

international telemmentor program

telemmentor.org



MAXIMIZING YOUTH POTENTIAL



Program Overview

“We welcome the opportunity to serve students in your community.”

David Neils, Director

Phone: 877-376-8053 (toll free voice/fax)

Email: staff@telemmentor.org

Engineering His Future

This high school student knows
what he wants BY VICTOR RIVERO

ALEX BROWN IS A STUDENT at Benton High School in Benton, La. But he's not just any student. "I'm a high school freshman and an aspiring Mechanical Engineer," he writes. In a message he crafted for engineers that he hoped would assist in moving him closer to more meaningfully exploring his future, he continues, "I'm interested in what mechanical engineers and technicians working for top companies around the world have to say about their profession and how they got ready for it."

Not just on another mandatory school assignment, but actually serious about learning something directly relevant to his future, Alex went so far as to develop numerous thoughtful questions for anyone who might respond. His goal: to elicit a response that would provide him with more than just a generic encyclopedic paragraph or a Google list of endless "resources". He wanted to hear from someone who was living his dream, now. "I'd be grateful if you answered one or more of them," he writes. "Thank you very much for your assistance and support," he says.

But despite good intentions, rarely in life do things simply fall into place all by themselves. "Some of his inquiries went unanswered and one respondent turned him down outright," says ITP program coordinator Zac Burson. "When I first met Alex two years ago, he was part of a group of seventh graders I was addressing. I asked the students if any of them were interested in any particular career fields," explains Zac. "Alex immediately raised his hand, offering that he planned to become a mechanical engineer some day." Since then, Alex has maintained that interest, and he's assembling a solid academic record. In fact, these days, "He's building a career portfolio," says Zac.

Ironically, the small community of Benton, La., where Alex is from, has very few engineers. There are even fewer African-American engineers in the area. Alex, who had already teamed up with an excellent (albeit non-mechanical engineer) ITP mentor, was at a point in an ITP career planning project where he needed a few professionals to answer some of his questions. As purpose-driven as he was, Alex had a difficult time finding engineers willing to give a few moments to share their wisdom with an aspiring member of



their profession. That's when Zac, inspired by Alex's persistence and determination, decided to step in—and step things up.

After having forwarded Alex's request to just fifteen HP mentors in one day, Zac immediately received four detailed, inspiring responses, including one from Jennifer, who was, that's right—a mechanical engineer at HP and an ITP mentor. Zac had told Jennifer about Alex's plight. "I'm always happy to help," she said. Finally, it was the bite that Alex had been fishing for. In fact, Jennifer turned out to be more than just a bite.

Jennifer forwarded Zac's request on to her manager as well, to see if she could get even more engineers on board to contribute their perspective. "Alex now will know that there are many positive people out there who want to help the next generation of engineers succeed," says Zac, "and he'll think that HP must be a pretty exciting place to work."

So what were Alex's questions? And were Jennifer's answers enough to get Alex going on the right track? Well, that's a story in itself. (See April/May 2006 issue, <http://www.telementor.org/news.cfm>) But for Jennifer, Zac has a heartfelt message: "Thanks for all that you've done to help Alex and your other ITP protégés over the years," he tells her. With comments like that coming from ITP staff and participants on a daily basis, it's no wonder that mentors, such as Jennifer, decide to continue mentoring. In Zac's words, "Jennifer is more than just a mentor and a professional. We're honored that she's continued to be a champion for the youth in this program."

And as for Alex? Well, we'll continue to follow him forward in future issues of *Telementor*. ■

This article is a reprint from the April/May 2006 issue of *Telementor*, the journal for the International Telementor Program. Visit <http://www.telementor.org/news> to read the latest issue.



contents

student spotlight2
who we are4
what we do5
research based.....6
grade level support7
results8
how do I get started?9
participant responses10
mentor spotlight11



SUPPORTING TEACHERS. Among the most valued members of our society are teachers with a passion for teaching. While an individual teacher may not have celebrity status on the world stage, every new school day they mean the world to their students. ITP mentors help teachers address the critical factors that lead to success in middle school, high school, and college.

Contact Us

ITP staff encourages you to consider providing academic mentoring resources for students in your community.

To learn more, contact ITP Staff at the toll free voice and fax line:

877-376-8053

staff@telementor.org

We invite you to read the latest program news at:

www.telementor.org/news.cfm

© 2005 ITP. All Rights Reserved. TELEMENTOR and MAXIMIZING YOUTH POTENTIAL are trademarks of the International Telementor Program.

WHO WE ARE

Established & Trusted

For more than a decade, the International Telementor Program has assisted youth in realizing their dreams for the future—in the present.

The International Telementor Program (ITP) facilitates electronic mentoring relationships between professional adults and students worldwide, and is recognized as the leader in the field of academic-based mentoring.

Thousands of students have received support, encouragement, and professional guidance. ITP serves students in K-12 and home school environments as well as college and university settings.

Telementoring is a process that combines the proven practice of mentoring with the speed and ease of electronic communication, enabling busy professionals to make significant contributions to the academic lives of students.

Through mentoring by industry professionals, a corporation helps students develop the skills and foundation to pursue their interests successfully and operate at their potential.

Although research shows that face-to-face mentoring programs can have a variety of positive impacts, many top professionals believe they simply don't have the time to make that kind of commitment.



A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH. For more than ten years, ITP staff members have partnered with teachers and students to design and implement successful telementoring projects.

By spending about 30-45 minutes per week, mentors can help students achieve academic excellence and explore career and educational futures.

So who are we? As you can see, we are the combined efforts of hundreds of mentors, teachers, classroom aides, program directors, corporate executives, employees, corporate community volunteer coordinators, students, parents and families.

In essence, we are you. And you are an invaluable resource for our future and *do* make a difference. Together we can support youth in a way that maximizes their potential as students and soon-to-be adults in our communities.

ITP is the Recognized Leader in Academic-based Mentoring

The **International Telementor Program** (ITP) facilitates electronic mentoring relationships between professional adults and students worldwide, and is recognized as the leader in the field of academic based mentoring. The program began at HP in 1995. More than 33,000 students throughout nine countries have received support, encouragement, and professional guidance from mentor professionals. ITP serves students in K-12 and home school environments as well as college and university settings. ITP is focused on five key areas:

1. Secure Online Community: ITP uses a secure Web-based messaging system for student/mentor communication. This system is actively monitored by staff and teachers daily and avoids many of the problems encountered with e-mail based systems.

2. Project-based: ITP provides students with rich mentoring support from top professionals to pursue individual topics that are real and meaningful for youth. ITP also helps high school students learn how to explore a unique career field successfully, develop a professional network, create a solid career and education plan, and receive letters of confirmation for the plan from top professionals. This approach takes students way beyond simply meeting local, state, and national requirements.

3. A Mentor for Every Student: ITP serves students from the third grade through college. ITP provides a unique opportunity for professionals employed by ITP sponsor companies to serve as mentors. ITP operates with a surplus of mentors and



DROPPING IN. From time to time, HP veteran mentor Kevin Cooper makes a guest appearance in Annette Zimmerman's classroom in Rohnert Park, Calif. The bulk of his assistance is accomplished through ITP's secure, online messaging system.

every student is matched quickly and efficiently.

4. Professional Development: ITP assists teachers with training and support to incorporate academic mentoring resources into curriculum while meeting state and national requirements.

5. Support Existing Youth Programs: ITP staff is focused on expanding service in active ITP communities that allow students to be served for multiple years, beginning with 21st Century Learning Communities, Upward Bound Math and Science Programs, and Gear Up Programs.

ITP provides mentoring opportunities for youth as well as professionals who normally would never collaborate in an academic environment. For example, students from Dodge City, Kansas have collaborated with ITP mentors from the United States, Canada, Philippines, UK, France, India, Singapore, Ireland, Australia, Mexico, Hong Kong, and Germany.

Based on Solid Research

The International Telementor Program directly addresses most factors that lead to success in high school as well as the post-secondary level. Education researchers have examined the factors that contribute to college access and persistence. Most notably, Watson Scott Swail, PhD, and Alberto Cabrera, PhD, with the Educational Policy Institute have identified the key cognitive, social, and institutional/systemic factors that lead to achievement at the post-secondary level.

Swail illustrates the relationships among those factors in the diagram below. ITP mentors assist students with the underlined post-secondary success factors in Swail’s model of student success.

ITP Mentors are college graduates and successful professionals at world-class companies.

Though all are college graduates, each has a unique experience and perspective on the college and career planning process.

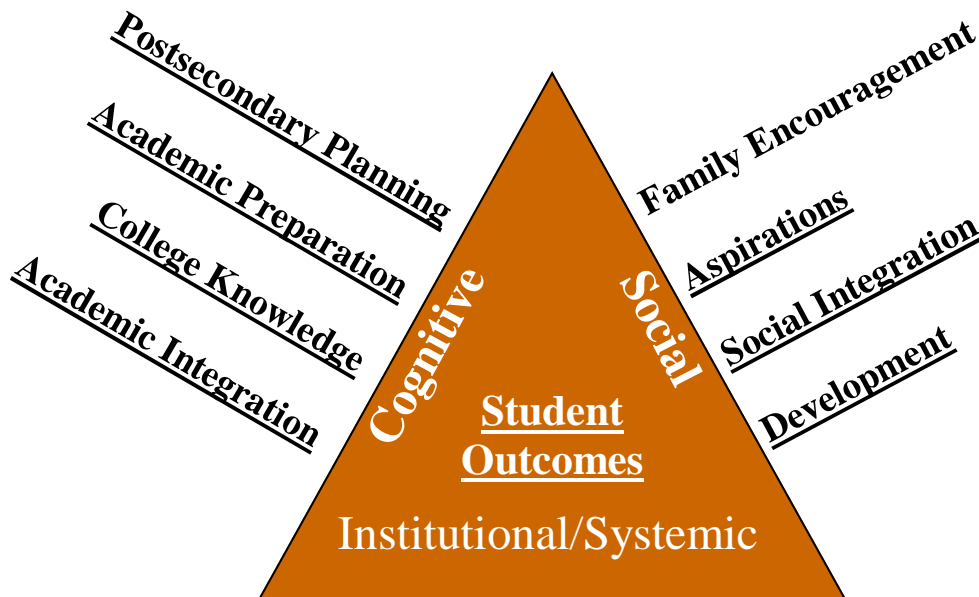
With ITP’s efficient structure, mentors become catalysts for students to achieve the outcomes Dr. Swail identifies below:

- **Cognitive Areas:** ITP mentors model and support academic excellence in middle school, high school, and college.
- **Social Areas:** ITP mentors help students create networks of support, access opportunities, and plan for a future that includes higher education.
- **Institutional/Systemic Areas:** ITP mentors guide students to efficiently navigate through the maze of institutional resources available.

The table on the next page illustrates how ITP mentors guide and support students at each grade level.

Integrated Model of Student Success

By Dr. Watson Scott Swail



K-16 Coordination

Outreach Programs

Financial Aid

Climate & Diversity

Facilities & Services

ITP provides academic mentoring support for students from middle school through high school. Mentors help students focus on the key areas that lead to success throughout their K-16+ journey.

Telementoring Focus	Academic/Planning Areas	With the help of a mentor, the student will
Grade 6 Experiencing How Professionals Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest Exploration ● Communication/Collaboration ● Information Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete a curriculum based project designed to introduce students to telementoring and project based learning.
Grade 7 Start Education Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Management ● Career Exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examine career opportunities and their corresponding education requirements and opportunities.
Grade 8 Connecting Personal Intellectual Interests and the Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Math, Science, Social Studies ● Advanced Research Skills ● College Application Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete curriculum based independent research projects related to student interests. ● Update Education Action Plan with college bound high school curriculum
Grade 9 Articulating a Personal Vision of the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Development ● College Finance Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete independent projects related to student interests. ● Learn the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens. ● Update Education Action Plan with personal mission statement and plan for financing college.
Grade 10 Becoming a More Effective Collaborative Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Technical Writing Skills ● Project Management Skills ● College Comparisons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete independent research projects that show a clear understanding of what an excellent work product looks like for a professional field. ● Update Education Action Plan with work samples and in-state and out-of-state college options.
Grade 11 Connecting to Careers and Education Opportunities and Creating a Professional Network of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional Writing Skills ● Problem Solving ● Leadership ● College Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address problems of relevance to the student, the community, and a professional community of learners. ● Continue college and career exploration. ● Incorporate into Education Action Plan work samples of high quality and letters of support from academics and other professionals in the field.
Grade 12 Leveraging Professional Networks of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workplace Skills ● College Application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address problems of relevance to the student, the community and a professional community of learners ● Complete college application. ● Leverage Education Action Plan, work portfolio, and professional network to maximize college opportunities including scholarships and internships.

Program Results

The Research and Development Center for the Advancement of Student Learning (R&D Center) completed a full program evaluation on June 30, 2005, that included a quantitative and qualitative study as well as program recommendations. The R&D Center, a clearinghouse to test and evaluate new ideas for school practice, was initiated in 1995.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the elements of the program that are effective and make key changes based on participant feedback.

Key Findings

Teachers reported that students made many significant improvements in the below-mentioned categories. The vast majority of teachers witnessed significant improvement in writing skills, self-directed learning, teamwork, critical thinking skills, career and workplace knowledge, desire to go to college, subject grades, and science comprehension and ability. A primary ITP program goal is to help



SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING. By survey, nearly 9 out of 10 teachers have indicated that they see an increase in self-directed learning amongst stu-

students adopt a proactive learning position and begin creating their own independent learning plans.

The full report is available on our site at:

<http://www.telementor.org/results.cfm>

Areas of Impact	Teacher response (average)
Improved science comprehension and ability	44%
Improved subject grades	45%
Increase in the desire to go to college	46%
Increase in knowledge of the workplace/career awareness	57%
Improved teamwork	75%
Improved critical thinking skills	75%
Increase integration of knowledge across subject areas	76%
Increase in self-directed learning	88%
Improved writing skills	95%

654321

Getting Started: Six Steps to a Successful ITP Mentoring Community

A successful ITP community includes sponsors, students, parents, teachers and community leaders who have an interest in leveraging academic mentoring resources.

Step 1: Establish program goals

- Each community articulates how they will partner with ITP to meet their youth program goals. The ITP project plan defines the connection between local program goals and ITP mentor resources.

Step 2: Determine participant levels and funding

- ITP staff helps each community estimate the number of self-selected students who will participate in the program.
- The community secures funding at a rate between \$100 and \$200 per student. The cost is based on the level of local support received by teachers and students. ITP staff will set the cost based on the level of local support. **Each student/mentor match is worth \$2,000 for grant funded programs.**

Step 3: Identify ITP teacher facilitator(s)

- The community contact works with ITP Staff to identify qualified teachers.
- ITP staff ensures that the teacher facilitator, prior to acceptance into the program, meets all program requirements.
- The ITP teacher uses project-based learning strategies and integrates Internet technologies into the curriculum to maximize student potential.



The ITP teacher completes an online application and submits a project plan through the ITP Web site: www.telementor.org.

Step 4: Arrange for supervised Internet access

- Students and mentors collaborate through a safe and secure messaging system on the ITP Web site.
- ITP staff encourages communities to provide supervised Internet access three times per week for participating students. Students must communicate at least twice a week with their mentors.

Step 5: Develop ITP project plan(s)

- The ITP project plan is the road map for student, mentor, teacher, and ITP staff collaboration.
- ITP staff provides direct support for teachers to develop solid ITP project plans that effectively leverage the guidance offered by ITP mentors. Each project plan demonstrates clear goals and objectives as well as specific project steps for students and mentors to follow.

Step 6: Begin student application and matching

- The students receive help to apply online.
- ITP staff notifies mentors about the mentoring opportunity.
- Mentors create matches online and the project begins.

Student

“Basically it’s preparing me for the future. Other areas that I was impacted in were my drive and ambition. My mentors over the past three years have helped me to finalize my plans for the future more and more. This program inspired me to consider other career fields and also I learned a great deal about some professions and majors.”

School Leader

“It’s been a magnificent partnership from the get-go. [ITP] is just a real driving force for educational change, [the program] really pushes for meaningful things to happen. [They’re] uncompromising, quality people. It’s really not possible in any other way to quickly and efficiently set up mentoring projects that will support student interests and find ways to connect it to the schools. The main barrier that we’ve overcome is, ‘How do you make something on this scale happen in a school district? How can you get over 1,500 kids involved in one-to-one mentoring relationships?’”

Mentor

“I love getting personal messages from the teachers, telling me that the kids are doing something differently as a result of my interactions. I’ve had several students who were unmotivated when we started, but who found that they really enjoyed school once they got into the project and that the enjoyment and work ethic persisted! That gives me the persistence and patience and creativity to keep plugging away. If I can only get through to a small number of students who would otherwise fail, it’s a huge victory.”



Parent

“I am thankful for all the opportunities that have been made available to my daughter. I hope that others are able to take advantage of these opportunities as well. We have so many kids who are capable of greatness and it’s good that we have a program with participants willing to help them reach their potential. My daughter has grand ambitions. My ultimate dream for her would be that she be able to do something she loves and get paid to do it.”

Teacher

“Our mentors are fantastic! I can tell they are dedicated to the betterment of humanity as well as their professions. They’re quick to respond and anxious to help students be the best they can possibly be.”

Sponsor

“Our professionals have observed a range of areas in which mentoring experiences have affected their perspectives. They see a positive impact in their relationships with their own children and families, in their work relationships with colleagues, and in their self-confidence. Telementoring offers a convenient and efficient way for our volunteers to make a significant difference from work, while traveling, or any time. Even nightshift employees who typically couldn’t help out at their local school are now able to participate.”

GETTING to Know ...

Big-Hearted Eric Santiago

'Why I Love This So Much!'

AS A LEAD PROJECT MANAGER for Thomson Financial, Eric Santiago works on Broadway in the heart of New York City's hustle and bustle — all the more reason he cherishes his telem mentoring moments. He first got involved with the program when he was looking for volunteer opportunities several years ago. "I came across ITP in my company's intranet site," he explains. As a mentor, he says, "My single goal is to 'unveil' the many opportunities that exist in the real world to children who are exploring education, careers, or personal improvement of any kind."

How Eric does this is "by sharing my experiences and what I know about this crazy world we live in and by treating students with respect and 100 percent honesty," he says. What drives Eric is his desire to teach "and my strong desire to assist minority students from tough backgrounds," he shares. "That was me, 30 years ago, as I'm a Hispanic from one of the most dangerous public housing projects in Brooklyn, New York."

The direct benefits that Eric gets out of mentoring are twofold: "Mentoring keeps me thankful for what I have, and it keeps me focused on what is important to me," he says. "I'm a busy husband and father. I have a two-year old daughter, a pregnant wife (baby number two will be here in August), a tough job, and a golf habit that can't be broken. I'm also starting school again in August to pursue my MBA. Oh, and I volunteer for various causes, including ITP," he laughs.

As for highlights he's experienced with the program, he offers this: "I've had so many (too many!) great experiences with telem mentoring. I will say, without getting into specific projects, that I'm always excited to work with a new student, so much so that I usually try to take on two students at the same time.

"The challenges are always the same with students: their writing and language skills, and their ability to get excited or motivated about a pro-



MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

◀ **CALM IN THE STORM.** "My work with ITP actually helps me focus on the important things," says the Thomson Mentor. "It makes me realize how lucky I am in a lot of ways. You can go for years or sometimes your entire life without realizing that you 'know stuff' and have a lot to offer kids from similar backgrounds."

ject. It's important for me to break through that by talking about my own experiences, my Hispanic heritage, and the problems or confusions I had at their age," Eric says. "It doesn't always work," he adds, "but it helps to form trust."

As for his message to others considering mentoring a student, Eric shares: *You don't really appreciate your value in this world until you share everything you have with the world.* "I say that because, let's face it, life can be complicated and difficult. Many of us are pulled in a hundred directions at once. We lack quiet time, and we don't spend enough time to make ourselves feel good about ourselves. I've always said that volunteering is one of the most selfish things you can do. You think you're doing something for someone else, but you're also helping yourself realize your potential and your value in this world. God has put me on this earth to make people laugh and to teach, I have no doubt."

What are Eric's thoughts about education in general these days? "There's too much emphasis on what a school or a group of teachers can do for a child. Families and other organizations such as The First Tee or the Boy Scouts need to be brought into the fold of formal education. A parent has or should have more influence over his or her child than a school or a book can. I, as a parent, will accept the *majority* of the responsibility related to the success (or failure) of my child's education. Too many parents are quick to blame a school when their child brings home a 'D' in English. Did you read to your child? Did you review or check up on their homework? Take him or her to your local public library? Go to a book fair? etc.

"I hope, in the future, ITP can expand to reach other under-served school districts in other parts of the U.S. and other parts of the world. I have strong feelings about ITP. My work with ITP actually helps me focus on the important things and it makes me realize how lucky I'm in a lot of ways. You can go for years or sometimes your entire life without realizing that you 'know stuff' and have a lot to offer kids from similar backgrounds." ■

international telementor program

telementor.org



MAXIMIZING YOUTH POTENTIAL



“The International Telementor Program really helped me as far as my long-term goals in and beyond high school,” says Whitney, a 15-year old high school junior from Shreveport, La., who has participated in ITP since she was in middle school. “It helps me to examine my focus on things. I was able to plan my future earlier than most students my age. I took things a little more seriously than they did.”

JOIN THE WINNING TEAM OF MENTOR ORGANIZATIONS!

Find out how your group, organization, company or foundation might get involved in helping our youth.

E-mail: staff@telementor.org or call : (877) 376-8053.

They'll be glad you did.



POUDRE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM



Agilent Technologies