



# MARYLAND MENTOR

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## CONTACT

Ellie Mitchell

[emitchell@mostnetwork.org](mailto:emitchell@mostnetwork.org)

410-374-7692

Erin Souza-Rezendes

[esouza@mentoring.org](mailto:esouza@mentoring.org)

774-644-0176

## MENTOR LAUNCHES MD AFFILIATE TO EXPAND MENTORING MOVEMENT

### *Maryland MENTOR Names Executive Director at Outset of National Mentoring Month*

**BALTIMORE** – Every January, we celebrate the power of mentoring to build bridges, break down “otherness” and create lasting, meaningful relationships. Yet one in three young people grow up without a mentor outside their family to help them thrive and develop into engaged adults. Mentoring programs, practitioners, and communities across Maryland will now have a key resource to help close that gap with the launch of Maryland MENTOR.

An Affiliate of [MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership](#) (MENTOR), Maryland MENTOR joins 25 MENTOR Affiliates across the country with its official launch on January 10 at the Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) annual conference. Maryland MENTOR aims to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships, support existing programs and new initiatives to improve quality, effectiveness and scale, as well as bring together stakeholders to expand local engagement, supportive policies, and investment in youth mentoring.

[Research](#) shows that mentors play a powerful role in providing young people with the tools to make responsible choices, stay in school, and engage in their communities. With a mentor, youth are:

- 55% more likely to be enrolled in college
- 81% more likely to report participating regularly in sports
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities

A recent survey of 76 Baltimore mentoring programs conducted by Baltimore’s Promise found that programs vary in funding levels, quality, and size. Maryland MENTOR will be a unifying hub for those programs and others across the state to provide trainings, best practices, and professional development for program leaders. It will also be a central force for campaigns to elevate mentoring and recruit volunteers. The call for a “mentoring backbone” was also a key

recommendation in Baltimore Mayor Pugh's Transition Report. Founding funders include The Abell Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Mark and Pat Joseph/Shelter Foundation.

Sadiq Ali will lead Maryland MENTOR as the organization's inaugural Director. Ali is a best-selling author, speaker, professor, leadership trainer, and certified mentor consultant. Prior to joining Maryland MENTOR, Ali founded the Millionaire Manners Academy and led the Young Gentlemen's Institute Conference Series for Young Men, a training organization focused on leadership, life skills, and career readiness. Ali has served as a trainer at dozens of youth development conferences in Maryland and beyond, including the National Youth At Risk Conference, the Maryland Out of School Time Statewide Conference, and the Maryland Male Student of Color Conference. He is also an adjunct professor in branding, business management, leadership, and entrepreneurship at Coppin State University and Morgan State University.

"Mentoring is about hope," said Ali. "Mentoring is about giving our young people something to aspire to. Maryland's young people deserve high-quality mentoring, and I couldn't be happier to be supporting the mentoring organizations in our great state working to deliver on that promise every day."

MOST will continue to house Maryland MENTOR. MOST is the statewide youth development organization working to increase both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities, including mentoring programs. MOST has experience in advancing the field of youth development and has advanced program quality improvement and built impactful relationships with partners, programs, and policy makers.

"We are so appreciative for the extraordinary local partnership from across sectors and organizations in Maryland to put relationships for young people first," said David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership. "With MOST's proven local leadership, MENTOR's support, the expertise of our existing network, and our growing national partnerships, we are thrilled to launch Maryland MENTOR with the foundation and momentum to make lasting impact for Maryland's young people and communities."

### **About MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership**

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership is the unifying champion for quality youth mentoring in the United States. MENTOR's mission is to close the mentoring gap and ensure our nation's young people have the support they need through quality mentoring relationships to succeed at home, school, and ultimately, work. To achieve this, MENTOR collaborates with its Affiliates and works to drive the investment of time and money into high-impact mentoring programs and advance quality mentoring through the development and delivery of standards, cutting-edge research, and state-of-the-art tools. Connect with MENTOR on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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