

Telementor®

Journal of the International Telementor Program ■ *Maximizing Youth Potential™*

■ Special Feature

CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY FOR YOUTH

CONNECTING STUDENTS TO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATHEMATICS

6 QUICK QUESTIONS

- YOUR EMAILS
- CLIPS FROM ALL OVER
- INSPIRING STUDENTS
- MENTORING GEMS



COLE, A SOPHOMORE VARSITY ATHLETE FROM PARKWAY HIGH SCHOOL, A PART OF BOSSIER PARISH SCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA, GETS HELP FROM AN ITP MENTOR TO ALIGN HIS INTERESTS AND GOALS NOW—FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL. **SEE PAGE 9**

PHOTO CREDIT: JOAN TUREK

www.telementor.org

INSIDE: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*

From the Founder

Handle with Care.

IT WAS A PLEASANT SHOCK.

Our family recently moved from Fort Collins to Loveland, Co. In the midst of elbows and boxes, three neighborhood boys showed up. They introduced themselves, welcomed us and offered to



help unpack. The look in their eyes told us it was their idea alone. What a breath of fresh air!

A couple months passed. I asked Josh why he did it. "When I was a little boy," he started (he's fifteen now), "I realized life is a lot more fun when you're friendly and connect with other people." Not the rule these days. Though most of our neighbors are great, we had to go out of our way to meet. We live in different times.

Yesterday morning I kicked back and read student/mentor messages as they came in. I saw community forming right before my eyes. Many youth today don't know that the social fabric has been ripped to shreds. They've never experienced a healthy community. ITP mentors work with teachers to mend that fabric, create connections, set goals and provide support to help these youth take important steps into their future.

Linda, a Sun Microsystems mentor, wrote a message that jumped off the screen. By the way, her company like others, is feeling the current economic duress. During the ITP's 13 years, Sun stock has been as high as \$253 per share. This morning it sits at \$2.92. Why would she mentor a student now? Linda's message:

*Hello Beth,**

Private victories are things that you have accomplished which mean a lot to you. Being a good mother to your baby is a private victory. That makes you feel good, right? Private victories are good to have so you can feel like you are making progress. Keep setting little goals and completing them.

Competition is everywhere in this world. You will see it when you step out and start college. You might end up competing against someone for a job as a nurse. A good thing to remember is, be honest and treat people the way you want to be treated. This will get you far in life.

It's great you help your mother. She must appreciate it and maybe it makes you feel good, too. Keep up with these things so you can have more deposits in your bank account.

I'm so glad to hear you are keeping your grades up to be a nurse. Don't forget how important this goal is to you. Dream about it, think about it.

*Talk to you soon,
Linda*

With help from a teacher, Linda meets her student right where she's at. The student reaps the benefit of Linda's investment, realizing there are professionals out there who care. Radical concept for many students. She gets advice, support, encouragement and is challenged to break through real and perceived barriers as she pursues her own interests successfully.

Like a steady heartbeat throughout this issue, you'll hear many examples of mentors, teachers and students working together to create community.

THANK YOU!

For youth,

David Neils,
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
staff@telementor.org

**not her real name*



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The International Telementor Program (ITP) facilitates electronic mentoring relationships between professional adults and students worldwide, and is recognized as the leader in the field of academic based mentoring. Since 1995 over 40,000 students throughout nine countries have received support, encouragement, and professional guidance. ITP serves students in K-12 and home school environments as well as college and university settings.

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Your Emails

My Virtual Children

I AM MENTORING ONE STUDENT now. I've just finished mentoring two students. The challenge, in my opinion, seems to be keeping the student on track. Specifically, keeping the correspondence related to the project they are working on. To me, it is still all worth it. I love getting to know the students personally. I hope that I give them some helpful advice or suggestions. I hope that they remember me for many years. It's like having an extended family. I have two biological children—but I have many virtual children.

***Dawn Baumbach**, Sales Information Specialist/Order Management, Hewlett-Packard Company
HOUSTON, TEXAS*

A Careful Balance

I AM ACTUALLY MENTORING three students right now, but one of them, Jackson, stands out because he is facing multiple challenges of his own. Jackson is a unique student in that even though he is only 17 years old, he has managed to solve computer issues at (and for) his school that even the IT technicians on the payroll there were unable to fix. I work for a major computer company and understand how significant this is to his future development. Because he was chosen to be a teacher assistant, and due to his involvement in other school activities, Jackson has had to

balance his tasks very carefully, including mentor communication. I have used the extra time when Jackson is unable to keep up with his messaging to do some research for him into computer hardware certifications and post-high school education options to try to help him figure out what options may be available to him after he graduates. So many of the students I've mentored have shown great potential and Jackson is no exception. I truly enjoy mentoring and being able to help encourage and hopefully inspire these kids to be positive and proactive about their future, and to know that success is within their control.

***Morgan Sumners**, Engineering Documentation Writer/Managing Editor, Enterprise Hardware & Software, Engineering Problem Communication Team, Hewlett-Packard Company
BAYPORT, MINNESOTA*

Sound Advice

I ENJOYED WORKING WITH A student on a physics topic involving sound generation from speakers that both he and I were excited about. The challenge was managing the number of experiments that was necessary for the student to run to obtain the necessary data with the amount of time that the student had available to run these experiments. We discussed the goals of the activities

'My goal is to be able to inspire students to stretch themselves intellectually so that they grow and learn to inspire themselves.'

Bill Hanlon, MERCK MENTOR

and the outcomes that were observed after running them. Although I recommended, and would have enjoyed seeing, more experimental data for the project, the student accomplished his goal of learning more about sound speakers and being able to accept his project's hypothesis. It was rewarding for me to see his enthusiasm build as he discovered new information about magnetism and its application in speaker technology. I very much enjoyed our conversations where we would discuss the project in detail and identify the individual experiments that were necessary. Outside of the project, I really enjoyed hearing about the student's non-academic interests in music and his passion for playing the electric guitar (which he admits that he is really good at). Overall, it was an enjoyable experience

continued >>

(continued from previous page)

working with a student who wanted to work on a science project that had a direct application to his musical interests.

Joe Maglaty,
*Ph.D., Director,
Education Outreach
Merck Institute for
Science Education
WEST POINT,
PENNSYLVANIA*



bulbs go off, unlocking deeper intellectual thinking and helping students have fun learning.

William A. Hanlon,
*Ph.D., Director, Merck
Research Laboratories
WESTFIELD, N.J.*

Conquering Time

MY LATEST MENTORING experience, as has been the case with all

my mentoring experiences, has been a wonderful challenge! Time is always one of the biggest and most challenging issues. What I have done is set an alarm on my scheduler to automatically remind me twice a week to send something out.

Maria Andreu-Giblin,
*Finance Manager,
Bank of America Account,
Hewlett-Packard Technology
Solutions Group
MIAMI, FLA.*

Highly Effective Habit

I AM CURRENTLY IN THE MIDDLE of a project working with students on the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. I've chosen to mentor for this project a few times because I've had such success with the habits in my own life. It's rewarding to know that students are being exposed to these habits at an early age.

Michael Short,
*R&D Engineer,
Hewlett-Packard Company
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON*

Reaching Out

I PARTICIPATE IN THE ITP TO make an impact on youth who reside in economically depressed areas and have a higher dropout risk than other kids who are more

affluent. By sharing my professional and personal experiences, I try to convey best practices and lessons learned to educate and motivate my students. I also try to provide a humorous and non-threatening learning experience.

Rickey Ono,
*Business Planner,
Hewlett-Packard Company
PALO ALTO, CALIF.*

The Right Approach

MY GOAL FOR MENTORING IS TO be able to inspire students to stretch themselves intellectually so that they grow and learn to inspire themselves. The challenge of mentoring is finding the right approach for the individual student's personality to accomplish that goal. The reward of mentoring is seeing light

REACHING US:

Email:
staff@telementor.org

**Please include your
name, job title,
company, city, state
and country.**



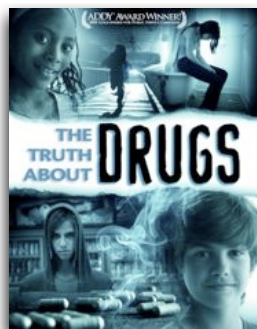
Clips from All Over

STEM a Hot Topic

“UNNERVED BY JOB LOSSES, weak test scores, and competition from an increasingly skilled foreign workforce, state officials have launched a variety of efforts to improve mathematics, science, and technology education, in an attempt to gird against whatever economic challenges may come,” writes *Education Week*’s Sean Cavanagh. “Those initiatives are being filed under an increasingly recognizable identifier: STEM, or science, technology, engineering, and math education. The term has become popular shorthand among policymakers convinced that schools must do a better job preparing students for an economy that will require different and more technically sophisticated skills.” For the full STEM report, click: edweek.org

Special Project Idea: Drug-Free World DVD

AN INTERESTING, FREE DVD suitable for middle school students comes from the



Foundation for a Drug-Free World. It’s part of *The Truth About Drugs* Information Kit and you can get it sent to your

school or class. The kit includes: 10 drug prevention booklets, a DVD with a series of superb public service announcements and a *Truth About Drugs* activities manual. Check out: drugfreeworld.org

What Students Want

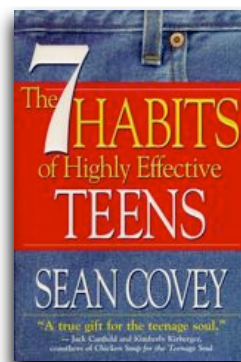
MOST STUDENTS WHO participated in a Project Tomorrow Speak Up 2007 survey are open to pursuing a job or career in a STEM field. Thirty-two percent of middle school students and 38 percent of high school students reported they are somewhat or very interested in STEM jobs or careers. Twenty-one percent more students in grades 6-12 indicated “maybe” they are interested in a STEM career. College scholarships, conversational interactions with professionals, visits to STEM companies, using tools professionals use, and hands-on learning opportunities have potential to further students’ interest.

Visit: tomorrow.org

“It’s time to turn the page on education, to move past the slow decay of indifference that says some schools can’t be fixed, that says some kids just can’t learn.”

—PRESIDENT-ELECT BARACK OBAMA

MOST POPULAR PROJECT



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens

By Sean Covey
Fireside Books; 288 pages

WITH CARTOONS, CLEVER IDEAS, USEFUL QUOTES AND incredible stories about real teens from across the globe, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* is used by teachers and students as a step-by-step guide to help teens improve self-image, build friendships, resist peer pressure, achieve their goals, get along with their parents, and more. As they read, students answer questions about the chapters and dialogue with their ITP mentors, creating journal entries, chapter reactions and a final project. They gain an understanding of positive habits that successful teens possess; synthesize reactions from their mentor and form their own hopes and dreams for successful habits in their own lives.

Creating a sense of **Community** for **Youth**

Next Generation: What's it *really* going to take to ensure our students are on the right path? One bold mentor dares to venture forth...

BY VICTOR RIVERO

SYED AZAM IMMIGRATED TO THE SUBURBS OF CHICAGO from Pakistan when he was 16 years old. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois, having earned his degree in Electrical Engineering. Today, as an employee of HP in their Research and Development division, he is gearing up to be a dad to career-minded teenagers, but affectionately considers his three children still very young. In fact, Syed has a daughter, 9, a son, 6, as well as a 3-year old son. “They’re babies right now. But I am mentoring them from a very early age.”

When he received some emails within his company that there were classrooms full of middle school students spread across various US states in need of mentors, Syed decided to volunteer. After talking with David Neils, Founder and Director of the International Telementor Program, he knew he had found an effective program.

Having come from what he calls Eastern culture, Syed still sees the contrasts and similarities between East and West. “Some of the things which I find very different in Eastern versus Western cultures is the way elders are taking responsibility for the kids or not,” he says.

“When I was growing up, I knew that my neighbor, my elders, my uncle, my aunts—and

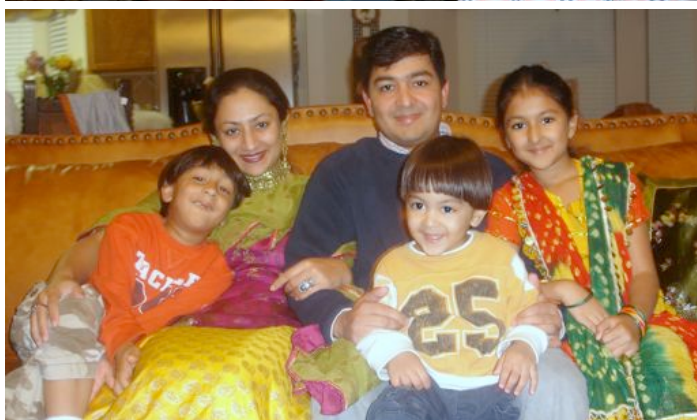
even somebody who is not even related to me, but who is older than me or the age of my father—would be watching me if I did anything wrong,” Syed says.

At that time, Syed admits that he didn't know why that would be. “Now it makes sense,” he says. While parents are a vital base for every child, parents are not always there 24/7. And when they are not, there must be caring adults, those who reach out to the younger generation whether or not they're related. In that sense, “It's the community's job,” he says.

Granted, the contrast may be less about a difference in East/West cultures, and more a factor of how earlier generations no matter the culture didn't think twice to steer a youth in the right direction.

But today, in rural areas, that is still often the case. And not just rural—even in closely knit neighborhoods from the Bronx to the suburbs of Orange County, there are still children who freely roam the streets in the late afternoon before bedtime—under the watchful eyes of aunts or neighbors who care about what they are doing.

Did Syed feel as though they were invading his privacy? “No,” he says. “But if they saw something wrong, they'd tell you what it is. In



All in the Family. (top) Hewlett-Packard's Syed Azam at the *telementor.org* site; (above) Syed and his wife, two sons and daughter. "I think right and wrong are universal. They're beyond religion. It's about humanity."

other words, they didn't back off in creating a learning opportunity. They were mentoring me."

In his quest to mentor students, Syed reminds would-be mentors: "Mentoring may be more beneficial for the mentor. In helping a student, I am learning how to mentor my own children for the future. So I come in to it wanting to learn." With a 9-year old daughter who wants to be a doctor, Syed has found a middle school student in the program who also wants to be a doctor.

"Through this program I'll indeed learn how to be a great mentor, and in developing this particular skill set in myself, I'll have helped my children as well." ■

"It's not by mistake that people succeed. Interests are developed—and careers are made."

—SYED AZAM, HP MENTOR

Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING?

A: "One of them is it's rewarding. If you have kids, you're preparing yourself. You learn in the process how to mentor children. I consider myself a self-made professional, so it's rewarding to see children follow in my footsteps. My elders told me right from wrong. I think right and wrong are universal. They're beyond religion. It's about humanity. And humans, by nature, are good. It takes an effort to be bad. Whether the student listens to you or not, just in telling them your thoughts, they'll eventually find out for themselves. If you don't, then they may very well be clueless. In any case, I'm learning how to mentor. And the child will get the guidance; this program is especially beneficial to the student. I've been mentoring a girl from Topeka, Kansas for the past few weeks. I helped her set goals. She wants to be a doctor just like my own daughter. I helped her set simple steps, gave her some basic guidelines. If she follows those, she'll be more successful. Overall, I have already learned something I knew all along: Interests are developed. And careers are made. It's you who develop the interests in a child. Children are not entirely on their own. I have an effect. I make a difference. And I know that children need to develop interests in things which are positive and bring value to the society. Our job as mentors is to help fine-tune and correct them. In my experience, it's not by mistake that people succeed. Again: Interests are *developed* — and careers are *made*." —S.A. ■

Six Quick Questions

Busy? Exactly!

THEY SAY THAT WHEN YOU REALLY WANT SOMETHING DONE, give it to a busy person to do. Carol Millar, a busy HP employee, is one of the ITP's most experienced mentors. Since 1998, she's worked with more than 28 students. An invaluable mentor to countless other students, her stellar support for so many of our youth in so many different communities deserves a hearty acknowledgment. Always one to create time in her schedule, here she offers a few insights into what makes her do it.

1 When did you first get involved and how? Several years ago, I was HP's K-12 education and community liaison (in addition to my regular job) at a division in Oregon. When I moved to Colorado in 1997, I found the telementoring program to be a way to be involved and support local schools. Since that time, the telementoring program has grown a lot and has participants across the US and in other countries as well.

“The messages from students can be like a breath of fresh air after a busy day. Focusing on their needs helped me re-focus on the other things that I needed to take care of at work.”



2 What prompted you to want to be involved? My past experience with local schools, particularly in serving as a judge at the Science Fairs, had been very positive. I enjoyed working with kids, and seeing them make their own scientific discoveries, and learning from their own experiences. Telementoring has the advantage of being flexible enough to accommodate my work schedule without a lot of juggling.

3 In a nutshell, what have been some memorable highlights over the years? The team in a Queens Elementary school who did a project on the behaviors of urban peregrine falcons, and placed in a national competition. A recent bilingual student with whom I communicated in Spanglish. The multiple kids who really appreciate another adult in their lives who will listen to them and help them succeed. The very multi-ethnic class who did research on the origins of their ancestors—they had such a wide variety

of cultures represented and were excited to own their heritage and to share it with others.

4 How does your mentoring benefit you in—or enhance—other areas of your life? The messages from students can be like a breath of fresh air after a busy day. Focusing on their needs helped me re-focus on the other things that I needed to take care of at work.

5 What are your thoughts on education these days? What makes you say that? Education has changed so much since I was in school! There is a lot more technology and information available, and kids often do better when they have some guidance in evaluating technology and information, and deciding if and how they will use what is available.

6 What advice do you have for others considering becoming a mentor? Do it! Mentoring will help the student, and may help you see other issues or situations in a different light. Your interactions may give the student a broader view of the world and what they can expect to accomplish in life.
—BY VICTOR RIVERO ■

*Got a person you'd like to see featured here? Write to us!
Email: staff@telementor.org*



Joan

Turek

Top-notch. All of the mentors this teacher has worked with are dedicated, professional and understand what it takes to motivate and encourage young people to reach for their best.

I'M CONTINUALLY IMPRESSED with ITP mentor-student relationships developed during research projects. Mentors meet students "where they are"—encouraging, guiding and challenging them for their best at every step. They help students obtain in-depth interviews with professionals; students collaborate with mentors to craft specific descriptive-reply questions to learn more about education requirements, day-to-day experiences, recommendations for high school and college prep, and their industry's outlook. Mentors then email professionals they find via websites, personal and corporate contacts and referrals—to answer the students' questions. Sometimes difficult (security within job fields or time demands), but always fun, we strive to locate quality contacts for each student no matter how long it takes.

Experienced Hewlett-Packard mentor Fran Wheaton and Emily, one of my ninth-grade students, explored neonatology. "I became interested in the field when my sister was born with a collapsed lung and kidney failure," Emily writes, "She was in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for a month. I saw the way the doctors helped her, and I decided I wanted to do the same thing." Fran's nursing background and extensive medical knowledge provided a compass throughout the project; interviews Emily received from two

neonatologists, Dr. Pat Hodges and Dr. Jay Greenspan, greatly increased her insight into the field. Her initial interest has developed into a concrete plan. Collaboration with Fran was an integral part of that journey.

Veteran Merck mentor Kendra Yoder used her talents to guide one of my seniors, Amanda. At first uncertain about her field or best-fit colleges, Amanda received Kendra's tireless help exploring options, assessing artistic talents and interests and examining college programs. She eventually settled on cinematography; Kendra found a local university with a growing program to match. Amanda has already interviewed a Georgia-based cinematographer with more interviews pending.

Last year, Hewlett-Packard mentor Nicole Morantz did a fantastic job working with one of my sophomores to explore the field of graphic arts. This fall, she mentored one of my seniors, Robert to investigate the same field. With her help, he received informative interviews from three graphic arts professionals, delved deeply into college options and realized his school of choice wasn't the best fit. With Nicole's encouragement, Robert's search recently culminated in acceptance to a university with an excellent graphic arts program where he has received a full-tuition scholarship for next fall.

Jeffrey, also a senior, is working towards his private pilot license with plans to be an airline pilot. Hewlett-Packard mentor Kevin Cooper challenged Jeffrey throughout his college and career project this fall. Providing insight, information and enthusiasm, Kevin's experience and interest in aviation sparked Jeffrey's interest, motivating him to examine civilian vs. military training. Together, they explored various programs in selecting one best suited to Jeffrey's style and interests. Interviews obtained were informative and highly motivating as Jeffrey pursues his passion for flight.

Cole, a sophomore varsity athlete, explored athletic training with his mentor last year. This year with MasterCard mentor John Rasnic, Cole researched physical therapy. Their shared interest in athletics and physical fitness was key; John encouraged Cole to take his research and writing to the next level with interviews and mentor direction that helped Cole increase his awareness of health and fitness careers as he continues to work toward his goals.

Mentors—and the professionals they involve in the interview process—make a tremendous difference in the education of each student who participates in the ITP program. When I count my blessings each day, ITP and its mentors are truly at the top of my list! ■



Zac

Burson

Nurturing STEM. If the Economy has anything to do with productivity, which it should, then we can change the future.

AS THEY FACE LOOMING worldwide financial, economic, environmental, and energy crises, business and governmental leaders can also consider unprecedented opportunities to affect the future positively. Their actions can foster the hopes and dreams of the students who will one day become their customers, constituents and colleagues. If their decisions are wise, these youth will strive to become problem-solving innovators who use the power of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

I see great potential for collaboration with ITP volunteers to support more students interested in STEM fields.

Current ITP volunteers have participated in career exploration/education planning projects and projects that directly address key elements of different curricula, quite notably, those elements that involve students applying science or business principles to solve real-world problems or otherwise develop their own ideas. Such projects are in-depth studies, lasting 12-16 weeks, far longer than US students might typically spend on independent inquiry.

These projects have also inspired students to investigate such select fields even further, pursuing still more increasingly rigorous academic work.

Students collaborate with one mentor or a few different mentors for multiple years to build networks of people and organizations supporting their aspirations.

They develop plans for the future grounded in a deeper understanding of—and actual experience with—some of the work habits of a top professional.

Over the years, ITP projects involving STEM fields have helped students understand some of the processes that are integral to different disciplines, and maybe most importantly they have allowed students to recognize the modes of thinking and the disciplines exhibited by leading professionals.

In most school settings, teachers have to create “simulations” to give students a glimpse of what work in a field might involve, but telementors connect students directly to current thinking and practices.

ITP mentors have made substantive and long-term contributions to projects, and they are an unparalleled

resource for our teachers and students.

Many hundreds of young people in my community have aspired to do more with their lives because so many volunteers have shared their enthusiasm, intelligence, wisdom, and competence with our students. To team with them has been an honor. ■

RELATED LINKS

Science & Entrepreneurship Projects ...

Careers & plans:

► <http://www.telementor.org/journal/Telementor-Winter-2007.pdf>

Entrepreneurship & business—see page 9 of this newsletter:

► <http://www.telementor.org/journal/Telementor-JunJul06.pdf>

See the cover of this one:

► <http://www.telementor.org/journal/Telementor-Fall-2007.pdf>

Zac Burson is worldwide Program Coordinator for the ITP and Transition & Mentoring Coordinator for Bossier Parish Schools in Louisiana. Zac welcomes feedback. Write to: staff@telementor.org

Appreciative Students



Grateful. (l-r) Kelsey and Madison

BOSSIER CITY, LA. — Students from Airline High School in Angela Pugh's gifted education class had some kind words for their ITP mentors.

"My mentor has been such a gargantuan help this semester with my Telementor project. I think it is great that he takes time from his personal life to help me out with this project."
—Randall Bennett

"Julie has been an extremely helpful mentor for me in the past weeks. By assisting me and keeping me on track with my science fair project, she helped

me to achieve a better grade. Julie gave me websites that I could use in my research, and also offered new ideas for conducting my experiments. When I was not explicit enough in my data, she would inform me that I needed to be clearer in what I was trying to explain. I appreciate her guidance and consistency with my assignment. She was very amiable and always positive about the work that I had done."
—Kelsey Lee

"Nova has been a great mentor for me. I am very thankful to have had her while working on my science project. My project was a test on the human eye about blind spots. Nova was very helpful and informative; she always had new information for me to look over and add to my research. Nova was affable and always had something positive to say. I am interested in meteorology as a career, and Nova has given me some helpful advice that I can carry on through high school and college that will help me while working hard to become who and what I want to be. Again, I am very thankful to have had Nova help me this semester."
—Madison Naquin

"My mentor, Brian, has helped me research the career of civil engineering. Throughout the exploration of this career, my



Thankful Buds. Randall, Matthew and Jake.

interest in math and science has grown. This has shown me that civil engineering may not necessarily be the career that I

choose, but through this program I have learned this while I am still in high school. Brian made sure that I always had the information I needed when I needed it. Even in the face of personal loss, he never faltered in the work he did to help me."

—Matthew Fahrenkrug

Share your success! Write to: staff@telementor.org



Q: Are they soaring high— or falling down?

A: Depends on which ones have mentors.



International
Telementor Program

Join our **Winning Team** of
Mentor Organizations!

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

Email: staff@telementor.org
or call toll free

(877)376-8053

License to Drive

CATHEY CAREY HAS BEEN A TEACHER for 27 years. "In all my years of teaching, I've never seen anything quite like this," she says of the ITP experience. "My students get to hear a different perspective, a different voice. I'm not standing up lecturing, and they're not sitting there reading or doing homework."

Every day, students rush in to check their mail and correspond with their mentors. "They want to send something that looks professional," Cathey says. "They care about what they write, and their mentors will edit their work and help them strive to be better. I like that."

Cathey's Career Exploration class has an exact structure and a plan. But step into her world and all you'll hear is a productive buzz. "I'm guiding them along. Everyone's on a computer, I'm going around the room. We're doing hands-on work on our portfolios and researching careers of interest. I always invite people to come in and take a look. My students are interested and busy the whole time. They're excited; I am too. It flies by!"



The road ahead. Edward Epps steers his future in a direction of his choosing.

One of Cathey's students, Edward Epps, has been using the ITP for a year and half. "I'm really enjoying it," he says. Last year his mentor, Victor Cousins, helped Edward look at his life goals. "We talked about what effort I'd make and how I'd pursue them; how I could keep on task in my life and school."

Involved in football, track and drama, Edward also fit in a leadership camp: the Louisiana Youth Seminar. Before he went,

Victor prepped him for what to expect. "That experience helped me get a very good job this past summer," says Edward, who applied to and was hired by the city of Shreveport solid waste department. "I got real-life experience. It showed me what hard work was and I liked it. The proactive skills I learned from Victor brought me a long way." This year, Edward has a new mentor: retired Hewlett-Packard employee Cina Barker. "She helps me with a lot of my decisions. I'm a senior now. I have to figure out what I want to do as a career." And Edward has decided: "I want to be a truck driver and get my commercial driver's license. Cina's helped me create interview questions; she's been a great inspiration in my life."

Edward's teacher, Cathey, couldn't be happier. "I really enjoy working with the high school students. I like helping them to prepare for their future. What I do with the ITP is very worthwhile. It gets us away from doing just textbooks. It's more practical." —BY VICTOR RIVERO ■

Join our *Winning Team* of Mentor Organizations!

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

Email: staff@telemotor.org or call toll free

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