



Youth Services System Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Youth Services System, Inc. Celebrates National Mentoring Month

WHEELING, W.Va.— January is National Mentoring Month, and this year Youth Services System, Inc. (YSS) is celebrating the annual campaign aimed at expanding quality mentoring opportunities to connect more of our community’s young people with caring adults by hosting monthly recruiting events for potential mentors. This month, YSS is hosting an appreciation dinner for current mentoring members.

Ashley Flaherty, Youth Mentoring Network Coordinator says, “Our vision for 2024 is to expand our social media presence, incorporate group mentoring monthly activities for youth on our mentee waitlist, and promote the mentoring program at various locations throughout the Ohio Valley.” Flaherty continues, “We are exploring new initiatives to enhance our mentor recruitment efforts. Be sure to follow the Youth Mentoring Network on social media for the latest updates about the program.”

According to the MENTOR [website](#), research shows that mentors play a powerful role in providing young people with the tools to make positive choices, attend and engage in school, and reduce or avoid negative behaviors. In turn, these young people are:

- 55% more likely to be enrolled in college.
- 81% more likely to report participating regularly in sports or extracurricular activities.
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities.
- More than twice as likely to say they held a leadership position in a club or sports team.

Yet, the same research shows that one in three young people in our country will grow up without a mentor.

National Mentoring Month is the time of year where engagement from community members interested in becoming a mentor is highest. This year, with the support of the mentoring community, we are encouraging the public to go beyond just digital engagement and become involved in real life. Mentoring relationships are at their best when connections are made between a caring adult and a young person who knows that someone is there to help guide them through life choices.

National Mentoring Month is led by [MENTOR](#), the national unifying champion of the mentoring movement. Each year since its launch in 2002, the campaign has enjoyed the strong support of the

President, George W. Bush, and the United States Congress. Other well-known supporters include the late Maya Angelou, Clint Eastwood, Senator John McCain, Quincy Jones, General Colin L. Powell, Cal Ripken Jr., the late Bill Russell (MENTOR founding board member), and Usher. In 2016, President Barack Obama's office shared a National Mentoring Month press release highlighting the crucial role that mentors play in young people's lives. Last year, United States Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona played a key role in the event.

To become a mentor, visit our Youth Mentoring Network [website](#). For updates about the program and upcoming events, follow the Youth Mentoring Network Facebook [page](#). For more information about our upcoming events or to become a mentor through YSS, contact Ashley Flaherty at aflaherty@ysswv.com.

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About Youth Services System, Inc.:

Youth Services System, Inc.'s mission is "to create better futures for children, families and our community." YSS is committed to responding to the complex needs of youth at serious risk. Since 1974, Youth Services System, Inc. has reached thousands of youth and their families with our shelter, residential, community-based and professional services. Together with youth and their families, we work to improve their physical and emotional well-being, to address the debilitating effects of abuse, substance use, and trauma, and to build the skills and connections they need to be successful. Accredited by CARF International, YSS is supported by our volunteer Board of Directors, dedicated staff and faithful community, allowing us to make a measurable impact in the lives of youth. For more information, visit www.youthservicessystem.org.

About MENTOR

MENTOR is the unifying champion for expanding the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships across the United States. MENTOR was created more than 30 years ago to expand opportunities for young people by building a youth mentoring field and movement. The result: a more than 10-fold increase in young people in mentoring relationships. Today, MENTOR is the expert voice representing a movement that meets young people everywhere they are – from schools, to workplaces, and beyond. MENTOR operates in collaboration with 24 Affiliates providing local servant leadership and expertise across the nation, with several more in development.