

JOURNAL of the  
INTERNATIONAL  
TELEMENTOR  
PROGRAM

# Telementor

MAXIMIZING YOUTH POTENTIAL™

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CREDIT: CLINTON VAN DER SPUY

# Creating Time

▲ **NEXT GENERATION.** Mother and daughter Sadie (l) and Jeany Haggerty pause for a photo opp while on a hike in Hermanus, just outside of Capetown in South Africa. Jeany is a Thomson mentor.  
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**CHECK OUT OUR SPONSORS ON PAGE 12**



## DEDICATED MENTORS

such as Merck's Kendra Yoder make a big difference in students' lives.

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**Wells-Fargo's Pioneering Program**  
The match was perfect. The format was workable. After just one project, these mentors couldn't get enough. See page 8

## It's About Hope

Late this summer, while warming myself near an early morning campfire I began thinking about what youth really need to succeed. I strived to look at this from a clean perspective, ignoring my assumptions of the past. Unknowingly, this wilderness meditation set the stage for my trip last week to visit students and teachers in Northeast Kansas. During this visit I experienced a glimmer of what youth need to pursue their own dreams successfully.

As I visited classroom after classroom, I saw the difference first-hand in youth who were full of hope versus students who were withdrawn and marking their progress based on a wall clock. And as I drove from school to school, I continued to ask the question, "What do youth need to pursue their dreams in a passionate, successful way?" The epiphany happened while working Tuesday evening at the Signs of Life bookstore in Lawrence, Kansas.

**To successfully pursue their dreams and operate at their potential, students need healthy relationships with adults and peers, a rich, nurturing learning environment that is challenging and authentic, the skills to put form around their own ideas and move forward, and some way to accurately monitor their progress.**

The homeopathic version of the paragraph above is: **Students Need Hope!**

As I visited one-on-one with students and helped them write messages to mentors, develop powerpoint presentation skills, and listened to their aspirations, it was very easy to determine where students were at on the hope meter. There were a few nines and tens who had hope cups that were overflowing but they were rare. Most students were somewhere in the middle and far too many were stuck near the bottom. I also noticed that as students shared the work they were doing with their



mentors, they expressed hope in some fashion over and over again.

Dr. Jim Knight, Director of the Pathways to Success Gear Up Project in Topeka, Kansas, shares a telementoring story about hope:

*In our community, where more than 60% of the students are in poverty, the impact that telementoring has had on student self-efficacy may be even more important. A conversation I had with a student a few weeks ago might convey how important self-efficacy issues are. During a reception celebrating one classes' completion of their telementoring project, a gifted eighth grader sought me out to tell me how important the project had been for her. She told me that reading Covey's book and learning about it with her mentor had taught her that she had value no matter what her circumstances were, and that she truly could control her own life. Later I learned that that young woman with such a positive outlook on life was living in a shelter, was in truth homeless, and that telementoring was the one thing that seemed to get her through her difficulties.*

Without hope, it's impossible for youth to realize their potential. Mentors provide many things but hope is the common thread tying it all together.

For youth,

*David*

## Telementor

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

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# Mentors Make ITP

They give the world to students—in minutes a day **BY VICTOR RIVERO**

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

—William Butler Yeats

**THE YOUNG GIRL AKEELAH** rose to her full potential by winning a national spelling bee contest at a young age in the film *Akkelah and the Bee* because of the support of her mentor Dr. Larabee. She learned she can believe in herself and not be afraid of what others will say. Even in real life, mentors have the power to open the eyes of those they are mentoring, to inspire, to challenge and support.

The International Telementor Program (ITP) is one such program that builds mentor/student relationships. But none of this mentoring would be possible without the participation of thousands of involved mentors around the world.

## What is ITP?

The International Telementor Program is raising the bar of academic mentoring. “We empower students to develop the academic foundation and critical skills to succeed from middle school through college and beyond,” says ITP Founder and Director David Neils from the 2006 Gear Up Conference in Washington, DC. Neils grew up in Libby, Montana, where he was inspired by his own childhood mentor Bob Clawson who helped him to think for himself and know that he could do anything he wanted.

Because of his childhood experience, Neils founded the ITP in 1995 at Kruse Elementary in Fort Collins, Colorado. Now serving students in the fifth through twelfth grades, the program leverages mentoring resources from 15 countries and is open to public, private, and home school students. The ITP has already served over 34,000 students in nine countries. With a dedication to “academic mentoring,” there is a focus on math, science, communication skills, career and education planning, and pro-

active learning. In fact, all student/mentor communication is project-based and facilitated by a classroom teacher, school staff, or parent.

## Building Skills for Tomorrow

With 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in high demand by corporations worldwide, the program has attracted much attention from companies and other groups interested in ensuring youth operate at their potential in the workplace, at home, and in our communities. Hewlett-Packard, Agilent Technologies, Merck Pharmaceutical, Cinergy, Thomson Financial, Sun Microsystems, Pitney Bowes, George Lucas Education Foundation, MasterCard International, and Wells Fargo Women In Technology are all involved in mentoring the increasing flood of students the program serves throughout the year.

This past summer, ITP staff looked high and low for program examples at the state level where high school students were being guided to connect the dots between their primary interests, career opportunities, and post-secondary options, all within their own state. They came up empty handed. No state in the country can afford a brain drain of talented youth after spending \$6,000 - \$10,000 per year per student from the first grade through the twelfth grade. Many youth want to stay in the state they grew up in but have no idea how to leverage their interests into education and career opportunities. ITP will address this situation head on, beginning with a program at Rocky Mountain High School in Fort Collins, Colorado. The first group of Sophomores are already participating. ITP staff and school staff expect many hurdles in this process to create a multi-year program for youth that extends beyond high school. Student success will be redefined as it moves beyond standardized test scores and smiley faces in the upper right hand corner of worksheets. Our youth deserve a definition that will work.

## MENTORING ITALIANS.

Even during her Roman holiday, Sylvie Coyle found a student (albeit a bit wooden) to provide some mentoring to.



According to Alberto Cabrera, a Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Ann S. Coles, Senior Vice President of College Access Services at The Education Resources Institute, there are several key factors that affect students' post-secondary success, factors that begin at least as early as in the seventh grade. These include a child's:

- Educational and career aspirations.
- Academic ability and preparation – reading at or above grade level, advanced math courses, writing, and reasoning skills.
- Schools and teachers with high expectations for students' achievement.
- Socioeconomic status and the accompanying opportunities, both in school and out-of-school (recreational and cultural enrichment, exposure to new experiences and ideas).
- Planning for college – information about college, careers, and financial aid.
- Financial resources for college costs.
- Strong connections to school and college communities with supportive adults and peers who share college-going values.
- Self-confidence and a sense of competence as a learner.

The ITP focuses on helping students with all of these factors and even addresses college barriers as early as in the middle school grades. Through various focus areas such as connecting personal interests with the curriculum and articulating a personal vision for the future, early success is sequentially built.

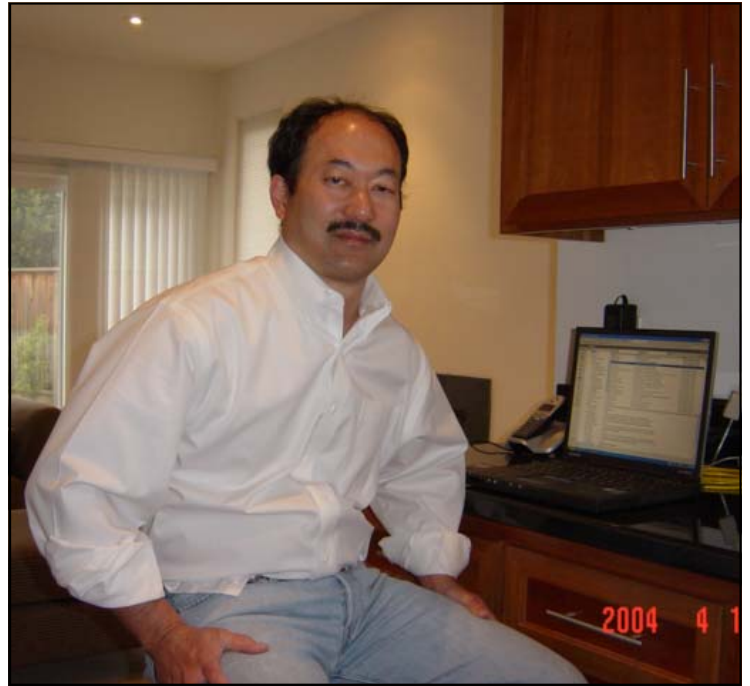
According to teacher survey data gathered by the ITP, telementoring – mentoring several times per week has impacted how students are performing in the classroom. Of those surveyed, the teachers saw a significant improvement in: writing skills (95% of teachers), self-directed learning (88%) and critical thinking skills (75%).

### The Importance of Mentors

There are many reasons why students need mentors such as being able to experience how professionals work and creating a professional network of support. Mentor Joe Davide, Senior Research Associate in the Department of Vaccines and Biologics with Merck and Company says that “[students] need to identify caring adults, parents, clergy, school-teachers, and counselors or other professionals who can come along side and mentor them. They also need to know that there is a world beyond their

### CREATING THE TIME.

Rickey Ono, an ITP mentor since 2003, is a Palo-Alto-based business planner at HP who has mentored 12 students thus far. For Rickey, it brightens his day to see the progress that students make during the course of a given project. Keeping them on track makes him feel as though he is on track.



small hometown where there are an infinite number of opportunities. They need to know that by being successful in high school, they will be able to tap into many of them.”

Davide continues. “Students need to know that high school counts for more than just a place to hang with friends. They need those adults in their lives to hold them accountable and to help them understand what it means to be good stewards of their talents. And for those who have figured out that life holds infinite possibilities, they need those adults to guide them along and keep them moving forward, staying focused so that they can realize their dreams.”

Davide contends that there is one critically important factor to having a successful mentor/student relationship. “After having raised three sons with very different needs, learning styles and behaviors, the one thing that was a constant for all of them was an inherent need to feel loved, cared about and valuable, which I argue is true for all of us. As far as I know, only human interaction can provide students with that.”

### Why Mentor?

There are many advantages for students in mentoring programs, but what motivates mentors to provide their time and effort? Mentor Paula Hancock, another Senior Research Associate with Merck who has mentored fourteen students since 2001, shares her feelings. “I feel strongly that the world would be so much better

off if everyone stepped up and contributed to their full potential. In order to do that, everyone needs encouragement, to be challenged, to be held accountable to know it does matter and that we all make a difference. Students need to learn to make contributions of value for which they will be rewarded both now and later, and they need to have good examples, they need to have a good plan for the future.”

Rickey Ono, a Palo Alto Business Planner at Hewlett-Packard who has mentored twelve students since 2003, sees mentoring as an eye-opening experience for those he helps. “I’m reaching out to students to provide them an opportunity to expand their view of the world by interacting with someone with professional experience but not intimidating and outside of their normal circle of peers, elders, and community. It brightens my day to see the progress that students make during the course of a given project. Most students express excitement and gratitude, and I feel that I contribute to keeping them on track and motivated to complete assignments.”

### Changing Minds

Mentors were once students themselves, some who had to learn their career paths on their own. By doing so, they provide a point of view that can help students stay more focused on their own futures.

“When I was in middle school, I’d wanted to be a doctor,” mentor and writer for IFR Magazine in the Netherlands Jeany Haggerty shares. “And then I switched my





◀ **MERCK MENTOR.** Kendra Yoder (right) and friend soak up the sunshine. Kendra has been a brilliant mentor to dozens of ITP students over the years, and a contributor to *Telementor*, the journal of the ITP. As a chemist for Merck, she has assisted youth to reach out for a career in the sciences and to follow through on their road to success.

ALL SMILES. Mentor Paula Hancock (opposite page) can't restrain herself when it comes to the joy she experiences from helping a student via the ITP.



mind and decided I wanted to be a lawyer. I worked at a law firm when I was a senior in high school. Decided after I worked there that I didn't want to do law, but I studied pre-law at college. And during my last semester in college I did an internship for a newspaper and decided...that's really what I prefer to do, and right now I work as a journalist."

Haggerty mentions the importance of exploring one's options. "What you want to do now might not be what you want to do when you finish school," she says. "But always keep an open mind, and keep on exploring options, internships, everything that you can to figure out what's best for you."

Haggerty wasn't the only mentor who had a change of heart and mind during her adolescence. Mentor Sylvie Coyle, Assistant Manager of Production at Thomson Financial in Ireland, had a similar experience. "When I was at school in France, first I wanted to be some kind of a scientist, because I loved math and chemistry in particular. But when I got older, I saw that maybe my abilities didn't allow me to do something like that. But...I was quite good at English, and I loved the culture. Then, I went to university to study English, and I got a degree at the University of Toulouse in France."

"After this I went to Ireland for a year to teach in a school, and I decided to settle there," she continues. "Now, because at the time there was not much correspondence between degrees and qualifications from country to country, it was difficult for me to teach there, so I decided to see what else I could do. And because of

my degree and because I had French and I was quite good at math, I got a job in a company as a financial analyst, which is the company now called Thomson Financial. I'm still there after 16 years, and I've moved from being an analyst to being a team leader, and then I took on my position as assistant manager in charge of production."

Others had a more clear-cut path, as did Nirah Shomer, Director of Lab Animal Resources at Merck. "When I was in middle school, I wanted to be a veterinarian when I got older. I have a DVM degree from University of Minnesota. I also have a PhD degree from the University of Minnesota, and my bachelor's degree (which is a four year college degree) is from Wellesley College. Having my many college degrees was what has allowed me to be in the position I am in now, which is a veterinarian directing a large veterinary department at a drug company."

Whatever the road, all mentors have their experiences that help them be great teachers for those who are seeking guidance.

Like so many other professionals involved in the program, Paula Hancock mentors "because I know from my experience that even a few words of encouragement and some astute guidance can make all the difference in the world."

## What Teachers and Students Say

But while mentors make ITP the successful program it is today, the real benefit can be heard in teacher and student voices. “It is almost impossible to help each student one-on-one with every aspect of their project,” says Lana Northup, a high school business teacher who has used the program in her class and seen her mentored students go on to win state young enter-preneur competitions as a result. “With telementoring,



they get that one-on-one assistance and with much more detail, since most mentors give more than just knowledge they already have. They frequently acquire information they know will be helpful for the students. ITP is like adding an extra teacher for every student who partici-pates. Mentors teach, help solve problems, and trans-

mit valuable information to students,” she says.

“As educators these days, we deal with so much more lack of motivation in students than in the past. They come to us after being entertained with big-screen television, iPods and cell phones. We have to find more ways to engage students in learning. Tele-mentoring is that kind of tool for us,” Northup says.

Like so many other mentored students, Addison, a 13-year old, has a lot to say about her experience. “I just love the program. Like, I wish I had a mentor for life! A lot of times during my project, I couldn’t find information on my topic and I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do. My mentor was there, and said, ‘Okay, whatever you want to do, I will help you find informa-tion about it.’

But isn’t that an easy way out for a lazy student? “What? Telementoring?! Oh, I completely disagree! The expectations are higher,” insists Addison. “You’re pushing yourself harder, doing and putting a lot more work into it. Them ‘helping’ you is not ‘doing the pro-ject for you’. A mentor has expectations. They know me, and they’re not going to underestimate me, they’re going to expect the best from me,” she says. Any final words for other students who go through the program? “Be thankful that you had a mentor.”

## Seven Easy Steps

### Getting Involved

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW** the important role mentors play, what are the steps that must be taken in order for both mentors and students to participate? Following are some guidelines to becoming involved with the ITP:

1. **Determine academic mentoring goals and objectives**
2. **Determine funding source – cost per student is \$200 (US Dollars)**
3. **Determine students participant levels**
4. **Assist teachers with project plans**
5. **Process student applications**
6. **Facilitate matching with ITP mentors**
7. **Evaluate each project and share results**

**For further information we invite you to read the ITP overview document:**

<http://www.telementor.org/doc/itpoverview.pdf>

# How to Establish an Easy & Rewarding Community Service Activity

BY VICTOR RIVERO

Jennifer Chu is the Co-Chair of the Outreach & Development Subcommittee on the Women in Technology (WIT) Committee, one of many volunteer opportunities at Wells-Fargo. WIT members represent multiple companies around the world. She is a mentoring advocate and a mentor through the International Telementor Program (ITP). She is helping to recruit more employees within the Wells-Fargo community service network. And there is a very definite reason she is expanding this program.

Looking into some of the projects in which they could participate, that would also fit within the parameters of their subcommittee, members heard from Julie Trevino-Lujan, a longtime participant in the ITP who used to work for HP. At that initial meeting, “We were just blown away,” Jennifer says. “Our reaction was, ‘What a great idea! This is something we can definitely do; it adds value and it’s also very simple to participate.’”

## A Perfect Fit

For busy working professionals throughout corporate America, simple is key. “We love going in through the Web site, versus going in through our own e-mail inboxes. With the secure messaging site, you’re able to track and have reporting-type elements and be sure of who’s participating. If we did it on our end just through our e-mail, then we wouldn’t be able to [do that]. Also, by using the site, we’re provided a separation between Wells-Fargo e-mail and ITP messages.”

WIT, one of several nationwide volunteer committees within Wells-Fargo, is comprised of more than 1,000 Wells-Fargo team members helping women toward greater success in their careers. Among their goals: to support each other professionally through the WIT Community; to build professional and technical skills through events, workshops and knowledge sharing; and to drive

advancement through mentoring and coaching. They keep members abreast of what’s happening not only within Wells-Fargo, but across the greater banking, finance and technology industries as well.

“It’s a forum to connect, share ideas, to promote each other and it’s a very positive committee for women in technology,” says Jennifer. “At Well-Fargo, we have different resource groups to assist our employees and the communities and networks in which they live and associate. That’s important to Wells-Fargo.”

With her co-chair, Maria Benjamin, Jennifer says that the ITP fit their committee with a natural ease. “It was a program we jumped on right away,” she says. Often, they found difficulty in trying to connect to local schools. “Sometimes you have to physically be there and allocate time during the work week, and of course, school hours are the same as work hours, so ITP was the perfect program. Mentoring takes maybe 30 minutes to an hour a week; you correspond through the secure messaging system – even better than e-mail. That was a big plus! And the teachers do a good job in communicating to the mentors to keep them up to speed.”

## Experiencing the Program

The very first class of students that WIT mentors matched up with (the matching is remarkably efficient; mentors choose their students from brief profiles and student comments on what they want to get out of the project; students, in turn, are wide-eyed with enthusiasm when they ‘get chosen’) was in a Topeka, Kansas-based school. The six-week project: Career Development. WIT mentors couldn’t get enough.

“We’re now participating with teacher Kathryn Thomas’ class there on another project,” says Jennifer. “The teachers do a great job keeping the mentors on track. So far, the program has been very easy. But that’s because the ITP staff makes it easy for mentors to communicate with students by providing reminders and various tools, including sample letters; everything is set up for success. And it’s well supervised, of course.”



In a survey that Jennifer sent out to WIT Mentors, she asked: What did you like about your telementor experience? They responded: “Making a difference in someone else’s life,” says one mentor. “It’s great for someone with a limited amount of time to volunteer.” Another says: “It’s a great program with enthusiastic teachers.” Yet another adds: “What I loved most was realizing that these kids are smart and motivated despite being in the ‘Learning Challenged’ class.” Still another says: “It was so easy, terrific; an opportunity to make a difference in a person’s life halfway across the country.” And “It’s a great program, and I’m glad I could be a part of it. It’s a great way to help and this is a very painless way to do it. Surprisingly, the e-mail format of the program wasn’t a limiting factor.”

While the impact on students is great, the change in the mentors can be even greater. “I myself am not just a participant in the program, I’m an advocate for it,” Jennifer says. She encourages everyone around her to participate and is working to raise awareness of the program within the greater WIT network.

“It’s something I didn’t have when I was younger. The difference you can make is just tremendous. We tell people that it’s a great opportunity to mentor young students to help them develop their interests and skills to possible career paths and opportunities. The program is an efficient way to volunteer with a limited amount of time,” says Jennifer.

### **A Purpose We All Have**

In some ways, the idea of mentoring is a purpose we all share. But in the case of helping youth, it’s not the thought that counts. “The more tools we can provide our young kids with these days, the better. Mentoring and coaching is an ongoing process,” says Jennifer. “The sooner you have a mentor at a young age, then wanting to develop mentoring relationships will follow you through high school, college and your career, and the more you will benefit. Overall, the ITP is a very positive program for education, and it would be nice to see it in even more schools than it already is.”



## **‘More Powerful than I Thought I Was’**

“Because I didn’t have any expectations going into the program, I was surprised by how much a student will trust you. They definitely value your ideas and opinions. My student went above and beyond what was called for, taking suggestions of mine and following through. I was very impressed. For example, my student went out to do some mock interviews, which I had mentioned. I didn’t expect to be that effective. Looking at students these days, I still see a wide range, including over-achievers, but it’s interesting now that even just the ‘regular’ students at such a young age are doing so much. But each student in the program is diverse. On another career-planning project, one student was very set on what they wanted to be and didn’t take to the suggestions, so it was a very different experience. You try to open them up a little bit, have them consider certain options. Yeah, they’re still kids! But just the fact that they’re participating in such a program is really beneficial for them.”

*—Jennifer Chu, a Wells-Fargo Women in Technology Mentor*

# Learning from Students: Homecoming Lessons

**OCTOBER IS THE MONTH FOR** homecomings. Just this week, I had the good fortune of meeting old colleagues and former students at a rousing football game played beneath a Harvest Moon. Seeing students 16 years removed from the seventh grade gifted education classroom where I'd first taught them was particularly interesting. In fact, in recent months I've met three of the first gifted students that I taught from seventh grade through high school graduation. It was terrific meeting Lee Ellen, a biochemist who had decided to go to graduate school and give herself new options after having started her career in biomedical research. It was also a pleasure to see Dawn, who had worked her way through college and earned a degree in accounting. Both Lee Ellen and Dawn had been successful students; however, when I mentioned the work that ITP is doing with career exploration and education planning, Dawn wished

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## MENTORING GEMS

she'd learned in high school how she might have more successfully developed her strengths and pursued her interests. She also recounted how ill-suited she had been for the ROTC program she had joined to pay her way through college. Her route could have been a lot less circuitous.

Many of my former students experienced factors associated with being "at risk": They came from single-parent families; substance abuse was common as were poverty and crime. The community produced few college grads. One thing they did have going for them was that at some point they'd scored well enough on a norm-referenced test of academic skills and a test of aptitude to have been identified as intellectually gifted. In my first few years out of college, I'd assumed that a student's intellectual giftedness would surely pave a smooth path to post-secondary success and a happy adulthood. In the mid- and late-1990s, Louisiana, like a number of states, began providing scholarships to students who successfully completed a college-bound curriculum and scored a set score on the ACT or SAT. In my thinking, this opportunity scholarship coupled with other forms of financial aid would create for all of my students a sure path to success.

### Lacking Support in High School

Many of the students had used military service programs and ROTC as a means to pay for college. But sadly, a number of these students were ill-suited to the service they had signed on for. A Louisiana legislative report noted that

"more than 30 percent of all TOPS students have lost the free-tuition scholarships over the last two years because they made poor grades or failed to finish enough courses." While TOPS paid tuition for a total of 30,000 high school graduates of the classes of 1998 and 1999, almost 10,000 of the students lost them.

I quickly began to realize that my students leaving middle school with strong credentials nevertheless needed a great deal more support in high school. At that point, I worked hard to connect them with summer programs at universities and other organizations that would allow them to explore their interests more successfully. Even so, some of these students failed to plan effectively for the transition from high school to college and were derailed by issues like financial aid. If a student lost their scholarship money, there went their college degree.

The event was a nice complement to what has been a succession of months spent reflecting on the impact that ITP mentors can have on how young people view their future. I'd run into former students in the community, and they'd had similar stories, but were on the right track after very challenging experiences:

Stephen lost his scholarships after having banked on the ROTC program as a means of paying for college, but he's on track to finish a degree eight years after high school graduation.

Adam persisted and got his college degree nine years after high school graduation and a few years of hard work as a highly skilled laborer in plumbing and HVAC. He'd just landed a wonderful job at a local university in their broadcast communications program.

Trey is back in school eight years after high school graduation to complete his degree in elementary education because he feels that young children should have many adults in their lives who care about them and value their interests.

### The 'Really Important Stuff'

Meeting Dawn capped off a four-month period during which I met a number of former students and their parents. No one mentioned how much they'd enjoyed my lessons on complex sentences or even my science fiction units. What they seemed to think about when I told them about ITP's current focus, was the really important stuff, not the curriculum that I had been charged to teach them.

Just a few months ago, I received a letter from Heather, one of my most brilliant and most self-disciplined students. She had such a strong will that she was not derailed by the very same obstacles that many of her classmates had failed to overcome. She'd left middle school to attend an early entry program at Mary Baldwin College and had graduated cum laude in 1999 with a B.A. in mathematics and computer program-

ming. Heather is now completing her teaching certification. In her letter, though she noted with remarkable detail the units we had studied, she was much more interested in the methodology that was part of the gifted classroom. In fact, she recalled elements of her classroom experience that I now recognize are of prime value to some of the most successful ITP projects:

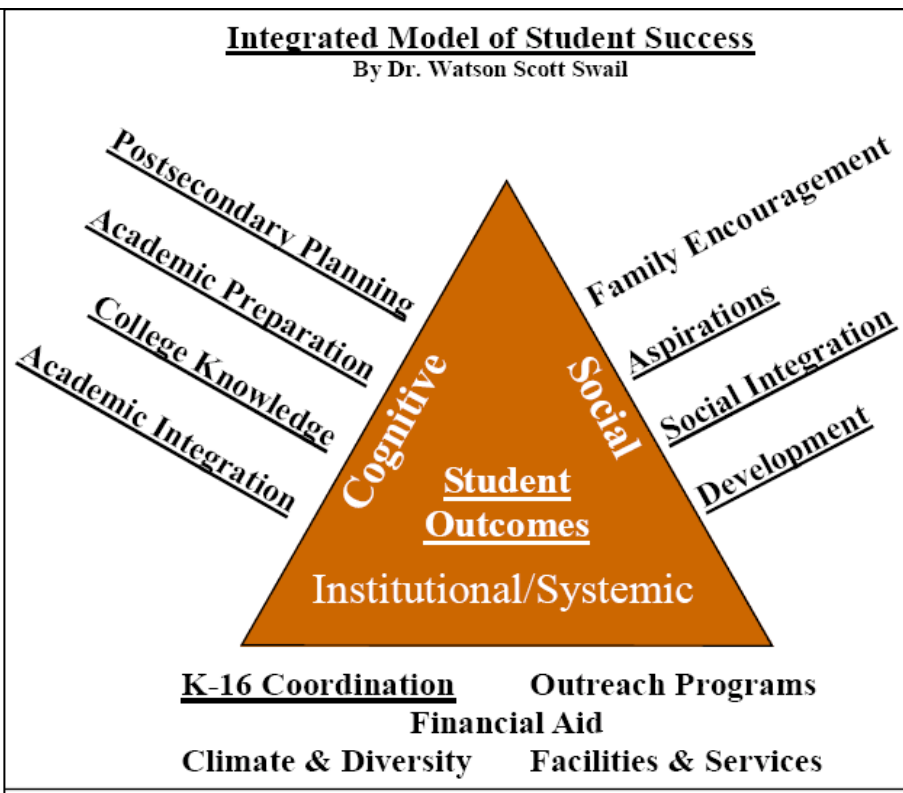
**Diversity of units.** I doubt a normal English class would find the opportunity to study atomic warfare, weather forecasting, or horticulture (among myriads of other topics). How did we ever find time for so many subjects?

**Strong bias toward independent research.** I suspect that not all students are as self-motivated as we were. It's more challenging to orchestrate the individual efforts of a larger class. Are there practical ways of bringing this sort of structure to a typical middle school class?

**Flexible deadlines.** I really appreciated this quality. You allowed us time to exercise our creativity and delve deeply into a project or to skim along its surface and meet only the minimal requirements, depending on our interest in the subject. I imagine it would be a struggle to manage such flexibility in a larger class. Also, I expect that some students would need more support from a fixed schedule of due dates in order to manage their time.

I should have made it clearer to Heather and her peers that experiential learning was the important lesson to learn. However, what I didn't have to share with students 15 years ago was a more individualized and comprehensive approach to their career exploration and education planning. We now make sure that ITP participants understand that mentors can help students develop their strengths and overcome obstacles in the following areas:

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



### Creating Better Stories with Ample Preparation

With the help of ITP mentors, we'll have scores of stories about students who address each of the factors Dr. Watson Scott Swail and his colleagues have identified in their research. Swail and his colleagues have created tools for sharing with parents, students, mentors, and school personnel, the complex factors that affect student success at the post-secondary level (*see diagram above*).

There is no longer a reason for a student and his parents to be surprised that one of the factors listed above has derailed them. There is ample time to begin these discussions in the seventh and eighth grade so that we can all make better decisions and provide access to resources and challenge students sufficiently and connect them with the people who can help them meet those challenges.

At ITP, we want to help students develop a more personal and comprehensive plan for post-secondary success. That work just can't happen without a more systematic approach to career exploration, education planning, and academic mentoring.

I am as excited this fall as I was that first autumn I began teaching in 1990. I'm grateful to have a few more questions to ask of parents, and some wonderful resources to provide for students, like the hundreds of mentors who volunteer to work with us each year.



## STUDENT SUCCESS



**ENGAGED LEARNING.** Students should never be lost, unless it's in the work that they are doing. Through a variety of specific projects with mentors assisting students one-on-one, youth can find their own and experience true learning. Learning must be relevant, rigorous and build meaningful relationships. Find out more about the International Telementor Program by visiting [www.telementor.org](http://www.telementor.org) or calling 970-206-9352.

## JOIN THE WINNING TEAM OF MENTOR ORGANIZATIONS!

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

E-mail: [staff@telementor.org](mailto:staff@telementor.org) or call : (970) 206-9352.

*They'll be glad you did.*



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