

# NEWS

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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

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Repeat as space permits through April 11, 2014

### Volunteer Mentors Inspire by Example Training sessions planned during National Volunteer Month

North Jersey— Becoming a mentor is a significant way to make a difference in the community and in people's lives. Men and women are needed to participate in two mentoring programs of the Volunteer Center of Bergen County. The mentors in both programs listen, share ideas and offer encouragement which empowers the person they are mentoring to make positive and healthy choices.

Through the **Mentoring Youth program**, caring men and women provide guidance, friendship and support to children ages 5 to 18 who are confronted with social, emotional and behavioral challenges. **Mentoring Moms** are women who make a difference in the lives of overwhelmed mothers of all ages. The volunteers spend time with mothers who have difficulty in coping with parenting, managing households, providing for their children or overcoming other obstacles. At any given time, there can be dozens of children or moms who are waiting for the support of mentors.

**Mentoring Moms** will meet on consecutive Mondays beginning on April 7<sup>th</sup>. **Mentoring Youth** begins its training session on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Both trainings are from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm at the Volunteer Center offices at 64 Passaic St. in Hackensack.

During the mentor training sessions, the volunteers are taught to develop good listening and communication skills and discuss such issues as problem solving and values. Guest speakers, including current mentors, mentees and social services case

workers share their experiences so that new mentors have the background and knowledge to help support their mentees. All mentors undergo a comprehensive screening process which includes fingerprinting and other background checks. Currently, there is an ongoing need for men to mentor boys and an especially critical need for bi-lingual Spanish speaking men and women to become mentors to accommodate the growing number of Spanish speaking families enrolled in both programs.

“The theme for National Volunteer Month is ‘Celebrate Service,’” says Janet Sharma, Executive Director of the Volunteer Center. “To be a mentor is to be a vital, important and positive influence on the life of someone who can use a guiding hand or a sympathetic ear. Mentors truly touch the lives of others for the better.”

Call the Volunteer Center of Bergen County at (201) 489-9454, or visit their website at [www.bergenvolunteers.org](http://www.bergenvolunteers.org) and click on Mentoring Programs to register for either program.

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County strengthens the community by connecting people through service and developing civic leaders.

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