

Nonprofit Business Plan
***Michigan Reach Out!* Incorporated**
August 2007

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1. Executive Summary

Michigan Reach Out! successfully develops coalitions with and among partners in business, K–12 schools, churches, colleges, universities, and other community organizations to leverage, train, and link mentors to support children and teens with academics, career exploration, and post–high school plans. While serving our children and teens appears to be our focus, we are acutely aware that the growth and development of our college student and graduate student mentors constitute a significant outcome of our work. We nurture those 18–30, fostering their development of “self,” allowing them to experience leadership and compassion in ways that will ever change their lives, and encouraging them to find their passions — which leads to career choices that will provide them with extraordinarily meaningful lives and the capacity for “selfless caring.”

This proven model and program evolved from 1995–2002 as an outreach program that was primarily funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) at the University of Michigan’s College of Engineering Center for Ultrafast Optical Science (CUOS). Mandated to provide math and science outreach to K–12 children and staff, we were honored to provide tutor-mentoring, innovative science clubs, and SMETH (science, math, engineering, health and technology) career exploration opportunities over the course of seven years. Programming primarily designed by undergraduate and graduate students in a wide array of engineering fields was provided to schools, faith-based organizations, and public housing community centers in Ann Arbor, Detroit, Ypsilanti, and Pontiac. The Fall 2001 Peer Review of outreach programming noted that we had “achieved an extraordinary range of long-lasting and genuine collaborations with diverse groups” and that “the authenticity of partnerships [was] indicated by the evolution of programs over time—both to adapt to what had been learned through experience *and* to accommodate the needs and to take advantage of the expertise of partners. The CUOS K–12 program crossed boundaries and engaged other service groups in a manner unprecedented in National Science Foundation Center experience.” However, as the NSF funding came to its pre-destined end, the University was unable to provide an administrative home and base funding for the core staff and program. Consequently, in the summer of 2002, this organization became a nonprofit corporation.

While at the UM and during the past five years as a nonprofit, *Reach Out* has mobilized hundreds of college-age adolescents and adults, business people, retirees, and other community members to form ongoing relationships with youth. These long-term relationships meet the needs of both sides for human connection, a sense of genuine community, and a sense of shared purpose to promote not only our youths’ academic success and knowledge of possible career goals but also that of our college-aged volunteer mentors. Somewhere during this difficult transition to becoming a fledgling nonprofit in very harsh economic times, our now highly diverse UM student volunteer mentors pushed us into developing an authentic “mentoring” model.

In order to scale up and replicate our model and to establish a *Michigan Reach Out* (MRO) Center of excellence for our state and nation, we need a partnership among our Board of Directors and key UM leaders who share our vision. By working together, we can address immediate funding and sustaining funding needs by establishing a capital fundraising campaign in order to (1) secure funding for the 2007–2008 *Reach Out* Program at Scarlett Middle School, (2) garner additional immediate funds to begin expansion of our model to feeder Mitchell and Carpenter Elementary Schools as well as with Huron High School (and mentoring for our mentee “graduates” who also may be at Roberto Clemente, Stone School, or Community High); (3) secure 5–10-year funding via grants, alumni donations, and contributions from centers or departments that are already funded to do similar outreach; (4) begin working with UM Flint and UM Dearborn faculty and students to devise plans to “plant” MRO on their

campuses; (5) work together to find venture capital for these early endeavors at UM Flint and UM Dearborn and to develop their critical student, K–12, business and community leader stakeholders; and (6) establish an endowment action plan to provide sustained monies for the core Ann Arbor/UM staff indefinitely, which will ensure programming at the central UM campus, UM Flint and UM Dearborn campuses. In addition, we need a serious ten-year minimum research plan to track our program components, evaluate training effectiveness, monitor impact for our children and teens served as well as their families, and to follow our mentors' growth and development into compassionate leaders in their own lives as they begin families, enter careers, and become active in their own communities. We believe our MRO Center should be a critical national center for best practices of mentoring and stakeholder development, essential training and a certification program to “train trainers,” and lab to come and see creative programming models we conceptualize and formulate to serve our children, families, and mentors.

An Ann Arbor *Reach Out* advisory committee will be formed to fall within the UM's Student Affairs organizational matrix and include representative faculty and student leaders from the three campuses, business leaders from the three cities with UM campuses, the MRO director and representatives from the MRO Board of Directors and MRO alumni body. The current nonprofit *Michigan Reach Out* Corporation and its Board of Directors will continue as an entity in order to promote the replication of the model, partnership development, and training programs for communities in the State and nation. Initially, expansion would be in our local area, including in the colleges and universities and in the K–12 schools in Washtenaw and western Wayne County. One-to-two business members and UM leaders who are dedicated to the expansion and replication of our local MRO mentoring model statewide and nationally will be invited to sit on the MRO Board.

2. Introduction

Our children, teens and college students need guidance and care to develop into whole, competent adults who can enjoy gainful employment and work constructively and collaboratively to improve their communities and society as a whole. Families and school or college personnel alone cannot give our youth and young adults all that they need, so other stakeholders must step in to help. Since the successful raising of our collective young is society's most fundamental—even indispensable—task, we are *all* stakeholders.

There is not any perfect model for rebuilding community around our children, teens and college students and nurturing their development of character and leadership and life skills. A community follows the values and passions of its members; each community's approach and methods are different. Having developed the *Reach Out* model in the greater Ann Arbor area over the past twelve years, we have found several forms and strategies for effectively involving partners from all segments of our community in collaborative work to develop our young into better and more compassionate human beings. As a consequence of enjoying adult care and attention, opportunities to take charge of their own lives and to help others, continuing academic guidance and individualized learning supports, and specific kinds of thoughtful guidance, both children and college young people in our programs do better in school or college programs, have higher and more defined aspirations for their lives, and develop realistic plans and search out resources for reaching their goals.

Reach Out successfully develops coalitions among business, higher education, K–12, parent and community stakeholders. These bodies are loose organizational frameworks surrounding a shifting cast of partners whose collaborations also evolve constantly at the community, campus or city level and also at the individual site level. Volunteer mentors commit to their children and teens for at least a year and meet with them at least one day a week to address their

academic needs, to promote self-awareness and career direction, and to support special interests and passions. Business, higher education, and community partners provide a wealth of resources to foster learning and to share the “world of work,” post-high school job training and educational options, and undergraduate and graduate school opportunities.

Reach Out staff members provide support services to the broad community and the smaller site-based communities, including partner and resource development, recruitment and matching strategies, orientations and ongoing workshops for professional development of all mentors and partners, effective assessment and evaluation tools, and methods to gather and disseminate information for new initiatives and ongoing programs. During the 2007–2008 and 2008–2009 school years, the Ann Arbor *Reach Out* staff and UM partners will focus on the greater Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti area and create a lasting authentic mentoring partnership and model center that can be replicated broadly, especially in collaboration with other Michigan higher education entities (universities, colleges, and community colleges) and K–12 school districts. During the 2009–2010 academic year, we would hope to have the teams, training, hired staff, and best practices required to “plant” MRO with UM in Flint and Dearborn. Much like a Peace Corps model, we have MRO alumni willing to be “ambassadors” — to take time off from their careers to plant MRO centers on other campuses. These committed leaders will require a stipend and insurance coverage for this time of service. Following these years of capacity building, funding development, establishment of an endowment, research, and overall experiences of staff and partners to create our unique culture and expertise, we should then be ready to offer our model to other campuses in the state and nation.

Who benefits from MRO?

Although the focus seems to be on our children and teens served, *Reach Out* profoundly impacts its mentors and supporters. College-age volunteers who anchor our programs benefit in similar ways and to a similar degree as their children in terms of understanding their own learning styles, exploring careers, experiencing real diversity “up close and personal,” and gaining knowledge and skills from substantial MRO training. In surveys conducted over the past five years, college mentors cite character and leadership development spanning an appreciation for genuine diversity, taking risks, learning from adversity and roadblocks, becoming more patient and perseverant, and experiencing ways to truly motivate self and others. Moreover, college students become engaged in the broader Ann Arbor community and meet business people and retirees they otherwise would not encounter. These leadership skills and community-building experiences cannot be taught in the classroom. The true impact is already being seen as our Michigan *Reach Out* alumni become parents, supporters of preK–12 education, and leaders in their own communities involved with similar programs through Chambers of Commerce or other business organizations, school and foundation boards, their places of worship, and their companies.

Business people, retirees, and other community adults who assist become enthusiastic boosters of our children and young adults and of their capabilities. Retirees find a role for connecting with youth and college students to support their mentoring, World of Work programs, and family and community events, and to solicit their friends and peers to be resources. Business and university / college partners are given natural and time-efficient options for sharing the world of work and research and for providing career mentoring for children and teens as well as our own college students, who are often still searching to match passions and talents with study and career plans. Our entire community is strengthened and uplifted as partners work together for our children, teens, and young adults.

3. Organizational History and Past Performance

Michigan *Reach Out* developed over the span of seven years (1995–2002) under the umbrella of the University of Michigan’s National Science Foundation Center for Ultrafast Optical Science. University, business, community, and K–12 partners determined that children need a better grasp of math and science (and fundamental literacy skills) along with an awareness of SMETH (science, math, engineering, technology and health) career opportunities in order to achieve academic success and to see a reason to do the hard work required to succeed in technical subjects. Partners identified existing and lacking resources and strategies to meet these needs and designed group mentoring and after-school science club programs to link resources and people with youth. Sadly, these needs remain the focus of Michigan Reach Out today.

University students became key stakeholders, forming their own *Reach Out* student organization with the financial support of UM’s President Lee Bollinger. They alone volunteered some 20,000 hours of mentoring service to youth during five years. The Downtown Ann Arbor Kiwanis Club provided 48 career mentors, job shadowing and business tour opportunities, as well as funding for consumable materials used in science clubs. The public housing community centers provided support for weekly science and career clubs and a summer camp program. The Ann Arbor Public Schools embraced mentors for their students in their classrooms, provided space for science clubs and a classroom to serve as a central *Reach Out* center. More than 1,000 children met with 500 volunteer mentors in 80 separate weekly science clubs. Over 800 children and teens were matched with an academic mentor, meeting at least weekly.

An extensive website evolved to manage and communicate mentoring, career, and educational resources among mentors and partners. Users browsed nearly 18,000 Web pages a day; more than 6.5 million “hits” a year came from all of the United States as well as over 60 countries. While at the University, we provided consulting services to Chambers of Commerce, Big Brothers and Sisters organizations, pastors and youth pastors, city governments, public and private schools, university and college student groups, 4-H Extensions, businesses, and service groups such as Rotary and Kiwanis to work collaboratively to better serve their children and youth in schools and community centers.

After the National Science Foundation and University of Michigan sponsorship expired in early 2002, community and business partners and over 75 faithful UM student volunteers kept programs going, now based in a resource room provided by Ann Arbor’s Scarlett Middle School. During the past five years as a nonprofit organization, we were limited by funding to a single site — Scarlett, yet over 600 children and mentors have been served.

4. Locations and Facilities

a. Central Staff Location and Facilities

It is proposed that the UM provide office space for the *Reach Out* director, web assistant/editor, elementary program coordinator, the secondary coordinator, and the World of Work coordinator. It is anticipated that these core staff may become UM employees specifically assigned to the maintenance and expansion of the Ann Arbor *Reach Out* programs and the broader MRO Mentoring Center.

Additional program space is provided at the school, community center, and church sites where we have or may provide actual mentoring programs. The Ann Arbor Public Schools graciously provide a classroom for a *Reach Out* Resource Center at Scarlett Middle School to house equipment and materials that were originally purchased with National Science Foundation

funds when the organization was housed at the University of Michigan's College of Engineering. It would be ideal to be able to have our staff offices, an office for our UM student family leaders, and a lab within a general vicinity of one another as we were lucky to have at the CoE.

Site leaders, mentors, youth, parents, and the community at large are welcome to check out materials from the Scarlett Resource Center. They often attend both formal and informal training sessions or attend workshops to help them effectively use the resources available. As more sites are opened, it is expected that they also will serve as immediate community hubs for resource sharing, meetings, and our highly effective training workshops, which can be geared for children, teens, college student mentors, K-12 staff, and family members.

Opportunities will also be available to offer training and symposia at the UM and at the First United Methodist Church in downtown Ann Arbor. The Church's space and meeting room availability has been appreciated, as it is very convenient for our many UM student, faculty and staff volunteers. Parent/guardian and teacher events and training workshops are typically hosted by the school and community center program sites in their *Reach Out* room/center or building media centers. We have designed training modules based on this experience. They have been received very well by UM students, parents, mentees, and their mentors. Clearly, these training modules have marketability for many different audiences, including UM students and faculty, community organizations, businesses, and youth.

The University of Michigan's student *Reach Out* organization will have office space at or near the *Reach Out* core staff. The MRO model provides a "rite of passage" for mentors to gain expertise and to demonstrate their leadership and commitment in order to be chosen to become a "family leader." Family Leaders have under their care 6-8 other mentors and their mentees. They offer support for planning family group events, offer an ear for sharing problems and concerns, reinforce MRO workshop skills and strategies, and generally serve as role models for those mentors under their charge. UM student family leaders will have regular office hours posted at their office in order to meet with students who are interested in becoming mentors, to provide reflection sessions for "family groups," and to generally provide informal support as needed. They also are key to addressing attendance issues, helping the arrangement of car pooling, and contacting the MRO Site Leader or Coordinator when issues arise that warrant their involvement and expertise.

b. Program Sites and Facilities

Schools, churches, and community centers have worked with *Reach Out* staff in the past while part of the UM College of Engineering and also as a nonprofit to provide academic and career mentoring programs for their youth at their own sites and locations. Each site provides space for mentors to meet with children and teens and storage areas for materials and projects in progress. Staff already in place at schools, public housing centers, or churches work collaboratively with *Reach Out* site leaders with recruiting and matching children and teens with mentors, meeting with parents or guardians to review roles and responsibilities, handling actual registrations of children and parents/guardians, dealing with basic logistical concerns, setting up rooms and learning stations, and generally supporting all programs and field trips or family events. Each site provides other facility support including, but not limited to, access to copying machines, phones, and computers; provision of their own vans or buses and drivers for field trips and family outings; paying for utilities and janitorial services.

School, public housing community center, and church staff or volunteers work alongside *Reach Out* leaders and coordinators and mentors to promote relationships and to maintain effective communications among mentors with youth, parents, counselors, and teachers. Regular feedback and reflection sessions are held at all sites for mentors and site leaders to share

concerns, plan projects and outings, learn about available resources and meet partners, deal with communication issues, and in general promote relationships among themselves. Site leaders also meet with individual mentors and the group at the end of each semester to gather assessment or survey information and to make plans for the coming semester together. Site leaders are liaisons between school staff, parents, and community resources and our mentors and children.

Reach Out Ann Arbor mentoring sites while under the umbrella of the UM College of Engineering included Arrowwood Hills Community Center, Bethel AME Church, Bryant Community Center, Hikone Community Center, North Maple Estates Community Impact Center, Pattengill Elementary School, Pinelake Village Community Center, Scarlett Middle School, Slauson Middle School, and Pioneer High School. With the security of our core and central staff, we would hope to immediately raise the funds needed to hire site leaders in order to return to these original partner sites. However, the immediate concern will be addressing the feeder Scarlett system: Mitchell and Carpenter Elementary Schools, and Huron High School. Thereafter, the staff and advisory will work with other schools, churches, and community centers to determine when and how to support additional programs as we scale up and expand the model in the city.

Our eventual goal is to have a *Reach Out* Center with academic and career mentoring programs and our training workshops in every Ann Arbor public school, public housing site, and those churches, temples or synagogues that desire a program for their children and teens. In the long term, we anticipate that each site will help raise the funds needed for site leaders, which would include a parent/retiree from the site's community and a UM student. For example, through MRO and UM partnership, we may provide the funds for our UM student site leader and then expect the partner to raise funds for their site leader partner. This ensures we have stakeholders and a better chance that the program will become embedded into that school, church, or community center's culture, budgets, and goals for the long haul. We have found that these co-site leaders can handle up to 50 children and 50 mentors. As sites expand programs and children served, additional site leader pairs are needed. These site leader partners have proven to be wonderful comrades in planning and supporting their volunteer mentors and children and in tapping into the many resources available within our campuses and communities. This multi-generation arrangement further promotes the sense of extended family and community that once was enjoyed by our children in the past in their own families and also in their neighborhoods.

We urgently need to revive our World of Work (WoW) program. Since we left the UM College of Engineering, it was simply placed on the back burner. With a WoW coordinator, we can devise a clear plan to train volunteers to recruit, develop, and post on our website partners able to provide job shadowing, workplace tours, and research tours. We believe our primary focus needs to remain on Science, Math, Engineering, Technology, and Health (SMETH) fields. At the same time, we would like to also work with Washtenaw Community College faculty and departments in some additional fields in which our children and mentors have shown interest as a part of Talent, Passions & Skills Workshops, personality inventories, and career/work surveys. Some of these non-SMETH fields include culinary arts, drama/playwriting, graphic arts and photography, entrepreneurship and various family business enterprises, and television and radio broadcasting. For the most part, we can see that most of their career interests and passions fall under the umbrella of SMETH careers. And even these latter interests surely connect to knowledge and skills beneath the SMETH umbrella.

We have the fundamental guidelines for preparing partners for providing these experiences, outlines to gather their biographical information, and basic parameters to cover to ensure basic employability and ongoing training information is shared across all fields. This information then can be placed on our website for all to enjoy — near and far. We also connect this

information to the Federal Department of Labor and higher education/job training resources. Due to the volume of requests we have had in the past from our own children, families, teachers and mentors, we realize that very quickly we need to evolve into offering virtual shadowing and tours.

Beyond the business and higher education/job training community sharing the exciting world of work and research in SMETH fields, we used to also train and match career mentors with teens and our own volunteer mentors. Again, the training, roles and responsibilities, and support mechanisms have been created and practiced. This is a second way for our business, higher education, and retiree stakeholders to become involved in the lives of our youth and college students. Often these mentors can introduce their mentees to a multitude of friends and colleagues who further open doors to opportunities, ideas, part-time work, and internships. Our hope is to deepen the relationships among our business community with our youth and college students to retain them here in Michigan and to grasp their ideas and tremendous zeal for learning and transforming Michigan into an innovative economy based on a culture of continuous learning.

The World of Work program embraces new partnerships with, but not limited to, Chambers of Commerce in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Dearborn, and Flint; the State Chamber of Commerce; each community's many business organizations and fraternities like Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions groups; economic development groups in each community; our local SPARK corporation; and entrepreneur and inventor councils or groups.

c. Farm retreat facility

We also have high hopes for the Meeks Farm located in Clinton, Michigan, the use of which is available to us. Basic restoration by the family is now in progress. We would like to secure funds to assist in tailoring the farm to what *Reach Out* might be able to use, such as barns and pavilion, fitness trails, a softball diamond, and soccer/field hockey/lacrosse field. Mentor and partner training may then be offered in this natural retreat setting. Mentors and children can use the facility for camping, hikes, retreats, and a wide range of family events. The barns can be used for concerts, plays, and crafts. Eventually, we would like to have an animal farm and equine facility.

During the summers, we have long envisioned training our youth and community members who are available to be one-on-one mentors for weekly day camps with children struggling with asthma, diabetes, cancer, or other ailments. We would like to offer this day camp program in partnership with UM Mott's Hospital. We have UM/*Reach Out* alumnae who are pediatricians and MSW-trained animal/equine counselors who have worked in similar camps. In this way, the children and teens we mentor during the school year would have the opportunity to have modified *Reach Out* training and structure to complete the circle of mentoring ... by caring for these children as junior counselors.

As we develop our MRO mentor, leadership, and life-skills training curriculum and workshops, we envision having our own MRO alumni certified to offer various workshops as consultants. Some of this training and the actual workshops may be offered at the farm. We believe our training has broad market potential including business, preK-12, higher education, community groups and leaders, parent organizations, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations.



5. Mentoring Defined and Refined

a. Mission, Goals, Mentoring Definition

Michigan Reach Out's mission is to link university students, community, and business mentors with youth to provide educational and career exploration opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

MRO Nonprofit goals:

1. Provide a model mentoring program and career resource clearinghouse for Michigan;
2. Provide academic support for children and teens and tackle the growing achievement gaps;
3. Provide career exploration opportunities for children and mentors with emphasis on science, math, engineering, technology and health (SMETH) careers;
4. Provide children, parents, guardians, and preK–12 staff information about post–high school job training and higher educational opportunities.

Mentoring Definition:

The foundation of MRO lies with mentoring. We believe that mentoring is “all about selfless caring.” We define mentoring as “an ongoing structured relationship between trusted and trusting individuals who grow and develop in a holistic partnership that includes academic, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical realms.”

b. Beliefs, Strategies, Objectives

Foundational MRO Beliefs:

- Mentoring is a long term journey requiring perseverance;
- Mentors do not try to produce a “mini-me;”
- Mentoring focuses on changing people from the inside, not on the outside;
- Mentoring relationships have profound effects on both partners.

Our fundamental mentoring strategy is that “both partners develop competence and character by ...

1. Discovering their gifts, talents, and passions;
2. Dealing with their personal pain and life struggles;
3. Becoming effective problem-solvers; and
4. Determining short- and long-term life goals.

Our objectives particularly aimed at the children and teens we serve:

- To provide youth with long-term academic mentoring to promote literacy and academic success.
- To provide youth with career mentors and career exploration programs to enable them to learn about their skills and passions and to define personal career goals.
- To provide youth with a range of opportunities and resources to explore their post–high school options including but not limited to: technical and apprenticeship training, community college programs and associate degrees, four-year college/ university



degrees, professional degrees, and military programs. Our focus remains on science, math, engineering, technology, and health (SMETH) careers.

Rationale for strategies and objectives:

Mentoring—and nothing else—is the answer to unfilled needs that are holding our children back.

- Affective issues vitally impact academic achievement: student views of their own abilities, the responsibility they take on for their own lives and futures, their aspirations, and their network of support when they need help.
- Attention to motivation through career exploration can improve student willingness to expend the effort required to master difficult, technical subjects.
- The consistent emphasis on *relationship and* multifaceted interventions can be as powerful as highly qualified teachers and rigorous curriculum in furthering academic achievement.
- Encouragement and reinforcement of parents and extended family in their support of children's learning and aspirations can make a critical difference in significantly changing the cycle that has hindered the advancement in science and math education for many years.

c. Best Practices

The *Michigan Reach Out* model features a two-way growth and learning approach where *both* mentees and mentors grow from the match. Many of the mentors have been with their students for two or three years. The *Reach Out* approach incorporates all five indicators of an effective mentoring program: *ongoing mentor training, structured mentor-mentee relationships, high frequency of contact, a mechanism for parent support and involvement, and ongoing program monitoring of relationships*. ["Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs for Youth: A Meta-Analytic Review." *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(2), 157-159.]

d. Keys to Success

No matter how numerous and pervasive preK–12 children's needs are, there are solutions, with collaborative effort from the entire community. Central to the idea of *Reach Out* coalitions and mentoring centers is the belief that learning can happen in every part of the community and that the entire community has a responsibility to provide educational opportunities for children — we are all stakeholders. Our principal "army" to jump in and make a quick intervention and at the same time a long-term relationship commitment is found among our college students. Frankly, they are our hope for turning many young lives around by helping them to survive and do well in our schools, to patch up the messy holes and gaps in fundamental skills that they have missed along the way, and to gain confidence in their ability to learn and to adopt strategies appropriate to their personal learning styles. Mentors also connect with mentees' families to encourage them, to help them know what opportunities their children can strive for, and generally to walk beside them as they come to believe that every child is worthy, precious, unique, and has a destiny. In a marvelous coincidence, while our college students make the personal sacrifices to be long-term genuine mentors, they in turn mature and become compassionate leaders with life skills and beliefs and values that will enable them to be incredible citizens who "challenge the present and transform the future" for our state, nation, and the world. We have a win-win situation and provide learning and relationships that simply cannot be replicated in the collegiate classroom or other kinds of athletic or student organizations and activities.

Michigan *Reach Out* develops the cliché that “it takes a village to raise a child” into an action plan resulting in collaborations among public and private community members to support the academic success for youth and college students and to provide them opportunities to learn about themselves and careers or jobs that can both motivate them to do well in school and provide them a sense of direction in their lives.

Key to the educational support and academic success of our children and teens is rallying, training, and supporting college and university students and other community members to provide weekly academic mentoring for children and teens. These young people and community members have succeeded in school and classes, can relate to youth and serve as role models, and will commit to the long term and weekly meetings with youth.

Key to the success of our youth seeing the relevance of school and having post-high school goals is bringing those who work or have retired from the “real world” into their lives to share what goes on behind closed doors at companies, laboratories, and workplaces of all sorts. Retirees, business people, researchers, skilled trades workers, and other professionals are critical and needed in order to offer career exploration and career mentoring programs. From meeting people and seeing workplaces, our youth see a reason to not only stay in school but to also take math, science and “harder” classes. They appreciate the relevance of school work to where they want to go in their lives, and they are far more likely to invest in the hard work required to do well in classes. A website and perhaps video and public television programs are critical to leverage and communicate job and career resources and opportunities broadly to children, youth, parents, teachers and counselors.

A key to helping our children and teens having goals and plans for their futures is helping them know where they can go to further their education and job skill training beyond high school. The linking of post-high school training and educational opportunities with youth, parents, teachers, and counselors is critical in order to assist them having a realistic plan for what to do after high school. Similar to career exploration, training and educational opportunities and resources must be available on the Web as well as through people who can take them to institutions and help them connect with those individuals who can help them prepare applications, identify loan and funding strategies to pay for continuing education, and know about and succeed in the testing or other requirements.

We need an army of support for our children and youth. Working together, *Reach Out* develops and builds community at local, regional and statewide levels to provide the guidance, time, and nurturing that our youth so desperately need.

6. *Reach Out* Vision for Ann Arbor — Our Home Base

Reach Out staff will assist schools and their communities in pulling together resources and programs to better serve and support their children and teens, particularly in the areas of academic success, career exploration, and post-high school planning. We can communicate our beliefs, vision, and actual programs in a way that can uplift others and provide them with a model that they may tweak and implement.

Our *vision* for Mentoring Centers includes these elements:

1. Youth and young adults empowered and actively engaged in learning, in learning environments that are collaborative and cooperative
2. Increased confidence, achievement, and career aspirations by youth and young adult mentors

3. Business and community members taking responsibility for our youth and the college students who are part of our community — by investing the time, care, guidance, and love that they all deserve
4. Programs and clubs where all teach; all learn; and all interact in long-term, mutually respectful relationships across boundaries of age, race, and class

a. PreK–Elementary Ann Arbor Reach Out Programs

Several partnerships and programs evolved to meet the needs and interests of the children we serve. These are not simply visions of what we might do, but things we actually did for several years, when we had the backing of UM.

Preschool Playgroups

This model was piloted at a church-based community center in Ypsilanti, where parents or grandparents attended one-hour sessions with their 2–5-year old toddlers facilitated by our university volunteers. Reading picture books with passion and joy was modeled and practiced, with grant-funded books to be taken home by participants. Guardians saw how youngsters can enjoy and learn from building with blocks, Legos, K'Nex, and similar toys — even though they may spend as much time knocking things down as building them up. Brief, age-appropriate, hands-on science and nutrition projects rounded out the hour.

High Scope and Ypsilanti Perry Preschool staff assisted with the design of these *Reach Out* Preschool Playgroups. Their early research indicated that we were making genuine strides in modeling to the children's guardians ways to play with them, to show a passion for the written word and a love for books, to look at science as simply questioning and experimenting to better understand our bodies and the world around us, and to embrace that early learning happens in those “teachable moments” when children are playing, tinkering, and toying with objects. The researchers were thoroughly pleased with how both our college students and the parents or guardians grew in terms of praising children, facilitating learning, and truly enjoying the “real time” required to “play.” As with other *Reach Out* programs, we once again saw that mentors and guardians grew and learned along with the children.

Weekly Hands-On Science Clubs

Hands-on activities truly engage students in learning and allow for multiple ways of grasping scientific and mathematical concepts. Unfortunately, they also tend to be messy and time-consuming, to require significant adult oversight, and, consequently, to be somewhat infrequent in elementary schools. As outsiders, we have more time and manpower, plus fewer constraints; we see hands-on science clubs as an important supplement to school study.

With guidance and support from site leaders, volunteer mentors work weekly with youngsters to learn and to enjoy science projects, as much as possible in one-to-one relationships — which, by design, are also sending the message that, “You are worth my time.” These clubs are held at schools at lunch-time or after school at community centers, and both children and volunteer mentors make a minimum one-semester commitment, so that relationships can develop. We also sent volunteers from *Pi Kappa Alpha* fraternity and from the UM (OAMI) into classrooms at the now-closed George Elementary School in Ypsilanti to help teachers with projects intended to reinforce curriculum and book learning. After a year, several teachers embedded Reach Out projects into their teaching, opening the door for our volunteers to offer more and different projects. We believe assistance from our volunteers at first was key to teachers gaining confidence in their ability to handle such hands-on projects in the classroom.

The focus of these activities is not on facts or content so much as on the process of scientific investigation and on real-world applications. We want children to learn to think like scientists,

to gain confidence in their ability to “do” science, and to develop the skills of scientists: carefully observing, recording data, asking questions, drawing inferences, predicting outcomes. They should be thinking about what happens in the physical world and why, about how they might experiment to explore or to demonstrate theories. Just as young children can easily pick up computer skills because they are not handicapped by the fear and assumption of incompetence that so many adults exhibit, so they can pick up competence in math and science before it occurs to them to doubt their capacity to do so. That early success lays the affective groundwork for continuing success. Moreover, just as regular practice enhances the performance of athletes and musicians, practice at acting and thinking like a scientist in informal settings translates to better performance in more formal school settings. In a way, we think of our science clubs as a “practice field” for classroom activities and achievement testing.

Many would agree in principle that hands-on learning is best, because learning by doing piques interest and promotes deep understanding of concepts. Considerations of time, materials and supervision, as noted above, limit opportunities to learn this way in classrooms. Our tremendous corps of volunteers, plus the equipment and supplies we have amassed over the years, make it relatively easy for us to safely offer these important experiences to children. We also have the connections to bring in university scientists to help with projects requiring particular expertise or specialized equipment.

As we move forward, we would like to add other “clubs” for our children that will foster literacy and excitement for learning. These will include mentors leading books clubs, writing clubs, computer clubs, and others that surface due to the interests of our children.

In the April 2002 *Phi Delta Kappan*, Jorgenson and Vanosdall note that, five years after the adoption of a district-wide focus on inquiry-based science instruction, fourth and sixth graders in El Centro, California, who had received such instruction for four years, scored, on average, 28% better in reading, 35% better in math, and 66% better in writing than students who had not. Clearly, engaging science learning can have far-reaching effects on academic achievement.

Family Field Trips

Site leaders, program coordinators, teachers, and mentors all help to identify, plan for, and provide appropriate learning opportunities for children and their families in their larger community. Our at-risk youngsters do not have the richness of experiences enjoyed by children who are regularly taken to museums and fairs and zoos, sent to summer camps, and enrolled in extracurricular classes and workshops. We also find that many middle and upper middle class children and teens are not experiencing these resources in our own community. Family field trips are intended to offer our youth such horizon-widening experiences — *and* to make their parents aware of community resources that they can take advantage of. We provide logistical planning, pay for admission when necessary, and arrange transportation when possible, hoping that the family will return on its own later. Volunteer mentors help to provide supervision, and community partners help with costs and logistics, enabling them both to provide service and to get involved with us and our programs. The coalition-building inherent in such efforts is almost as important as the particular projects on which we cooperate.

Meeks Farm Summer Day Camps

As we are able to restore the Clinton farm, we plan to work with UM Mott Children’s Hospital staff, MRO alumnae pediatricians, MRO alumni mentors, MRO current mentors in the area, adult community members, and middle and high school mentees to develop weekly day camps for various children with asthma, diabetes, cancer, etc. During these camps, high school and adult volunteers will be matched as one-on-one mentors with their own child for each week. Middle school mentees will volunteer as activity assistants, based upon their personal interest areas. The facility will offer swimming, fishing, bonfire cooking, a variety of sports and games,

crafts, petting farm and animal care, drama/plays, songs and musical instruments, hiking and nature walking, yard games like Frisbee and croquet, bird-watching, bug studies, etc.

Our aim is twofold: provide our mentees, alumni, and mentors the opportunity to be summer camp mentors and to provide children with diseases, medical conditions and hardships the chance to have “camp.” We also love the fact that the farm is only 30 minutes away from the hospital. We could offer 1-day, 1/2-day, 2-or-3-day, or 5-day camping opportunities. We also may offer the farm as a respite for parents and families of our children who are patients throughout the year — a place to get away, have reunions, take part in support groups, etc.

b. Secondary Ann Arbor Reach Out Programs

Even if teens sign up for and work hard in advanced science and math courses, they often need help to do well in them. Increasingly, they have no one to ask for that help. Teens interact with few adults in this era of nuclear-family households, parents are home with their teens much less often today, and many more teens progress beyond their parents’ level of expertise. One reason for the persistent achievement gap between African-American students and others in Ann Arbor is that a greater proportion of them come from less wealthy families; and the well-off families hire tutors at an astounding rate in this city. This only exaggerates the natural advantages correlated with higher socioeconomic status. With the rigorous new high school requirements in Michigan, we know that MRO mentoring is critical to helping our children succeed in their classrooms and meet these graduation standards.

But academic help is not all that our under-achieving teens need. Our mentoring is also designed to help them develop “soft skills”: interacting with teachers and the school environment (how to act, where to sit, when and how to ask for help), time management and organization, selection of friends with values and goals in mind, handling academic pressure. We also address the motivational issues that can hold young people back. We believe that developing a career goal can add the missing elements of self-discipline, personal responsibility, and enthusiasm for academics.

Academic and Personal Mentoring

We offer academic support, as much as possible, to those who need it most — those having serious difficulty in core math and science courses and no one to turn to for help. In the past, it was difficult to realize this intention, because these teens are also the least likely to take advantage of our mentoring program. In recent years, however, this problem receded as children who took part in our elementary programs reached secondary age. They already know and trust us, and are aware of how we can help them. Moreover, with limited support from Ann Arbor Public Schools through the Federal Title I program, we were able to specifically target economically disadvantaged, English language-learning, and special education students.

Academic mentoring formally consists of meeting one-on-one with an adult volunteer who is committed to meeting at least once a week for at least a semester. Most of our mentors go beyond that, meeting longer and more often, and staying with the same mentee year after year. As we work with our teens, we offer training and support for a variety of needs encompassing reading, writing research papers, study and test-taking skills, to time-management strategies.

Our volunteer mentors are able to offer such comprehensive assistance because of our thorough, ongoing training. In addition to our three-hour initial orientation and comprehensive handbook, we offer a series of workshops that are meant to be cycled through every year, offering a deeper engagement and reinforcing skills with each iteration. These workshops are expressly designed for the personal benefit of mentors as well as mentees. Those offered to date: Personal and Healthy Boundaries, Understanding Feelings and Emotions, Intentional Dialogue,

The Power of What I Say, Learning Styles, Multiple Intelligences, and Exploring Gifts, Talents and Passions.

Reach Out Math Lab

While at the UM College of Engineering, we twice tried to teach algebra in summer programs. The first attempt was less successful than we had hoped, yet a tremendous learning experience for us. We applied much of that learning in the second attempt, during the summer of 2001. The primary lesson was that *more* of the same thing that is not working well in schools is *not* the answer. The teens with whom we work have disheartening gaps in basic knowledge and skills, yet they have surely been exposed to what they should know — they just haven't "gotten" it. They need a more engaging, less intimidating, truly hands- and minds-on approach to learning. And we found that we had to link their career interests and find World of Work partners to also jump in and help us show them real world projects and jobs that utilized what we were trying to teach them.

Our new-and-improved summer algebra program, therefore, offered more than a low pupil-teacher ratio and a lot of personalized attention. It began with careful diagnosis of deficits and creation of individualized plans for addressing them. We also provided regular in-classroom projects for applied and hands-on learning, as well as work-place lessons to demonstrate relevance and pique interest. Community volunteers in a variety of fields hosted us for graphic explorations of how math is used in their lines of work. In addition, much time was spent on group discussions aimed at the importance of teens taking charge of their own lives. The most important consequence of the summer-long program was probably the teens' realization that no one can pour knowledge into them; that no one cares as much as they if they succeed or fail; that they need to take responsibility for their own futures; and that there are things *they* can do to make their lives turn out as they hope.

Based upon this experience, our plan for improvement is to offer an in-school, for-credit class called *Reach Out Math Lab*, meant to supplement regular math classes, using self-paced CD-ROM programs to discover and ameliorate basic-skill gaps. Math Labs will be co-supervised by the Secondary Program Coordinator and part-time teachers (who could be UM faculty members, non-working certified teachers from the community, or our college graduates now interested in teaching). Each class will have a limit of ten students to allow for intensive attention; will be supplemented with work-place lessons and career tours or job shadowing; will involve help from university scientists with occasional long-term projects; and will also offer exploration of learning styles and of study and test-taking skills. Math Lab can be coordinated with career mentoring when students desire this. It will be part of the years-long continuum of services we offer to make a genuine difference in the lives of children and teens. We also hope that it will influence the kinds of systemic changes in schools that we have seen evidence of due to our academic mentoring programs.

Other ideas that have surfaced since we have become a nonprofit include establishing partnerships with Washtenaw Community College's math, reading, and writing labs. We could train additional community and college students to be volunteer tutors in their labs and take our children to WCC for this remedial help. The UM Athletic Department also has a state-of-the-art new academic support building and a wide array of prescriptive, individualized, tutorial programs. We may be able to establish a similar partnership with them. Finally, again while part of the UM College of Engineering, we found more college students, graduate students, faculty and community members who were willing to offer their expertise to teach teens a variety of math, science and even language classes for course credit via the Ann Arbor Schools Community High School Community Resource Credit program. At one time in the mid-1990s, we had 38 Pioneer High School teens who completed algebra I and II, geometry, and chemistry for transcript credit via our efforts and collaboration with the school district via this program.

Without this support and volunteer dedication, these teens would not have had these classes. This is another area that we believe we need to explore again. It provides another avenue for more college students and community members to be academic mentors and to ensure that for the teens who simply will not make it in the current schools' offerings, they can get these classes, learn for meaning and retention, and have the courses required for their further college or job training programs.

World of Work - Career Exploration

We believe that career exploration is important not just for helping our young people to map out life paths, but also to provide meaning for what they are learning. Every teacher has heard, "When are we ever going to use this stuff?" and many parents have confronted a teen's unwillingness to pursue rigorous science and math study over more "fun" electives. We believe that students are much more interested and motivated to work hard at learning when they see a connection between academic subjects and attractive careers. When teens are intrinsically motivated — doing something for their own reasons — they no longer need our prodding or nagging. Moreover, neurological research shows that, even if a topic makes sense to a learner, it must also have personal relevance in order to be remembered. So, understanding the real-world applications of academic learning can actually make for more effective study.



World of Work tour of the Chrysler Proving Grounds

World of Work - Career Mentoring

This is another program that we developed and piloted with community partners. Our Kiwanis partners took teens through a multi-week process of figuring out who they are and might become, and what kinds of careers would be satisfying and productive for them. This process was capped with an on-site investigation of a particular career of high interest — a tour, interview, or job shadowing experience. We do not expect this to fill all of a teen's guidance needs, but it models exactly the kind of investigation teens can continue on their own *before* investing too much time, money, or effort in the pursuit of fields that may not match their

passions, interests, and talents. Too many of our undergraduate volunteers “wake up” as juniors or seniors to this kind of revelation. We think that can be avoided.

We envision training and posting on our website a wide array of business, retiree, and *Reach Out* alumni partners who have been trained to be career mentors with *Reach Out*. Our youth will likely enjoy several career mentors with us during their middle and high school experience. During middle school, career mentors offer children the opportunity to learn about their learning styles, their personalities, their gifts and talents, and most importantly their passions and hopes for their futures in the workforce. Children gain knowledge about themselves during this career mentoring time and bond with an adult who can listen to them and guide them in becoming more self-aware of who they are and the many choices that await them in their near future. As part of this process, mentees will also learn how to dress and to prepare for these interactions, to relate to adults, and to observe niceties such as sending thank-you notes afterward.

In high school, career mentors are matched more specifically with their teens according to the jobs and careers that they have explored in middle school and choose to investigate more thoroughly as they are defining goals and plans after graduation. These career mentors are trained and supported to assist their youth with looking at related job and career areas in a field such as auto trades and engineering, health care and research, counseling and education, architecture and construction, etc. We provide youth the chance to see the range of jobs and careers that are within a field and the varying levels and kinds of post-high school training and education available.

It is critical that our teens learn about the many technical training schools and college programs that are here in our county. Many have no idea where these programs are or what they have to offer. Further, by actually visiting campuses and programs, our teens know firsthand what is available for them after high school, and they recognize what they need to do to get there. These tours and meetings are essential and mean far more than common programs such as college fairs or speakers from campuses in the classroom. Our annual *Reach Out Day* at Washtenaw Community College exposes teens both to WCC’s college programs and to its Technical Middle College high school program. We need many more WCC, UM and EMU partners to let students come to see them and to learn options within career pathways. Many WCC associate degree and certification programs are articulated with bachelor degree programs at UM and EMU.

Our students meet people who can share the job and training/education paths they took to get where they are today. Teens come to recognize that there are many options available to them, that few people are certain what they want to do for their life work, and that they will most likely have several jobs and careers in their life time. Teens come to recognize that continuing education is a given in any field and that every learning and job experience is a building block for future employment. They have a road map for how to get from where they are to where they want to go.

Community and On-Line Career Resources

As noted above, we solicit business and other community volunteers to offer career presentations, work-place tours, and job shadowing opportunities. These resources are then available to our career mentoring programs and, whenever possible, are posted on our website. *Reach Out* staff and Chamber members with this interest will be instrumental in recruiting, interviewing, and posting job shadowing and tour resources on the web and communicating available resources to site coordinators and mentors.

Since we have noted in the past that remote usage of on-line resources is much greater than in-person usage, we plan to use video technology to similarly extend the reach of our tours and job shadowing. A recording of such experiences can make them available to vastly greater numbers

of people — with less disruption in the work environment. It will also, we hope, allow us to restore some of the plant tours we have lost over the years; we believe some corporations would be willing to offer such remote access to their work sites. As our users' bandwidth and technology have improved so dramatically in the past decade, we plan to post these on our website to demonstrate the wide range of careers available. We also hope to do more video-format reporting on *all* of our programs, since that is so much more immediate and evocative than print reporting.

c. Services Offered Beyond Basic Programming

Based upon prior experience and expertise developed over the years we plan to offer the following services:

- Assist business and industry, colleges and universities, preK–12 education, and public or governmental agencies in planning and executing the process of coalition-building in their own communities and schools, community centers, and churches.
- Provide a Web clearinghouse of resources and information regarding coalition-building; authentic mentor program development, implementation, support, and evaluation; best practices, model programs and standards, and current mentor research; exemplary mentor, leadership, and life-skills training; post-high school job training and higher education opportunities and links to people to consult with; and our World of Work career exploration resources and career mentors.
- Manage and expand the Ann Arbor area *Reach Out* program in all schools, community centers and faith-based organizations that desire a program.
- Provide for-fee consulting services, including orientations and workshops tailored for other organizations and businesses, as well as renewable certification to community members who wish to go through our training to enhance their effectiveness in similar programs or to train others in our methods. Our “Train the Trainer” Consultants will certify others in business, higher education, K–12, faith-based organizations, and community organizations as providers of MRO orientations and training. We would re-certify every three years, including updated curriculum, best practice research, improved delivery strategies, improved pre- and post-test methods, etc.
- Organize conferences, seminars, and guest speakers to address mentoring, research, World of Work (WoW) topics, resources for programs, etc.
- Offer such training and symposia either at client sites or at the Meeks farm retreat facilities.

We have helped people and organizations statewide to plan and execute the process of coalition-building. We have provided extensive personal coaching to nearly 30 groups in Michigan communities. We have helped to connect groups such as Chambers of Commerce, Big Brothers, youth pastors, city governments, public and private schools, university student groups, 4-H Extension, and service groups such as Rotary and Kiwanis to work collaboratively to serve children in clubs and mentoring programs tailored to specific groups and settings. While still part of the UM College of Engineering, we worked with Director of Community Relations Jim Kosteva's office to present ideas and to offer our MRO models for mentoring, science clubs, and World of Work to business groups, community organizations, and K–12 school leadership groups in Detroit, Pontiac, Flint, Lansing, Grand Rapids and Saginaw. We believe we could once again work with this UM office to offer such support, ideas, and particular MRO services/training/resources.

Specific strategies include guiding groups as they

1. Determine needs of the children, teens, and college students in their community;

2. Limit their scope by deciding which needs they feel most called to address;
3. Identify resources already existing in their community that could help;
4. Define roles for segments of the community that are appropriate, and so most likely to effectively engage volunteers over a long term;
5. Design and implement mentoring and training programs;
6. Troubleshoot problems along the way; and
7. Plan appropriate reporting and evaluation techniques.

7. Management Plan

a. PreK–Elementary Programs

Each site has co-leaders, typically a UM undergraduate student who has been a program volunteer at the site and a parent or retiree from that site’s community. Together, they establish a *Reach Out* Center. This is some area dedicated by the host site to us, from a closet in a multi-purpose room to a small office to a full-fledged Community Resource Room. Site leader responsibilities depend upon the site, the programs, and the age level of young people served, but typically include

- Recruiting, training (both with an initial orientation and with ongoing mentoring), and supporting (with planning and logistical help) site volunteer mentors
- For science clubs (and other clubs such as computer clubs, writing clubs, and book clubs), working with mentors to choose weekly projects, procure materials, and do weekly evaluation and reflection with mentors after a project
- Supporting teachers, at school sites, by linking them to community resources, by providing hands-on lesson plans that complement their curricula, by helping them to offer hands-on activities within the classroom, and by arranging for them to use items from our store of educational models, materials, and equipment
- Linking site partners and volunteers to information exchange, professional development, and networking forums and opportunities

The Elementary Program Coordinator oversees all the site leaders; serves as a link to university and community volunteers for career exploration, field trips, and summer camp; provides team meetings for site leaders to ensure ongoing professional development and proactive problem-solving; and helps maintain databases and continuing evaluations.

b. Secondary Programs

Our Secondary Program Coordinator recruits (usually from among veteran volunteers), trains, and meets weekly with the secondary school site leaders. She also recruits, trains, and supports volunteer academic and career mentors; helps to maintain databases and evaluations; co-teaches *Reach Out* Math Lab classes; and promotes the development of business and university partnerships in order to provide career mentoring and World of Work workshops and career exploration resources (*i.e.*, workplace tours and job shadowing).

Coaching and ongoing support of volunteer academic and career mentors is done by the Executive Director, the Program Coordinator, and the site leaders. This one-on-one interaction is key to our success. In this context, e-mail has been invaluable to us as a supplement to face-to-face discussion. Mentors e-mail for advice, to share concerns, and to ponder how to deal with adults (typically parents, teachers, coaches, or counselors) in the lives of their mentees. Sometimes, they ask for academic advice; we suggest alternate approaches to try, such as applied problems or some version of manipulatives to make mathematical operations easier to

grasp. Together, we share who we know and the resources available in our community to better support our teens in academics, career exploration, and defining goals and job training or higher education plans for their futures after high school graduation.

c. Central Administration

Our site leaders and program coordinators need to spend regular time together and with the executive director, communicating exactly what they are experiencing and what they require in terms of support. They need to be periodically refocused on their goals, helped to brainstorm solutions to problems, and able to enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of others in the same position. If this time is not actually scheduled, it tends never to be found. We get so caught up in being busy that we never sit back and look at our work from an objective perspective. We also, then, fail to appreciate just what we are accomplishing — and this sense of purpose is vital to keeping us going!

Our organizational structure is looser and less hierarchical than people are used to; this is consciously intended to develop leadership and other personal skills, and to take advantage of the richness of ideas and depth of enthusiasm that stem from self-direction. We all agree on what our mission is: to connect many facets of the community in a common effort to improve the math and science literacy of all children, as well as to inspire, encourage, and support the aspirations of young people to pursue study and careers in science, math, engineering, technology and health (SMETH). But we need not prescribe or even agree upon the means of reaching those goals. As Peters and Waterman put it in their ground-breaking 1982 book, *In Search of Excellence*, we are “tight” on ends or expected results and “loose” on means and procedures.

8. UM Benefits from MRO *Reach Out* Mentoring Center

- Campus-wide recruiting, background checks, interviews, conduct references for mentoring
- Development of partner schools and other sites for mentoring programs
- Placement with best mentor site for mentor
- Trained and supported elementary and secondary coordinators
- Trained and supported site leaders (UM students and community member pairs)
- Orientations for all coordinators, site leaders, mentors
- Ongoing professional development and workshops for coordinators, site leaders, mentors, volunteers
- Research and dissemination about “best practices” in partnership with UM faculty
- Connection with faculty for service-learning, undergraduate research opportunities and grants, and meeting outreach mandates coming with their research grants
- Creation of national Mentoring Center offering conferences, research, models

Specific Benefits for Our UM Students:

The university’s purpose is broader than the production of graduates with employability skills; it also aims to produce well-rounded, competent, engaged citizens. Participation in *Reach Out* programs energizes, motivates and matures our student volunteers.

- They are prepared for a pluralistic society by experiencing diversity up close and personal, on an ongoing basis. Outreach offers them sustained contact across the boundaries of race, ethnicity, class, and geography — both in the community and within the organization’s membership.

- They are prompted by our training and their mentoring experiences to reflect on who they are and want to become, establishing their own identities. These academic achievers have habitually worked hard to please and meet the expectations of others, but they often don't know what *they* want out of life. Our workshops explicitly guide them in self-analysis and life planning.
- In a competitive environment that tends to make them even more self-centered than is normal for their age, selfless voluntarism brings them out of themselves, helps them to develop empathy and concern for others.
- Our flat organizational structure allows and encourages real leaders to arise, as they incrementally take on more and more responsibility. Their youthful enthusiasm and energy is directed toward real work that makes a difference in their community — which they find a refreshing and motivational counter-balance to their academic lives. We fully embrace UM's mission "to develop leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future."



9. Reach Out Core Staff

Jeannine LaSovage - Executive Director, MA, BA

Director of UM NSF Center for Ultrafast Optical Science K-12 Outreach, 1995 to 2002, which established coalition and program models described in this document for district and city-wide expansion. Advisor for UM student organization that formed to support CUOS K-12 outreach named *Reach Out*. Substantial experience directing community coalition development and managing educational partnerships and programs with higher education, K-12 schools, business and industry, and parents and community, including the Washtenaw County Learning Community Coalition, Center for Community-Based Volunteer Services at Eastern Michigan University, the Detroit Compact with responsibility for statewide higher education and corporation negotiations and contracts for Detroit Public Schools and students, consulting with Michigan Departments of Labor and Commerce to establish statewide school-to-work partnerships and program evaluation models, and Education Director for the Michigan Technology Council encompassing programs for inventors and entrepreneurs to university and K-12 students. Previous teaching and administration experience at elementary, secondary, and college levels. Founder of Technology Tools for Learning, providing educational and HRD services for high-tech, automotive, and utility companies.

Martha Toth, Technical & Research Coordinator (webmaster, editor, database manager), BA

UM employee 1993-2002: associate editor, K-12 outreach program associate. Creator and manager of our Outreach website and of all stakeholder and program-specific databases tracking qualitative and quantitative feedback and assessment data. Writes, edits, and lays out brochures, newsletters, press releases and articles, flyers, workshop materials, and training packages. Editor for all reports including the annual reports and program summaries for various stakeholders. Experience training both adults and youngsters in technology use. In her 17th year as a school board trustee (not in Ann Arbor); previously a secondary teacher for Dept. of Defense Schools overseas and a six-year volunteer classroom aide when her children were

young. Advocacy work for gifted children and for Equal Educational Opportunity ballot campaign. Past member of planning team for Ypsilanti Schools' Math-Science Elementary Academy.

10. Accomplishments of Organization, Management Team, and Volunteers at UM, 1998–2002

- **Science Clubs & Programs.** More than 1,000 children met with 500 volunteers in 80 separate weekly science clubs in schools, churches, and community centers. Hundreds more enjoyed one-time science programs.
- **Tutor/Mentoring.** Academic mentors were matched and met at least weekly with 800 children and teens.
- **Career Exploration.** Volunteers from the Downtown Ann Arbor Kiwanis Club developed with us a career mentoring program and 47 middle and high school teens went through it. Dozens more attended career workshops and a career fair we organized.
- **Teacher Services.** More than 400 teachers were served by our inservices, tech training, in-class science activities, and academic or career mentoring programs. Eleven teachers and teachers-in-training came to CUOS in the summers of 1999 and 2000 to learn about both optics and pedagogical research and how both might enrich teaching and learning experiences they coordinate.
- **Resource Clearinghouse.** Before our website was moved from UM to an independent server, users browsed 18,000 pages a day, more than 6.5 million a year.
- **Coalition-Building.** The Southeastern Michigan Math-Science Learning Coalition that we facilitated met 15 times at sites in Detroit, Pontiac, Ypsilanti, and Ann Arbor, with 325 attendees from five counties and out of state, representing higher education, K–12 education, community/parent groups, business, and government stakeholders. More than 100 business, community, government, foundation, K–12, and higher education guests of UM's Office of Government Relations on "Sneaker Tours" were hosted in 1997–98, in workshops on using the Internet in instruction and in building community coalitions.
- **Coaching & Collaboration.** Our outreach staff provided extensive personal coaching to people from dozens of groups in this and nearby communities who were beginning new initiatives with goals related to our own. They included the Computer Challenge Clubs, the UM Health Occupations Partnership in Education, the Sisters of the Atonement in Detroit, Serendipity Reading Clubs, The Neutral Zone teen center, the Downtown Ann Arbor Kiwanis club, the Ford Rouge plant outreach planners, the North Maple Estates science club, the Washtenaw Mentoring Alliance, the YES Coalition, the Ypsilanti Schools Math-Science Academy planning group, Ann Arbor Bethel AME Church, Ypsilanti Community Church of God, Detroit World Outreach, two Wayne State University K–12 outreach groups, Pontiac Boys & Girls Club, McMath-Hulbert Observatory, the City of Pontiac, Pontiac Schools, and — on campus — *Eta Kappa Nu*, Circle K, the PreMed Club, and the National Society of Black Engineers.

These collaborations often included our creating and temporarily hosting the initial websites for such groups, including Serendipity Reading Clubs, the UM Health Occupations Partnership in Education, The Neutral Zone teen center, the Downtown Ann Arbor Kiwanis club, and the Washtenaw Mentoring Alliance.

- **Other Services.** To further develop partnerships (and because we *could*) we provided atypical services for community organizations. In spring 2001, we provided logistical support and set up a full day of activities for the entire fifth grade cohort from Ann

Arbor's Pattengill School at UM. When 90 fifth graders from Detroit's Mann Learning Center came for a day-long visit, we helped to arrange a couple of hands-on science activities for them. We provided a hands-on science activity table for the K-grams Kids-Fair program every year through 2002. We provided four Workshops for Incoming UM Freshmen, with content extrapolated from our experiences with teen mentoring at Pioneer High School.

11. Accomplishments of Organization, Management Team, and Volunteers, MRO Nonprofit, 2002–2007

From fall 2002 through spring 2007, Reach Out provided

- 371 Scarlett Middle School students with weekly one-on-one tutor/mentoring. For the last two years, the majority of them were Title I students — economically disadvantaged, English language-learning, and/or special education-designated.
- 522 elementary students with weekly hands-on science club activities, in both schools and subsidized-housing community centers (2002–2005 only).
- 15 elementary students with summer day camp experiences, with a one-to-two volunteer-to-child ratio (summer 2003 only).
- More than 2000 hours of comprehensive orientation, workshops, and other training to more than 1000 participants.
- More than 20 World of Work and college tours attended by nearly 400 participants.
- Family events such as potlucks, farm visits, and skating parties attended by more than 200 children, mentors, and parents.
- Community service projects (Christmas in April; VA Hospital favors and entertainment; and care packages for servicemen in Iraq, Safe House children, and local homeless people), many on a monthly basis, in which uncounted numbers of children and mentors took part in together.
- In our last full year (August 2006 through July 2007), more than a million users made 1.8 million visits to 3.6 million pages of our website, with more than 14 million hits a year.

Sources of funding

We believe that various faculty and departments may have outreach funds that they can commit to a piece of the Ann Arbor MRO Mentoring Center or particular academic sites/ programs or the World of Work.

Some faculty may have research grants that can utilize MRO for their studies and so direct some funds to programming and MRO staffing.

Other faculty may be mandated to do outreach as part of their basic or applied research funding, as did the UM CoE NSF-funded Center for Ultrafast Optical Science, and would welcome using MRO to fulfill their faculty and student outreach goals.

In the end, we hope to work with UM Student Affairs and possibly a diverse faculty team to gain a 10-year grant to seriously plant our MRO Center model. At the same time, we want to work with UM Michigan Difference to become part of an endowment plan and to garner alumni champions and supporters to secure MRO indefinitely on campus for future generations of students and faculty.

We expect our community supporters and growing corps of alumni to continue to contribute to our nonprofit through individual, family foundation, and corporate matching contributions.

In-kind contributions

University of Michigan to provide MRO Central Offices and *Reach Out* Center (space, utilities, computers)

Schools, Community Centers, Church Sites to provide their own sites' *Reach Out* Centers (space, utilities, janitorial service)

13. Michigan Reach Out Board of Directors

- President: Jeannine LaSovage, founding Director of UM CoE *Reach Out* and MRO nonprofit organization. Expertise with overall MRO Center vision and design, motivating and managing staff and volunteers, developing partners and stakeholders, “mentor” expertise, oversight of training and professional development of mentors and staff, development of partnerships and stakeholders.
- Vice President: Daniel Nye III, current mentor, past family leader. UM Class 2008 – Economics. Expertise in web design and development, undergraduate mentor recruitment, connections with UM Greek system, fundraising efforts with UM student organizations.
- Secretary: Martha Toth, founding assistant director and webmaster of UM CoE *Reach Out* and MRO nonprofit organization. Expertise as a 16-year public school district trustee; knowledge of public school policies, “Leave No Child Behind Act,” and Michigan Merit Curriculum; writer/ editor, researcher.
- Treasurer: Lance Maynard, past mentor. UM graduate and holds an MBA. Experience with business training and consulting, completing CPA program. Moving to Korea for work and will continue on board via conference call. Expertise in business partner development and coordinating Washtenaw Community College annual *Reach Out Day*.
- Director: Shara Cherniak. 2007 UM College of Education graduate. Past mentor, family leader, Scarlett Middle School site leader. Will be teaching in Spain during the upcoming school year and continuing on board via conference call. Expertise in mentor training development and implementation, mentor recruitment, and family leader training and support.
- Director: Timothy Eatman, PhD. UM College of Education research staff. Assistant Professor Spring Arbor University. Currently moving to Syracuse University as Associate Professor/Director of Research for Imagining America.
- Director: CJ Johnson, UM graduate. Past mentor, family leader, fundraiser, mentor recruiter. Expertise in organizational design and management, MRO alumni development, fundraising.
- Director: Jane Viventi, UM graduate. Past mentor, family leader and Scarlett site Coordinator. Expertise in marketing, publications, sales, MRO alumni Development, and public speaking/presentations.