



News from Connecting Generations

about Creative Mentoring, Seasons of Respect,
and Creative Transitions

July 2009 Newsletter

In Their Own Words

"I look forward to seeing my mentee every week, and I think she feels the same. Her teacher says that she has seen an improvement in her work and that makes me feel great inside. When I first started working with my mentee, we were both pretty shy and didn't talk very much. Things are very different now, she starts talking the minute she is out of her classroom. Her teachers have all said that she participates more in class than she used to and she interacts with her peers more. I look forward to seeing her smiling face every week."

- Katie Harrington, Creative Mentor at North Dover Elementary School



Visit www.connecting-generations.org/in-their-own-words.html to read more mentor stories.

If you'd like to share your story and photo, email it to sferrell@connecting-generations.org

See more photos from the
**Creative Mentoring Appreciation
Events** below



Creative Mentoring Facts and Figures

During School Year 2008/2009:

- Creative Mentors contributed

Dear Friends,

As you know, the recession has made it very difficult for individuals, families and businesses during the last year. We have all had to tighten our belts and Connecting Generations has not escaped the economic hardships.

Our funding was cut last year by **8%**, but we worked hard to serve more students and adults than ever before (See Facts and Figures on the left).

The funding we receive from the State of Delaware for the next fiscal year was cut by the Legislature as they searched for ways to cut an \$800 million shortfall. Our total funding was cut by **17%** (\$66,500).

In anticipation of these budget cuts we have actually been cutting costs since late winter 2009. The budget cuts have included:

- Elimination of 1 full time position
- Reduction of hours for Outreach

more than **32,800 hours** of volunteer service, at an estimated value of more than **\$707,800***.

- We almost doubled the amount of new mentors trained (**668**), compared to last year (**341**), and more effectively scheduled our training sessions so that more mentors were served at a lower cost per person.
- We piloted two new kinds of mentor training sessions: one for **teachers**, and one for **high school students**.
- The Creative Mentoring Training changed! We updated and merged our two mentor **award-winning handbooks** into our new *Power of One Mentor Manual*, and updated the training sessions.
- We hosted **3** continuing education classes for current mentors.

And we did all of this with an **8%** cut in funding last year (See the Letter from the Executive Director on the right). We thank all of our school partners for working with us and all of our new and long-time mentors for your service! We had a very successful year, and look forward to another one next year.

*Independent Sector estimates that a volunteer hour was worth \$21.56 in Delaware in 2007, the most recent year for which they have data.

Creative Mentoring End of Year Survey

Thanks to the 1,325 mentors, mentees, teachers, and parents who completed the survey. Results will be published next month.
Stay tuned!

Coordinators - increased use of email and phone for contact with School Coordinators

- Use of unpaid interns and volunteers
- Reduction of travel and meeting expenses
- Use of e-newsletters replacing paper newsletters
- Elimination of financial support for the Seasons of Respect celebrations
- Reduction in Marketing expenses, office supplies, and printing and postage costs

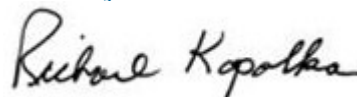
The loss of over **\$66,000** in funding will make it even more challenging to meet the needs of the students and adults we serve. We will redouble our efforts to secure funding from other sources and continue to expand our partnerships with schools and community/faith based organizations to lower costs through collaboration.

We have been very successful since 1990 in helping to meet the needs of the children and adults with whom we work. Our board and staff are determined to find ways to cut our expenses because of the cutbacks without lowering the quality of our services.

More than ever before, we will be counting on the thousands of volunteers, partners and friends who helped us meet the needs of over **1,000** school mentors and over **2,400** 5th grade students through our Seasons of Respect Program in the 2008-2009 school year. From volunteering in schools or on a Connecting Generations Committee or Board of Directors, to making donations of money or items, there are many ways to help us achieve our mission. Click here to see how you can help: www.connecting-generations.org/what-you-can-do.html.

Thank you for your continued support and service.

Sincerely,



Executive Director

Mentors, Coordinators, and School

"Imagine a World" With Us!

Join us for one of our next free one-hour "Imagine a World" open houses to learn more about what's coming up at Connecting Generations.

**July 15th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Community Service Building,
Wilmington**

or

**August 7th 2:00pm-3:00pm
Georgetown State Service
Center, Georgetown**

Register today at
www.connecting-generations.org
or by calling 302-656-2122 ext. 14.

Connecting Generations Board and Committee Members Needed

We are looking to expand our Board of Directors and increase the number of volunteers on our Committees.

Our current Board priorities include:

- Live in Kent or Sussex County
- Fundraising expertise
- Legal expertise
- Technology expertise
- Human Resources expertise

Our current Committees include:

- Finance Committee
- Nominating and Board Development Committee
- Fund Development Committee (Subcommittees include Special Events, Grants, and Individual Fundraising)
- Creative Transitions Task Force

District Recognized for their Service

More than 100 Creative Mentors and school and business mentoring program coordinators attended the Creative Mentoring Appreciation Events held in Newark and Georgetown this spring, where **Lieutenant Governor Matt Denn** and **Senator Tom Carper** helped us thank mentors for their service during the 2008/2009 school year. These events are being held annually as a way for us to show our appreciation to our mentors and coordinators and to provide an opportunity for them to network and share ideas and challenges. Based on feedback received from surveys, we will continue to improve the supports we offer our mentors and coordinators and the events we host to thank them for their service.

Ivan Neal, the Administrator of Community Programs for the Indian River School District, accepted a Letter of Commendation from the Delaware Department of Education presented by Connecting Generations at the event in Georgetown. Mr. Neal and his staff have been instrumental to getting 13 elementary, middle, and high schools in the IR School District involved in mentoring. They currently have 294 active mentors! Indian River is a great example of how all school districts can embrace mentoring.



Ivan Neal with Connecting Generations
Executive Director Rich Kapolka

This was a year of transition for a new Connecting Generations staff and a revamped Creative Mentoring program, but our **81 school partners** and **1,000+ active mentors** came through, making this one of our most successful years ever! (See our Facts and Figures to the left.) Thanks again to our volunteers and supporters for making a difference one child at a time.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions please contact Rich Kapolka at 302-656-2122 ext. 11 or rkapolka@connecting-generations.org.

Executive Directors of Connecting Generations and Big Brothers Big Sisters Co-Directing the Delaware Mentoring Council

Established by former Governor Tom Carper in 1998, the Delaware Mentoring Council (DMC) comprises representatives from education, government, businesses and mentoring service providers with the common goal of increasing the impact of mentoring across the state. Funding for the DMC was reduced from \$600,000 in FY08 to \$0 in FY09. Despite the cut, the DMC continued to meet during the 2008-2009 school year with some leftover funds and support from the University of Delaware.

Rich Kapolka, Executive Director of Connecting Generations, and Joe Duffy, Executive Director of Big Brother Big Sisters, have agreed to serve as Co-Directors of the DMC while additional funding is pursued. For more information about the DMC, visit www.delawarementoring.org.

Creative Mentoring Appreciation Events

April 2009, Newark



See more Creative Mentoring Appreciation Event photos below!

Local Businesses Helped us Thank Mentors for their Service

Panera Bread bought gifts and provided sandwiches and other treats to mentors at the Creative Mentoring Appreciation event on April 27th in Newark. \$10 gift certificates were given to all mentors at the event so they could share a good-bye meal with mentees at the end of the school year. Funds for this donation were raised during their 08-09 Operation Dough-Nation initiative for the second year in a row.



Mike Jackson, District Manager of Panera Bread, presents check to Stephanie Ferrell, Director of Development of Connecting Generations

The **Georgetown Walmart** donated potted flowers as thank you gifts to mentors at the Creative Mentoring Appreciation event on June 1st in Georgetown. Rick Reiger, Assistant Manager, expressed Walmart's support of mentoring and volunteerism. One of their employees is currently a Creative Mentor and he hopes more will sign up.





See more photos from this event at www.connecting-generations.org/photos.html.

June 2009, Georgetown



Rick Reiger, Assistant Manager of Georgetown Walmart, thanks mentors for their service

We thank these two generous companies for their support.

Connecting Generations Volunteer Recognized by RSVP

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program recognized Marilyn Whorl for her commitment to volunteerism. Read about Marilyn and our other great volunteers and volunteer opportunities <http://www.connecting-generations.org/volunteer.html>.



Stephanie Ferrell and Rich Kapolka of Connecting Generations with Marilyn Whorl, CG Volunteer, at RSVP Recognition Event

We thank Marilyn for all of her hard work volunteering for Connecting Generations!

Support Connecting Generations

Have some time to volunteer during the week in a local school or our office?

Want to help cover the costs of our free mentor training? (every little bit helps)

Want to get involved in a committee or Board?

Find out how you can help us continue to make a difference in children's lives in Delaware at www.connecting-generations.org/what-you-can-do.html.

We're on Facebook!



See more photos
from this event at www.connecting-generations.org/photos.html.

Our Facebook page is a great opportunity for mentors and supporters to share their experiences and advice.

If you're not already on Facebook, now is the time to join! Go to www.facebook.com, create an account, search "Connecting Generations", become a fan, and see what all the fuss is about!

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