

# **The Tutor/Mentor Connection: A Retail Business Model**



Tutoring/mentoring is simple: it connects caring adults with children and youth who need extra adult support to help them grow to reach their full potential in life.

## **The Case for a more comprehensive form of tutoring/mentoring**

**Many leaders, including the President of the United States, already support the concept of mentoring.**

However, very few have business plans that answer these questions:

“What are all the things we need to do to assure that youth born in poverty, and participating in tutor/mentor programs, are starting jobs/careers by age 25?”

How do we increase the number, and quality of “places” where youth access these services?

Read more. This is what the Tutor/Mentor Connection focuses on every day.

**T/MC at [tutormentor2@earthlink.net](mailto:tutormentor2@earthlink.net)**

# Leaders Needed

**The purpose of this T/MC essay is not to convince you that tutoring/mentoring is an important education-to-careers and civic engagement strategy.**

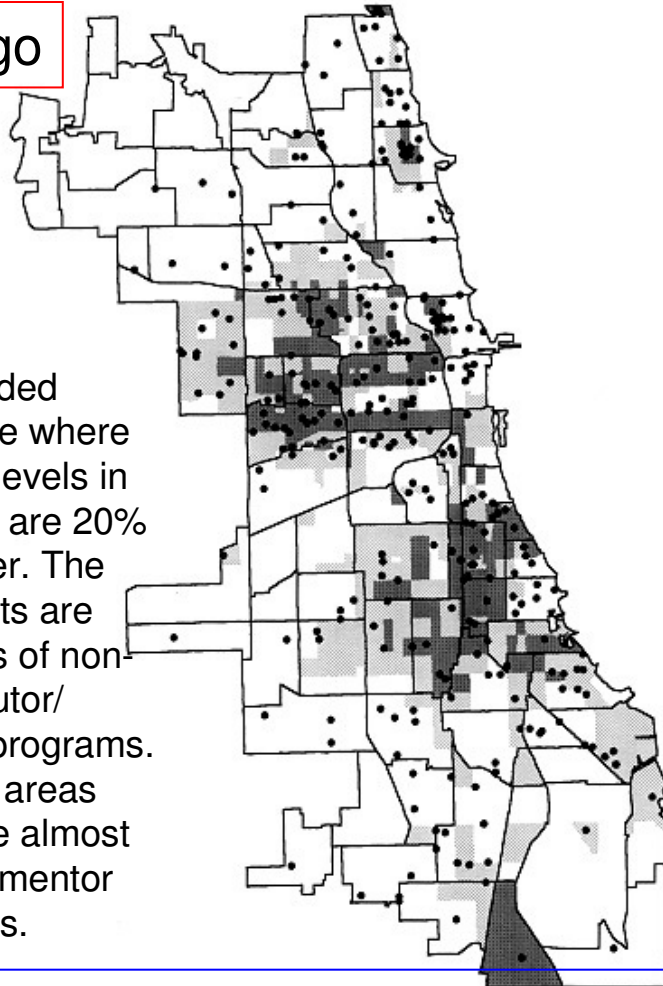
**The purpose is to recruit leaders from industry...**

- to share their skills and experiences...
- to make more and better tutor/mentor programs available in all places where they are needed.
- to provide the operating and innovation dollars needed to fuel efforts like the T/MC in Chicago, and similar structures in other cities.
- and provide resources to support collaborations which bring Science, Technology, Arts, Engineering and Math mentoring into existing tutor/mentor programs

# Innovative strategies are needed to assure availability of tutoring/mentoring programs

Chicago

The shaded areas are where poverty levels in Chicago are 20% of greater. The black dots are locations of non-school tutor/mentor programs. In many areas there are almost no tutor/mentor programs.



At this time the biggest obstacle to participating in a tutor/mentor program in Chicago or in most other major cities is that

- there are not enough programs
- there are not enough good programs, and
- there is a poor distribution of programs in neighborhoods where they are most needed.

See interactive T/MC map at

<http://www.tutormentorprogramlocator.net/InteractiveMap.aspx>

# **Tutor/Mentor Programs are not available in all places where they are needed**

- There is a perception that many organizations offer tutoring/mentoring or youth development services.
- In reality, in many neighborhoods there are few programs that offer tutoring and/or mentoring.
- When the availability of programs is looked at by age and time of day segments, it is obvious that a contributing factor to the high drop out rate of teens is the lack of programs to mentor them to careers.

# Not all programs are equally effective

There are wide differences between the type of tutoring and/or mentoring programs that are available.

- number and age group of children served
- number of volunteers involved
- quality of staff available to support youth or volunteers
- uneven availability of arts, technology, career mentoring

***As the T/MC builds its database of programs, it seeks to build an understanding of the various types of programs, dividing them by age served, time of day services is provided, and type of tutoring/mentoring offered.***

**Not everyone can volunteer time as  
a tutor/mentor...**

**Customers for a tutor/mentor programs  
are not just children and youth living in  
poverty neighborhoods, near poorly  
performing schools, or in broken  
families...**

***...Customers are volunteers who can  
help provide infrastructure and  
leadership, not just tutors & mentors.***

# Many ways to volunteer...

- volunteers are needed to create innovative strategies that increase visibility for tutor/mentor programs and increase the flow of operating dollars to every tutor/mentor program in Chicago and other major cities
- business partners are needed to develop strategies—using employee volunteers, company assets & dollars to PULL youth from poverty into jobs & careers.
- people and organizations are needed to organize and provide curriculum, training, and ideas, to help educate all stakeholders in the movement.



# **The T/MC borrows its strategies from proven business practices**

Successful companies try to put stores where there are large numbers of potential customers;

Some companies have thousands of stores distributed throughout every state in the country

Economies of scale are used to increase quality and lower the operating costs per location

# Successful Companies Invest in Infrastructure

Advanced technologies are used to make sure each store always has products and services that are wanted by customers

Successful companies invest in employee recruitment and training programs that place courteous, well trained staff in every store

# Advertising Draws Customers

Successful companies invest heavily in daily advertising and public relations campaigns intended to build a positive image and draw customers to their stores

Marketing campaigns that support hundreds of stores in many cities are more cost effective than ad campaigns offered by hundreds of individual stores in many different neighborhoods and cities.

# **Similar Strategies are needed to support the tutor/mentor movement in America**

\* tutor/mentor programs are needed in every poverty neighborhood and near every poorly-performing school in the country

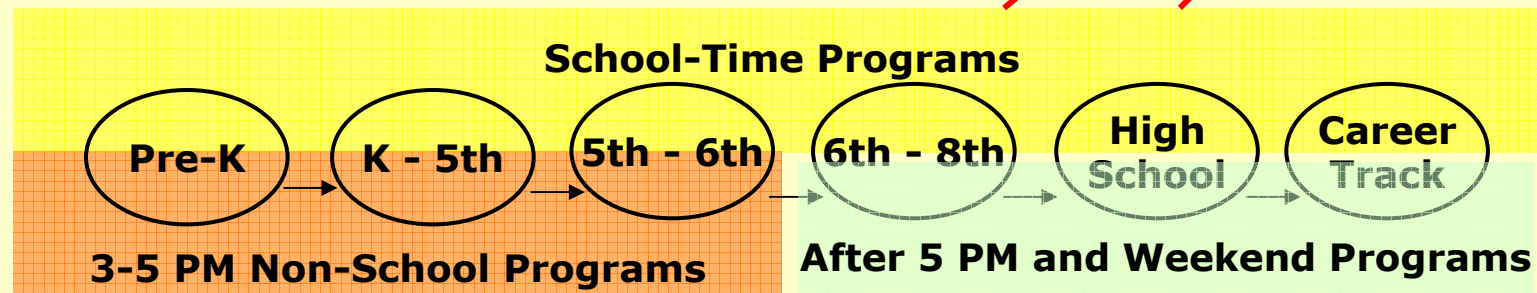
- learning systems and information networking structures are needed to make sure that each tutor/mentor program has products and services that motivate youth and volunteers to participate for multiple years
- on-going advertising is needed to draw customers to programs in multiple locations.

# How are these business strategies incorporated into the T/MC?

- A T/MC “store” is a place in a neighborhood (usually a non-profit organization) where children and youth can meet on a regular basis over an extended period of time.
- In such programs adults serve as tutors, mentors, coaches, change-agents, and friends, with a commitment to help youth succeed in school, stay safe in non-school hours and stay headed toward jobs and careers.

**OUR GOAL: SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF COMPREHENSIVE, VOLUNTEER-BASED TUTORING/ MENTORING PROGRAMS THAT HELP INNER CITY YOUTH REACH CAREERS**

**To SUCCEED**  
We must recruit business leaders who will use their resources in **PULLING** Youth to Careers



**To SUCCEED**  
We must help tutor/mentor program leaders, volunteers, schools and parents be more effective in **PUSHING** Youth to Careers

**Every Industry has a reason to strategically invest in creating a pipeline to careers for kids living in poverty.**

# **This is a K-16 and Career Education System**

- \* college and business partners are needed to help build a trained cadre of tutor/mentor leaders, and to support them in their daily work and career development
- \* innovative partnerships with business and with peers are needed to create a greater public visibility and a more consistent flow of essential resources (dollars, volunteers, technology, etc.) to every program in every city.

# **T/MC Maintains Database of Chicago Area Programs**

*Since 1993 the T/MC conducted on-going surveys to create a database listing more than 400 locations where various forms of tutoring and/or mentoring are offered. This database is used by parents, social workers, prospective volunteers and potential donors.*

*It can be seen in the Program Locator section of <http://www.tutormentorprogramlocator.net/InteractiveMap.aspx>*



# Chicago and other cities need a program-support Infrastructure

*We need to think like for-profit organizations who try to put products and services where customers are concentrated.*

*The Internet offers the opportunity to build a low-cost learning network that could support the growth of thousands of tutor/mentor programs*

*T/MC web sites are at the core of a growing training infrastructure that seeks to help each tutor/mentor program find ideas and resources to be able to constantly improve.*

# **Every Tutor/Mentor Program needs to have products and services that customers desire.**

Through the Internet we can learn what works in other programs. With business support we can duplicate good ideas in more places.

We need to understand that customers are not just kids and volunteers.

They are also volunteers who can build the quality and availability of tutoring and/or mentoring services in neighborhoods throughout the country

# **A Tutor/Mentor “Store” needs to have talented, motivated, well-trained employees and leaders.**

The T/MC seeks to

A) recruit talented people to be leaders and provides training and on-going support to help these people stay in the tutor/mentor business longer

B) provide an Internet-based knowledge system and learning environment that connects tutor/mentor stakeholders in on-going networking and learning, and that will be used by leaders of tutor/mentor program in all parts of the country.

# Involvement based on where need is greatest.

T/MC advertising and public awareness seeks to educate resource providers to make choices of involvement, drawing from a menu of ways individuals and organizations could be involved, and using GIS maps that show where the need for tutor/mentor programs is greatest, and where existing programs are located in these areas.

Such a strategy will lead to a more even distribution of resources to all neighborhoods where tutor/mentor programs are needed, not just to those with a visible brand name or in a high profile neighborhood.

# Advertising and Public Awareness

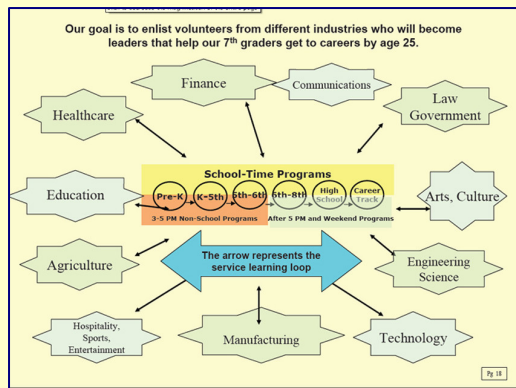
We don't have multi-millions dollar ad budgets, yet we need similar reach and frequency of daily and weekly message delivery.

The T/MC seeks to recruit leaders from business and faith communities who will use their own media to create and lead a *call-to-involvement*.

*This* evangelism will reach thousands of people in every business, social and faith sector many times each day with messages that encourage people to be volunteers, leaders, donors, etc.

# Models of such leadership exist

The Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Lend A Hand Program at the Chicago Bar Association is an example of the type leadership the T/MC seeks to create in every industry and service sector. See <http://www.lawyerslendahand.org>



If programs like this are in each industry, each tutor/mentor program would have volunteers modeling different career opportunities, along with multiple sources of funding.

Strategies like this can support volunteer-based tutor/mentor program growth in every neighborhood of Chicago and other cities with high concentrations of poverty.

# **Volunteers needed to help build knowledge base**

The T/MC seeks university partners, interns, and graduate students, who will help build a library of examples showing how various businesses and industries use their leadership, human capital and communications resources to PULL youth from poverty to careers.

**Such Examples will fuel the actions of similar businesses throughout the country.**

# Educate Consumer. Provide a menu of choices for involvement in tutor/mentor programs

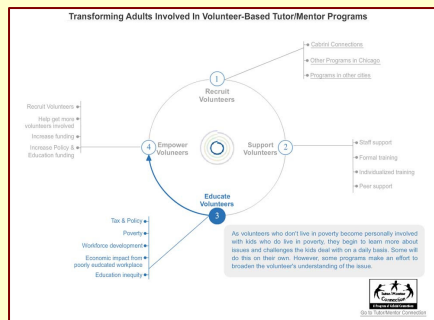
By building an on-line library of “what works” and creating visual databases that sequence what works into a [blueprint of actions needed](#) consistently for many years, we support the involvement of anyone who wants to help kids move from poverty to careers.

On-line networking and collaboration portals can connect volunteers from different locations of the same company with each other, or volunteers from many different programs with each other and support a process of on-going learning that builds a more effective tutor/mentor workforce, and benefits the companies who support this strategy at the same time.



# As volunteers do “service” we seek to enhance “learning”

Every time a volunteer connects with a youth we seek to enhance learning, so the volunteer becomes a bridge to her industry, faith group, and/or alumni network.



Such volunteers have the potential to bring additional resources to tutor/mentor programs every time they return to do service.

As some of these volunteers become CEOs, this become a self-sustaining system with different leaders in different places taking the lead at different times each year. [See this idea illustrated at http://www.tutormentorexchange.net/images/flash/vol\\_leadership.swf](http://www.tutormentorexchange.net/images/flash/vol_leadership.swf)

# Our goals are your goals.

Organizations that offer volunteer-based tutoring/ mentoring services seek to improve the quality of life for people living in poverty by helping them move up the ladder to jobs and careers.

This creates new customers and new employees for industry and lowers the costs associated with poverty, crime and workforce development.

This also creates an army of people who are more personally committed to helping inner city kids, because they have come to know them, and understand their challenges, through volunteer involvement.

# Benefits to companies and their employees

Involvement in well-managed volunteer-based programs provides many benefits to employees in corporations, such as expanding leadership skills, and expanding informal networks for those who are involved.

Using Internet e-collaboration tools, volunteers in a T/MC strategy learn skills and habits that can be applied profitably in 21st century business applications.

Most of all, it's the right thing to do. Businesses who are effective at helping youth move to careers will earn public good will and loyal employees and customers.

Benefits to business - <http://tinyurl.com/T-MC-Civic-Engagement>

# Invest in T/MC and its partners

Become a sponsor, drawing attention to your business, while you help us draw attention to mentor-rich, tutor/mentor programs

Point workplace donations to tutor/mentor programs so volunteers are well-supported and benefit more from their involvement

If you are a venture capital manager, or venture philanthropist, consider becoming an investor in the Chicago Tutor/Mentor Connection. 1993-2010 T/MC funding has been lower than most of the major mentoring partnerships in the country, yet the Chicago region is one of the largest regions where tutor/mentor programs are needed. Your investment helps T/MC do more of the things described in this essay.



# Get informed. Get involved.

Visit the following web sites to learn more about tutoring, mentoring and the Tutor/Mentor Connection.

[www.tutormentorconnection.org](http://www.tutormentorconnection.org)

[www.tutormentorconference.org](http://www.tutormentorconference.org)

<http://tutormentor.blogspot.com>

<http://www.tutormentorprogramlocator.net>

<http://tutormentorconnection.ning.com>

or email: [tutormentor2@earthlink.net](mailto:tutormentor2@earthlink.net)

Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC, Tutor/Mentor Connection  
Merchandise Mart PO Box 3303, Chicago, Il. 60654

## **Why Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC and Tutor/Mentor Connection (T/MC)?**

From 1993 to June 2011 the T/ MC operated as partner to the Cabrini Connections tutor/mentor program in Chicago, under one 501-c-3 non profit board of directors. Due to financial pressure the T/MC was separated from the Cabrini Connections program in June 2011 and the Tutor/Mentor Institute, LLC was created to provide alternative strategies for generating revenue to continue to operate the Tutor/Mentor Connection in Chicago while helping similar intermediary structures grow in other cities. The names will be used interchangeably in many of our materials since both focus on the same mission.