

# Tri-Mentoring Journal

## Spring-Edition 2009

*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

*- Maya Angelou -*

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### Grant creates partnerships to help LPS students

*By Margaret Reist - Lincoln Journal-Star*

What a difference two years makes.

The first time Tammie Burns met Bekkah, she was a timid 8-year-old in a denim skirt, clutching a stuffed puppy.

But timidity soon gave way to chattiness, and Burns learned that the little girl she’d been matched with through Big Brothers/Big Sisters loved books and Barbies and that stuffed puppy.

Fast forward two years, and the conversation with 11-year-old Bekkah tends to veer to the subject of boys rather than Barbies. She still loves books, but now there’s basketball and friendships and sleepovers and all the complexities of middle school life.

Their relationship, Burns thinks, will only get more important as time goes on.

A human resources manager at Duncan Aviation, Burns helped raise two stepchildren and figured she’d like to have a child in her life again. And if she could give something to that child, all the better.

“I just felt it’s really a need in our community,” she said.

Josh Cramer and Pete Ferguson couldn’t agree more.

It’s why Cramer, the federal programs supervisor at Lincoln Public Schools, secured a \$483,000 grant to create a partnership between three mentoring organizations in Lincoln.

It’s why Ferguson decided to leave Leadership Lincoln – where he’s encouraged high school students for nearly a decade – to head the three-year grant-funded project.

The goal: to reduce the achievement gap between Latino, African American and Native students and their white counterparts.

How? By increasing the number of students who have mentors.

Research shows mentoring results in fewer behavioral problems and better academic performance, all steps toward graduation. But mentoring isn’t tutoring, it’s helping students believe in themselves, Cramer said, and that brings other changes.

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*The mission of TeamMates is to positively impact the world by inspiring youth to reach their full potential.*

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*Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters for the 2nd consecutive year is one of 25 out of nearly 400 affiliates to be recognized as a “Best All-Around Performer” by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.*

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*Latino Achievement Mentoring Program seeks to enhance the quality of life of Latino youths in this community. Our evaluation component measures the program’s ability to achieve stated goals.*

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## Tri-Mentoring Mentor of the Quarter

By Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters

Name: Shawn Ryba

Employer and Job Title: Neighborhood Lincoln, Communications Organizer

**What brought you to Big Brothers Big Sisters?** I had the opportunity when I was young and I was a Little in the program. I remember it being pretty neat.

**How do you view your role as a Big?** My role is to be a positive role model and to lead by example.

**What have been some of your favorite activities that you and your Little have enjoyed together?** We have loved everything with sports and we have that in common! We have played hoops, went to a Lincoln Stars Hockey game, and a Huskers Baseball game. My Little Brother is big into college basketball and we talk about that a lot. Everything is fun, no matter what we do!

**What are some of your ideas for future match activities?** My Little Brother likes and is involved in almost every sport it seems. We have been talking about going to the driving range and play golf or play Wii. We also love to go out to eat!

**How would you describe your match relationship?** We are a new match and everything is awesome! My Little Brother is easy to talk to and pleasant. He talks about sports, school, family and his friends. We have good communication, it's fun and exciting!

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### ***Grant creates partnerships to help LPS students from page 1***

"It's not that (mentors) help with math, but that they believe students can do math. You give them the tools to be good at anything," Cramer said.

Ferguson said mentoring is about empowering students, not enabling them.

"If you inspire a student, you see gifts and talents come out others might not have seen," he said.

To that end, Ferguson will head the LPS Tri-Mentoring Partnership, which will combine the efforts of Heartland Big Brothers/Big Sisters, TeamMates of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Latino Achievement Mentoring Program or LAMP.

The goals are threefold:

- \* To increase the number of mentor/student matches.
- \* To provide assistance to mentors, particularly cross-cultural training.
- \* To increase the length of time mentors work with their students.

The grant requires that the project add at least 150 mentors, but Ferguson and Cramer are thinking bigger than that. And both hope the program will remain after three years.




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For additional information  
about Tri-Mentoring partner  
Heartland Big Brothers Big  
Sisters call 464-2227 or  
436-1974.

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## Tri-Mentoring Mentee of the Quarter

By Latino Achievement Mentoring Program (LAMP)

Luis Alberto Guiza is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Culler Middle School, and he lives with his parents and siblings.

His parents are very supportive of his education, and they wish he will pursue his dreams to have a happy and fulfilling life.

Luis Alberto has lots of energy and enjoys sports and his P.E. classes. He enjoys learning and is very social. He loves to play soccer and also likes drawing.

Luis Alberto started this spring semester as a new mentee of the Latino Achievement Mentoring Program through the Tri-Mentoring Partnership Grant.

He and his mentor have lots of things in common in their lives and are having a great time together going to different places and getting to know each other.

We all **WELCOME** Luis Alberto and his family to the LAMP - Tri Mentoring Partnership Community in Lincoln!



**LAMP**

For additional information about Tri-Mentoring partner LAMP call 472-4998, 436-1974 or e-mail [lamp2@unl.edu](mailto:lamp2@unl.edu)

## Tri-Mentoring Program Coordinator

Peter Ferguson is the Tri-Mentoring Program Specialist. A product of Lincoln Public Schools, Ferguson is a 1991 alumni of Lincoln East High School. A 1996 graduate of Hastings College (Hastings, Nebraska) Ferguson obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication Arts and English.

Since that time his professional career has included direct involvement in numerous successful youth development and advisory programs in the Lincoln/Lancaster County area including roles as a; case manager at Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters; coordinator of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council for the Consortium for Planning and Advocacy; Coordinator of the Youth in Action Center and Vice President of Leadership Lincoln.

"I'm excited about the Tri-Mentoring Partnership. Each partner has a proven track record of providing a high level service to countless youth in this community. This partnership will represent a positive change as we collectively go about the process of weaving mentoring throughout the fabric of this community. The Tri-Mentoring partnership recognizes that through a mentor one can be inspired and empowered to go past dreaming to achievement of their fullest potential!" states Ferguson.

Ferguson's favorite superhero is the Brown Hornet from the Fat Albert cartoon series. He is a supporter of the Wildcats of the University of Arizona, Dallas Cowboys and Houston Rockets. Currently he's training for his second and last marathon, May 3 (Lincoln). "I am a slow big billboard an advertisers dream. Why my last? I want to go out on my own terms just like all the greats; Jordan, Gretzky, Barry Sanders!" jokes Ferguson.

Ferguson is married. He and his wife Stephanie have a daughter, Jaden who is 8 ½.

For additional information on Tri-Mentoring call or e-mail Pete at: [pfergus@lps.org](mailto:pfergus@lps.org) or 436-1974.



*Peter Ferguson  
Tri Mentoring Program  
Specialist*

For more information about Tri-Mentoring, the partners or how you can become a part of this movement contact Pete at; (402) 436-1974 or [pfergus@lps.org](mailto:pfergus@lps.org).

*Tri-Mentor of the Quarter continued from page 2*

**What strengths do you see in your Little?** My Little Brother is mature, communicates well and is polite. He is also well rounded and knowledgeable about sports and movies. He's a neat kid!

**What advice do you have for those considering being a mentor?** This is an opportunity for you to be a kid again and I love it! I have also learned a lot from my Little Brother in the short time that we have been matched. My Little Brother has become my role model and I see all of the responsibilities that he has. He has made me grow as a person and it takes you back to when you were their age. You get to make a difference and be an active citizen in society. This is your chance to have a positive opportunity and to do something for the community.

## Be Great...TRI-MENTORING!

The "Tri-Mentoring Partnership" partners Lincoln Public Schools with TeamMates of Lincoln, Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Latino Achievement Mentoring Program (LAMP), and El Centro de Las Americas. The collaboration between these partners will increase the likelihood of academic and life success for Lincoln youth. This initiative will enhance and expand mentoring services, academic and social resources for "all" students empowering them to fulfill their fullest potential

To apply to be a mentor or get more information on Tri-Mentoring contact Peter Ferguson at [pfergus@lps.org](mailto:pfergus@lps.org) or 436-1974.

## Lincoln Public Schools STUDENT RECOGNITION DATES

**May 1 - Native American 6:00 p.m.**  
University of Nebraska  
Union Ballroom - 14th & R St.

**May 19 - African American 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**  
SCC Continuing Education Center  
301 S. 68th Street Place, 3rd

**May 21 - Asian American 6:00 p.m.**  
Northbridge Community Center  
1533 North 27th St.

**June 13 - Hispanic American 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**  
Malone Center  
2032 U St.

# "TRI" Mentoring

## Be Great...Be a Mentor!



# TEAMMATES™

MENTORING PROGRAM

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Heartland

**Big Brothers Big Sisters**

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## Latino Achievement Mentoring Program

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*"Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love..." - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*