many programs provided coaching but not emotional support. As Alphonso developed relationships with the players, he became a mentor figure. Many of the personal, emotional, and psychological problems that the players were facing were identical to the situations Alphonso had once faced and was learning to cope with and manage. He recognized that this (i.e., ages 15 – 24) was a critical time for African American boys and young men. It was a time that adult guidance and positive role models made a vital difference and could facilitate a sound transition from youth to adulthood. Ostensibly, at the time that mentorship was particularly crucial for African-American youth.

In 2014, Alphonso felt a calling to bridge this gap; he began informal mentoring one of the players from Glen Burnie High School and four African-American young men. Initially, the mentorship was unstructured—with Alphonso organizing social activities (e.g., movies, pick up games of basketball), and supporting youth at their school events. After a few months, Alphonso thought to structure the mentorship around youth's service-learning, as all the youth had a requirement of 50 hours of service-learning. The service-learning also provided a purpose (of the mentorship) that readily resonated with the youth. As part of this group mentoring, the youth participated in—and sometimes organized—park clean-ups; meals for the homeless; community-lead block parties; and, relationship building with police (e.g., though Doughnuts for Cops Day). In 2015, eight more youth, in grade school, joined Alphonso's mentoring program. In addition to the mentoring that Alphonso provided, there was an organic relationship between the grade-schoolers and the high school youth. The grade-schoolers emulated the high schoolers and looked to them for guidance; the high schoolers tutored the grade-schoolers and felt a sense of responsibility for them. The youth learned to support each other.

Alphonso realized that due to the lack of opportunities teens and young adults who are underserved were losing faith in the possibilities that await them. To successfully become a Mentor, young people must be in a caring, inclusive learning environment that promotes their best effort and reinforces personal growth. For mentees to receive services, they must be enrolled in school. Mentoring Mentors will identify underserved teens and young adults who need assistance with a positive transition into adulthood as well as provide a support system that will encourage and promote self-worth, resilience, and education.

The group will participate in weekly planned activities to improve the confidence of the Mentee. Mentees will receive continuous tutoring throughout the year and will participate in monthly meetings to report progress. Mentoring Mentors will create a learning environment that will be a valuable resource to mentees, aspiring mentors, and the community at large throughout the duration of the program.

#### **The Problem:**

Young people of color, especially African American boys and young men who grow up without a father or male mentor are faced with significant challenges related to trauma, have a higher chance of doing poorly in school, being incarcerated, and dying at an early age. The lower graduation and higher incarceration and mortality rates among African-American youth have contributed to a lack of positive presence in the community. As a result, there is a higher incidence of trauma and lower academic performance among young people of color, primarily African American males. With fewer African-American men available to engage in schools and educational settings, a positive path for younger generations is increasingly more unattainable.

By successfully developing relationships within the community, Mentoring Mentors will partner with schools, churches, colleges, universities, and other community organizations to enhance the learning experience for young people of color in Baltimore City and surrounding counties. The objective of Mentoring Mentors is to link each mentee to resources that support and encourage academic success, career building, goal setting, and short and long-term planning, while battling the obstacles emanating from trauma. Through this positive engagement at a young age, Mentoring Mentors can achieve its ultimate goal of transitioning past Mentees into future Mentors within their communities.

**Mentoring Mentors defines trauma** as an **experience that causes distress such that it negatively impacts a person's emotions, feelings, and ability to function optimally within certain contexts**. It is our understanding that the psychological state of trauma promotes feelings of “less than” or inferiority. Providing strong mentors model the process of working through trauma and inspire others to see how mentee defined success can be achieved despite trauma.

## **Mentoring Mentors Blueprint**

### **Community Serve**

Mentoring Mentors is anchored in Baltimore, working closely with High students.

### **Mission**

**To engage teens and young adults in Baltimore by providing services that will encourage and empower self growth and education to inspire future mentors**

### **Values**

- Encouraging Integrity
- Copowering through Education
- Inspiring and Promoting a sense of community
- Exceeding Excellence - Never accept the status quo
- Courage in the face of adversity

## **Board Members**

### **Rachel Lewis Vice President & Co-founder**

Rachel Lewis is a legal analyst, mentor, and networking business owner. She is a Baltimore native who has a passion for serving youth. In her early childhood, Rachel attended Sought Out Redeemed Christian School and Greater Grace Christian Academy. She continued her high school education at Towson High Law and Public Policy. Throughout her schooling, Rachel struggled with reading and comprehension skills, but knew that with persistence and many hours of studying, she would be able to overcome these obstacles and excel. A graduate of Stevenson University, Rachel majored in Paralegal Studies and was on the Dean's List.

Growing up, Rachel witnessed many traumatic circumstances in her community, which fueled her passion for giving back and belief that she could be an example for youth who struggled academically. Rachel was recognized for her outstanding service in 2011, when she received the President's Volunteer Service and National Engaged Leader Award. Rachel also was named to Who's Who Among Students in America, Lambda Epsilon Chi, and paralegal of the year in Covington Who's Who (2015).

At the age of 24, Rachel sought to make an even greater impact in the lives of youth in the Baltimore City region, where she co-founded Mentoring Mentors. Through Mentoring Mentors, Rachel is

committed to growing a unified community of leaders and providing mentoring services to youth in underserved communities and schools.

### **Founder and Executive Director**

**Alphonso Mayo** is a motivational speaker, author, coach, and youth activist. Alphonso was born to a drug-addicted mother and a father who consistently was incarcerated – an experience that caused Alphonso many hardships, struggles, trials, and tribulations throughout his youth. During his early childhood, Alphonso struggled with behavioral problems. At the age of 13, Alphonso was diagnosed with a learning disability that made it difficult for him to pay attention in school and to retain what he had learned. As a result, he struggled academically during his formative years.

Unfortunately, in large part due to his athletic ability, his intellectual disability was overlooked. In spite of this, Alphonso would practice reading every night and, with great perseverance, taught himself how to read while managing the challenges of school during his freshman year at Baltimore's Northwestern High School. Alphonso would go on to graduate 9th in his high school class of approximately 200 students. After graduating, he attended North Carolina Central University, and later Stevenson University, where he graduated with a degree in Human Services.

Shortly after graduating, Alphonso founded Mentoring Mentors with the goal of helping underserved youth who face similar challenges to those that he overcame as an adolescent. The program serves as a means to bridge the gap between teens and the communities in which they live.

### **Why this matters:**

Anyone who has experienced psychological and emotional trauma knows well how they can play a significant role in the trajectory of one's life. The lack of African American men in the home and schools has led to a lack of stability for young people of color, particularly African American boys. Without the appropriate resources and role models in neighborhoods, schools, colleges, and workplaces, young people of color find themselves unable to recognize possibilities and a path to future success. Ultimately, this is a problem because our neighborhoods and communities are not benefitting from the intelligence and potential young people of color possess. Imagine what would be possible for the broader community of Baltimore and beyond if resources, guidance, and care were available to young people of color in ways that do not currently exist.

### **Current Students**

- **Malik Forrester**
- **Kam Mason**
- **Deander Thomas**
- **William Fernandez**
- **Zachry Jeffers**
- **Tajiel Wesley**

## Core Programs

### ACADEMIC-YEAR PROGRAMS IDEAS

#### Steps to stairs Business program:

Offer authentic business expertise from business owners and/or recognized experts in business related fields like finance, marketing, human resources, strategic planning, law, and leadership development. These individuals will provide their expertise to students looking to gain information for business-related topics and explore the idea of business ownership.

#### Program Objective:

STS program is an 8 week program held on Saturday from 9am-11am for students served by Mentoring Mentors, and their families, who want to learn about business. Participants will gain a better understanding of the business environment, techniques, professional environment, and key steps needed to build a successful business.

#### Outcomes: Educate and inspire youth to:

- Share their ideas
- Embrace diverse backgrounds
- Learn from mistakes
- Develop a business plan
- Operate a startup business
- Understand Branding, Marketing, Budgeting
- Present a Business Plan
- Work collaboratively and support other youth
- Provide 2 scholarship to specialize Business camp for summer 2019

#### Six-Block Mentality: Mission Haiti

Allows students to expand their vision beyond Baltimore City. With many young people of color attending schools within their zip code or just on the other side of town, many students have not traveled outside of Baltimore City by the age of 18. Mentoring Mentors refers to this as the "six-block mentality. Mentoring Mentors understands the importance of exposure, and wants to increase the worldview of our students by taking our students outside of Baltimore. The "six-block mentality" mission trip to Haiti: CHURCH ADVANCEMENT PROJECTS (CA PROJECTS)  
CA Projects are specific projects that contribute to the physical needs of the village. These projects represent the highest priorities for meeting the physical needs of the village. Furthermore, they are a part of a continuum of transformation plan that has been developed with the local church pastors and Village Champions. Mentoring Mentors team will have the opportunity to sponsor and participate in these projects during a week long trip 6/26/15-7/3/15.

- Exposes students to a culture that is not well-defined here in Baltimore;
- Allows students to learn about heritage and ancestry;
- Allows students to partner with an organization to serve those in poverty;

- Enables students' minds to expand and understand that, through serving, relationships are formed; and
- Gives students a different outlook on their own current situations.

**Summer fIT Program:**

Is a summer school initiative in which students attend classes during their summer break from school for two months, teaching the importance of continued education. Students have four courses – sociology, economics, finances, basic math – lasting 45 minutes each. After classes end, students participate in activities intended to push them outside of their comfort zone, such as kayaking, bungee jumping, zip-lining, horseback riding, ATV riding, and hiking. Students also will complete four service projects throughout the summer. Mentoring Mentors hosts a ceremony similar to a prom at the end of the program, at which time Student-of-the-Year awards are given out.