

Issue 3
Summer
2005

Reflections on a year of growth

Sue Luck, the former Executive Director of Mobius, looks back at her year as the leader of the organization.

Recruitment of new mentors is one of Mobius' highest priorities, and the past year has been a tremendous start to the role Mobius is designed to fill - to provide Chittenden County with more quality mentors. Mobius has been successful in serving as a clear and efficient voice for the mentoring community, capturing a wide audience in a way that would be difficult for any one program on its own. In Sue's first nine months, 138 new mentors were added throughout the Chittenden County Mentoring Network programs. She pointed out that people were very receptive to hearing the Mobius story and getting involved.

Part of Mobius' role is to provide resources, which means both mentors and money. Sue was very excited to distribute \$71,000 to network programs through grants and private donations. Sue worked with the board of directors to successfully meet its ambitious campaign goal of raising

\$75,000 in the first year. The most important aspect of the campaign was to expand the donor base, which will help sustain Mobius into the future. Several foundations that added to these efforts are: the Permanent Fund, McClure Supporting Organization, Turrell Fund, Henderson Foundation, Department of Justice, the Newcastle Fund, and Fletcher Allen Health Care.

Mobius has significantly increased the public awareness of the need for mentoring. It has accomplished this through a Public Awareness committee and wide-spread radio and print advertising. About 175 people attended the Vermont Mentoring Month Celebration this year. Enhanced awareness of Mobius and the benefits of mentoring has allowed us to better carry out our mission. Sue was overjoyed to point out that a 5th grader at Central School remembered Mobius' radio ad from the fall, and was able to recite back to her the little girl's lines in the ad.

One key development of the past year has been an increase in Chittenden County Mentoring Network relations. The network has

developed into a team that supports each other and shares a goal of having quality mentoring throughout the county. The network is now planning for the year ahead and hopes to collaborate on many efforts. Every program in the network is embraced, as there is a wealth of knowledge among them from which everyone can benefit.

In Sue's words, the goal for the future is to keep our "eye on the prize", for every child in Chittenden County who wants or needs a mentor to have one.

Our Mission

The mission of Mobius is to increase the number of high-quality, adult-to-youth mentoring relationships in Chittenden County. We aim to do this by developing a culture of mentoring in the community, by nurturing the growth of existing programs, and by building additional capacity through the creation of new programs.

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Alaska Ho!

By Calen Perkins

What happens when 11 young DREAMers put their mind to something? They end up in Alaska, of course. The young adults that participate in the DREAM High Adventure program from the Elm St. community in Winooski are: Devon, Ashley, Corey, Connor, Becca, Steven, Kayla, Katrina, Kaitlyn, Sandy, and Christian. In High Adventure, the participants are shown a map of the U.S. a year in advance, brainstorm places that would make for cool adventures, and then raise the money to go there. They were told they'd need about \$18,000 to make a trip to Alaska a reality - a rather daunting number. But they developed a fundraising plan which centered on bottle drives. By sweeping the area clean of its unwanted returnables, they slowly got closer to their goal. When June 21st rolled around, they had enough money in the bank, and enough excitement to fuel the two week trip. For many, it would be not only their first time west of Lake Champlain, but their first time on an airplane, contributing to the level of anticipation. Six mentors from UVM accompanied the group, along with a DREAM staff member.

The group spent the entire two weeks on the Kenai Peninsula, which lies south of Anchorage. Their first stop was Seward, a small town which sits at the base of a glacier field. While camping there, the group hiked a glacier, where - as the kids will quickly point out - exposure to the glacier water for more than 6 minutes can require amputation. From Seward, the group made their way to Homer, a tiny fishing village on the west of the peninsula. The group spent two days in Homer in the company of a Dartmouth grad named Ian, who knew the staff trip leader, Chad. Ian showed the group a lot of hospitality. He took the group clamming and also hiked with

them to a spectacular view of a glacial lake.

Many kids proclaimed the next leg of the trip the most memorable and rewarding. The boat brought them across the Kachemak Bay to the isolated Nanwalek tribe, who are an interesting mix of Native American, Siberian, and Russian. The community of 300 members



sits four miles (walking only) from the nearest town, and the DREAMers were their only visitors this year. They still maintain their own language, systems of currency, and trade. Ashley and Devon recalled how nervous they felt when they first got there, thinking that the Nanwaleks would be far different from them. During the first 20 minutes there was little interaction. Once the awkwardness passed, the two groups of teens began to feel comfortable with each other, and were soon inseparable. The DREAM kids pointed out the similarities between the Nanwaleks and themselves: dress, language, and the use of computers and iPods - an indication, perhaps, that this wasn't what they were expecting to find. Many of the DREAMers have already written to the Nanwaleks, only a few days after returning. They are planning to put their fundraising skills to use to bring members of the tribe to Vermont in the future. With ambition like that, it's clear that this group understands the value of setting a goal

and putting in the hard work to achieve it, no matter how distant it seems.

When asked, "What was the biggest challenge of the trip?", most responded that the hardest part was getting along with such a small group for a year of fundraising and a two week trek. There were rough spots along the way, but students dealt with them maturely and respectfully. Ashley pointed out that humor played a big role. Little games like "would you rather..." helped ease tensions and keep everyone in good spirits.

These DREAMers had an enviable experience as a result of their hard work. When talking about their trip, the words "inspiring", "adventurous", "fun", and "amazing" were woven into their stories. They were able to experience scenery, activities, and cultures that aren't available at home, and learn from their contact with each. No doubt that they will be making, and achieving, even bigger plans in the future. As the trip's motto goes - Alaska Ho!



The DREAM group prepares for a rafting trip

Building Futures at Recycle North YouthBuild

By Lindsay Foreman

The new ReCycle North YouthBuild Mentoring program will serve youth ages 16-24 enrolled in the YouthBuild program. The focus of the YouthBuild program is on education, job-skills training, and personal growth. The YouthBuild mentoring program is designed to supplement the YouthBuild program by helping young adults to succeed in these areas. Many of the young women and men who come through the YouthBuild program have had some involvement in the foster care system and/or the juvenile justice system, and have faced detrimental obstacles beyond their control. When young women and men make the choice to join YouthBuild they begin to see, through the accomplishments of their work, that the challenges life has handed them are surmountable. They also begin to realize that changing their life requires letting go of old behaviors and beliefs that led them down undesirable roads with undesirable consequences. Letting go of these old beliefs, and replacing them with positive substitutes, requires immense support.

Throughout the eight months that participants are enrolled in YouthBuild they come to rely heavily on the support of the YouthBuild community. Although much progress takes place while they are enrolled, many of the young people run the risk of returning to some of their old patterns if they don't have the necessary support to encourage and guide their new behaviors after they graduate. This is the reason the ReCycle North YouthBuild Mentoring program was developed - to ensure that the young people who go

through the program will have additional opportunities for support and guidance while they are enrolled in YouthBuild and after they leave.

The new mentoring program will recruit mentors who can commit to standing by the young people while they face new challenges and work towards accomplishing their goals. Mentors will be matched with youth participants in the middle of their enrollment and will assist them with their transition into a career or higher education. Due to the program's focus on construction carpentry, a majority of recruitment efforts will be focused on individuals in the trades. However, for students interested in pursuing other careers, the program will attempt to find them mentors in their area of interest.

The overall goal of the mentor program is to help youth to build self-confidence, find and follow a career or educational path, expand their opportunities, and make healthy choices that benefit themselves as well as the greater community. Mentors will work one-on-one with YouthBuild students and will tailor

their activities based upon the needs of the student. In addition to one-on-one mentoring,

the program will hold various workshops and group discussions to give mentors and youth participants the chance to better understand each other and to explore ways to grow a more vibrant community for everyone.

The YouthBuild model for adult/young adult relationships is based on honesty, mutual respect, and



non-coercive support. The YouthBuild program believes that in order for youth to make positive changes in their life, the desire has to come from them. Rather than the mentor imposing their values and beliefs onto the student, the mentor helps students identify their own values and goals. The mentor will help the student be the person they want to be, and then supports them through that process. The hope of the program is that by using this model of relationships, mentors will become a vital extension of the YouthBuild support community.

The YouthBuild students have identified the following ways they would want support from a mentor: *academic support, support with finding and following a career path, building a support system, having someone to turn to when life is hard or confusing, help building leadership skills, support making healthy life choices, and having someone to hang-out and do fun things with.*

ReCycle North YouthBuild Mentoring Program is currently recruiting mentors to be matched with YouthBuild students. If you are interested in learning more about the program or becoming a mentor, please contact Mobius at 658-1888, or Lindsay Foreman @ 658-4143 ext 27 or email lforeman@recyclenorth.org



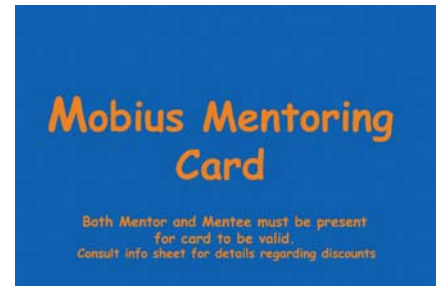
recycle
NORTH
YouthBuild

Mobius Card!!

The Mobius Card has finally arrived! Chris Piana, Mobius' former Americorps VISTA member, put lots of legwork into getting 12 local businesses to make donations to benefit the mentoring community. Calen Perkins, Mobius' current VISTA, delivered Mobius Cards to over 300 community based matches. The card is designed to help mentors find affordable things to do with a mentee out in the community - especially during the frigid winter. It provides matches with an array of activities that are free or at a significant discount.

The fun activities the Mobius card offers are:

- free basketball and hockey games at St. Mike's
- discounted ice skating at Cairns arena
- free Shelburne Museum admission
- free sailing rental on Lake Champlain.
- discounted women's basketball and all soccer games at UVM
- discounted studio time at Blue Plate Pottery
- discounted bowling at Champlain Lanes
- free entry to the Burlington YMCA
- free climbing gear at Petra Cliffs



- free theatre tickets at Champlain College
- discounted skiing at Bolton Valley
- discounted entry to ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain

Please consult our website for more information, including date-specific discounts, and phone numbers, www.mobiusmentors.org

Mobius would like to thank the following businesses and schools for their contributions:

St. Michael's College, UVM, Champlain College, Blue Plate Pottery, Shelburne Museum, Bolton Valley Ski Area, ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, Cairns Ice Arena, Champlain Lanes, Community Sailing Center, Petra Cliffs, Greater Burlington YMCA



An Introduction

*By Calen Perkins
Americorps VISTA*

"Welcome to the Mentoring Movement!" was the resounding sentiment I got from the staff at Mobius and the Network upon my arrival. To a curious but unknowing bystander, this may sound like an invitation to a secret cult, meeting behind a moveable bookshelf in the local library. After some quick education on the topic, however, they would find out, as I did, that this is a far cooler endeavor - fueled by positive energy, forward thinking people, and the desire to affect a healthy change in our community.

My job of furthering the awareness of mentoring, the Network, and Mobius has been made easier with the groundwork successfully laid by those who came before me, including Chris Piana, my predecessor. I graduated this May from St. Michael's College in Colchester, and was lucky to have lots of experience working with children - from mentoring a refugee at Winooski High School, to teaching a kids golf clinic, working at an orphanage in El Salvador, and teaching English at an elementary school during my semester abroad in Ecuador. Embarking on a new job with high expectations is always a challenge that comes with some uncertainty. I will rely on the experiences I've had, and the training and support I've gotten along the way, especially from Chris, Sue, and Ginny here at Mobius, to steer me in the right direction. It should be a fun journey, and I look forward to meeting many of you, and doing what I can to ensure that this mentoring movement continues with success!

Dishing it Out

Mobius distributed \$23,000 worth of funds to Chittenden County Mentoring Network program partners this summer. The Mobius Services Committee based the funding decisions on financial need, commitment to the Elements of Best Practice, evidence of volunteer/mentor satisfaction, and the overall mission and goals of Mobius. Priority was given to programs that Mobius had not funded previously. Susie Moakley, Cortney Cahill, and Amy Mellencamp staff the Services Committee. They met and reviewed all proposals and selected the following to receive funding: YouthBuild, Spectrum, Essex CHIPS, Connecting Youth, and Community Friends.

This round of funds distribution complements the previous allocation of funding to programs. Overall, Mobius has distributed \$96,000 in the past 18 months through grants, private and corporate donations.



40 Weeks of Fun and Fitness

This year promises to be a healthy one for the mentoring matches in Chittenden County. Mobius and seven partnering programs have received a \$10,000 grant from Fletcher Allen Health Care to design and implement a calendar of healthy activities for mentors and mentees during the upcoming school year. The project is called "40 Weeks of Fun and Fitness".

The project will involve a core group of 30 matches that signs on to participate in at least 2/3 of the 40 activities that Mobius organizes. In return for agreeing to participate,

matches will receive a calendar and free entrance to 40 fit and healthy activities during the 2005-2006 school year. The program partners will track the progress of the group and use their feedback to help plan similar programs in the future. There will also be healthy activities, in addition to the 40 organized events, available to the entire mentoring community. Fall activities include cooking classes, salsa dancing, basketball, hiking, swimming, and cross-training gymnastics. All activities will be funded by Mobius through the Fletcher Allen grant. Health and nutrition is a topic that many people

are talking about right now and Mobius is thrilled to provide positive change in that direction!

Lemonade Stand



King Street Youth Center has generously offered to lend its Church St. lemonade stand to the Chittenden County Mentoring Network on the weekend of Sept. 27-28. Various CCMN programs will staff the stand over the weekend, making the delicious fresh-squeezed lemonade you've enjoyed all summer long. Stop by for a glass and say hi!

South End Art Hop

Save the date! On Sept. 9th and 10th, Mobius will open its doors to be a stop on the South End Art Hop. Drop by the Mobius office at 431 Pine St. (the Maltex building) and you will see the creative work of young people from throughout Chittenden County.

In anticipation of the Art Hop, mentors and their mentees will have the opportunity to take advantage of the Burlington City Arts open studio at Memorial Auditorium on August

18th from 4-8pm. Pieces produced for the South End Art Hop will be on display at the 13th annual Art Hop on September 9th and 10th.

If you come to the Art Hop, stop by the Mobius office to draw an artistic rendition of someone who mentored you. The atmosphere of the South End of Burlington will be both festive and educational. Don't miss this excellent opportunity to introduce a young person to a variety of artistic expression.



Everything Fit and Healthy Expo

By Tom Oddy, Beth Kuhn, and Nancy Menard

The Champlain Valley Exposition, in cooperation with the Champlain Initiative, the United Way of Chittenden County, the Vermont Department of Health, UVM, Vermont Public Interest Research Group and the Greater Burlington YMCA is pleased to announce the date of the first annual "Everything Fit & Healthy" Expo. The event will take

place on Saturday, October 22, 2005, and promises to be a unique, enjoyable and educational event for adults, children and families in Vermont and the Champlain Valley. "Everything Fit & Healthy" will include demonstrations of cooking nutritious food on a budget, healthy lunches your kids will eat, having fun while getting fit, organic farm products, health screenings, massage, and more. There will also be seminars conducted throughout the event in-

cluding a kickoff and welcome from Governor Jim Douglas and Dr. Lewis First, Chief of Pediatrics at Fletcher Allen Health Care and host of "First with Kids." Come to the expo and visit us at the Mobius table!

Mobius Hires New Executive Director

By Andrea Torello

I want to extend a warm greeting to all members of our extended mentoring community. It was with great anticipation that I accepted the position of Executive Director of Mobius and I can honestly say that every experience in my first three weeks has exceeded my highest expectation. It has been my pleasure to meet, visit or talk to many Chittenden County Mentoring Network program directors. I am exceedingly impressed with their accomplishments and warmed by their stories of how mentoring consistently makes a difference in young people's lives. I have enjoyed getting acquainted

with members of the Mobius Board of Directors, an impressive collection of motivated and compassionate individuals who truly champion the mentoring cause. Finally, I am ever so grateful to Ginny and Calen, my dynamic staff who make our work here both productive and exciting. I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead. As Sue points out in her farewell to Mobius, we continue toward our goals to increase the number of high quality mentoring relationships in Chittenden County, to increase funding to our network programs, and to develop a culture of mentoring in every corner of our great community. I hope you will all join me in the effort to make our collective dreams come true.



Originally from Connecticut, Andrea has lived in Vermont for the past 25 years. She brings to Mobius 30 years experience working with young people from age five to twenty. She lives in South Burlington with her younger son Michael.

Mentoring Org.	644
Community Friends	91
Connecting Youth	46
DREAM	88
Essex Chips	10
Everybody Wins! VT	121
Foster Arts	12
Foster Grandparent	13
Junior/Senior Buddy	54
Linking Learning to Life	31
M.O.V.E	52
Reach for the Stars	24
RSVP	29
Spectrum Mentoring	21
VSAC Gear Up	22
UVM Buddies	30
Total:	644

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