

Meet Gabe and Jerry!

Age is just a number and does not affect a person's ability to show up in positive ways in a youth's life. Gabe and Jerry are proof of this; when you meet these two quite reserved guys, you might notice their age difference, but this hasn't stopped them from finding meaningful ways to engage in their mentoring relationship. You can usually find them out in the community visiting local museums or hanging out on the lake. As Gabe shared, "Jerry has a house by the lake where we spend time together, which I enjoy. His home is fantastic!"

At first glance, you might not have guessed that this is a cross-cultural match. When asked what they have learned from each other, Jerry expressed, "It's been a positive experience as far as learning some cross-cultural differences." Gabe's family is from Panama, and they often have family visiting. This has given Jerry opportunities to engage with Gabe's family, especially his mom Glenda whom Jerry usually sits and chats with when he drops Gabe off. Vice versa, Jerry has had opportunities to teach Gabe about topics that aren't part of Gabe's culture. Recently Gabe approached Jerry and asked him about Memorial Day and its significance and Jerry gladly explained.

When asked about a favorite memory from the mentoring relationship, Gabe shared about mini golf outings in Superior. While mini golfing was the first thing that came to mind, Gabe also mentioned that he likes everything he does with Jerry. Gabe and Jerry have been matched for a little over a year now and continue to find meaningful ways to show up for each other. Reflecting on their time together, Jerry shared that "Gabe is a great guy, and it's been a good match." Jerry sees how he has become a sounding board for Gabe as Gabe looks to the future and the direction he wants to go. They both agreed that they look forward to their time together. Gabe's mom Glenda agrees with the guys and said, "It's nice that Jerry has given Gabe a space where he can be his authentic self and open up about being a teenage boy, especially when he lives in a house full of women."

Gabe and Jerry both agree that they don't see their match ending anytime soon. They have established trust and consistency, and they both value the time they get to spend together!



***Mentor North believes in the
dignity of all people.
Our goal is to create a vibrant and
inclusive mentorship community.***

Embracing the Change of Seasons in the Twin Ports

Summer in the Twin Ports is a popular time of year, but how do you enjoy the fall and winter seasons? Grab your jacket, a hat, some mittens, and eventually those snow boots as you check out some of our favorite seasonal activities.

Fall

- Apple picking in Bayfield
- Corn mazes and haunted houses
- Driving the North Shore to admire the fall colors
- A ride on the North Shore Scenic Railroad
- Raking leaves and jumping in the pile
- Enjoying the crisp morning area with a steaming cup of coffee
- Bonfires and hot apple cider
- Storm watching
- Chili and football on Sundays

Did we miss any of your favorite activities?
Let us know!



Your Seasons Calendar

Fall 2021:
Wednesday, September 22nd

Winter 2021:
Tuesday, December 21st

Spring 2022:
Sunday, March 20th

Summer 2022:
Tuesday, June 21st

Winter

- Snow days and hot chocolate (don't forget the marshmallows)
- Sledding with friends
- Ice skating on the lake
- Creating the first footprints in the fresh snow
- Bentleyville
- Holiday cookies
- Holiday light displays
- Snow sports
- Ice fishing
- Movie marathons during snow storms or those super chilly days
- Excuses to wear cozy clothing at all times
- Cozy fires indoors and soups

Thank you Lyla and Ellie, 2020-21 Mentor North Interns

We are so thankful for the time Lyla Abukhodair and Ellie Nelson spent with our staffing team during their internships. Each of these remarkable individuals contributed so much to our organization and while it's always sad to say goodbye, we can't wait to see all that Lyla and Ellie do next.

I am so thankful to be a part of Mentor North as their MSW intern. It has been so fascinating, watching it grow into the complex organization it is now. It is important to recognize and consider the history and dynamics of mentoring and how mentoring has changed drastically over the years. As an organization, we are constantly evolving, with growth and acceptance at the heart of everything we do. When developing new content for our programs, we ask questions, we reach out to communities that we are not a part of to see what we can do to be more inclusive, and we work to create safe space. Mentor North works to support youth in becoming who they want to be and to achieve the goals that they want to achieve.

The Mentor North team is supportive, kind, resilient, and hardworking. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this team.



Lyla Abukhodair

While being a mentor in my undergrad, I witnessed first-hand the impacts Mentor North has in promoting equity among youth in our community. As a first year Master of Public Health Student, I had the opportunity to pursue an internship and I immediately began brainstorming projects I could complete with Mentor North. Over the course of this summer internship, I have completed various activities including creating COVID-19 educational materials, researching the impact of mentoring, creating educational materials regarding cultural humility, creating recruitment and training materials, and analyzing mentor log data.

The most rewarding aspect of this experience has been sharing the impact of mentoring. There is profound research supporting the impact of mentoring on youth's mental health and behavioral outcomes and it has been so exciting to broadcast this message via social media and recruitment materials as well as to remind our staff how impactful the work we are doing is.

This internship has been a remarkable learning experience and has helped me grow as a public health professional. I am so appreciative to have had this opportunity and for the staff of Mentor North for being so supportive and genuine.



Ellie Nelson

Summer Fest was a huge success!

In late July, we enjoyed gathering on the Earth Rider Fest Grounds in Superior for Mentor Superior Summer Fest. We had a lot of fun talking about the power of mentoring, enjoying live music and good food, and raising money for our program. Thank you to Solid Foundations of Minnesota, London Road Rentals, Border Town Betties, Kero Creative, Kiwanis Superior, and North End's Councilor Lindsey Graskey for supporting our event.



Getting ready for Give to the Max Day!

Give to the Max Day is Thursday, November 18th. Minnesota's giving holiday is an opportunity to talk about Mentor North and raise funds for our organization that are vital in strengthening our efforts to build a diverse

and inclusive mentoring community. Please spread the word! Learn more about our Give to the Max Day campaign and make your donation at givemn.org/organization/Mentornorth.



Thank You for Your Support!

Birds Bar named our Mentor Superior program as their June meat raffle recipient. Wow! What a wonderful donation.



We recognize **Duluth Aging Support** for their continued partnership and support of Mentor North. Duluth Aging Support enhances the lives of older adults and caregivers in the Northland through outreach, awareness, advocacy, and collaborative partnerships. Learn more at duluthagingsupport.org.

The **Concordia Cares Committee** at Concordia Lutheran Church (Superior) recently made a donation in continued support of the integration of mental health services into our programming.



Your support matters. If you'd like to make a donation to Mentor North, you can do so right on our website (mentornorth.org). If you'd like to discuss opportunities for business sponsorships, including newsletter and event sponsorship opportunities, please email info@mentornorth.org.

Program Updates

In July 2021, we welcomed Azrin Awal to the Mentor North team as our new Mutual Mentoring and Five Points Program Advocate.



Azrin comes to our team with lots of energy and passion for the community and seeing these programs grow to their full potential. Welcome Azrin!



Mutual Mentoring is our new intergenerational mentoring program connecting students at St. Scholastic to older adults living in Duluth. We look forward to sharing more about this program and stories from our program participants with you in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact Azrin for more information about Mutual Mentoring.



Our second year of Five Points is underway! We are so excited to once again match adult mentors with students in our Duluth schools for academic support. This year's focus is with our middle school students and providing opportunities for them to meet with mentors on a regular basis throughout the academic year.

We wish everyone a great school year, and we look forward to sharing more about Five Points as the year progresses.

Youth Voice Project



The Youth Voice Project aims to engage youth in helping us tell Mentor North's story as well as to give them an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences in our program through creative storytelling. The project is a collaboration between DanSan Creatives and Mentor North.



Our goal is to affirm the importance of youth presence and voice in our program while also creating and fostering safe spaces where youth can be their authentic selves and help us educate our community and future families and mentors about our program and what it has to offer. Mentoring provides a space to lift each other up, build trust, ask big questions, and take risks. Youth and youth voices are important.



Photos taken during a July 2021 recording session with Daniel of DanSan Creatives.



Hiking in Harmony

For six weeks in July and August, Mentor North youth were able to enjoy Hiking in Harmony, a special activity made possible through a special collaboration with the KAKO Foundation. Youth were able to enjoy nature through a variety of activities and always with a connection back to music.



What a fun way to learn, explore, and grow together.





Beth Burt (Olson)

Welcoming Beth Burt (Olson) to the Mentor North Team!

Hello Everyone and Happy Autumn!

My name is Beth Burt (Olson) and I am so excited to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of Mentor North.

I live in West Duluth with my wife and two cats. I have a 23 year old daughter who lives in Superior. For over 20 years, I have worked in the Duluth community organizing and advocating with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. I left this work to serve as a St. Louis County Commissioner. I chose not to run after one term, because I knew I belonged out in the community making our community better for families and youth. Mentor North does just that. I am proud to be here and look forward to meeting you all some day.

Mentoring relationships are powerful. Just check out the story of Gabe and Jerry to learn about that power in action. That powerful impact extends to families and communities. Together, through mentoring, we build resilience, inclusion and generosity of spirit in our community. That's why it's all hands on deck to find more mentors to match with youth who are waiting. I'm asking each of you to think about someone in your life who would make a great mentor. Maybe it's you. Maybe you already are a mentor and you have friends, families or co-workers who you know would love it. Reach out and let them know about the power of mentoring and together we will make sure every youth who wants a mentor has one. Together, we will build a community where all youth can reach for the stars.

Take Care!

Beth Burt



***Want to get in touch with Beth?
Email: bburt@mentornorth.org
Call: 218-606-2772***



The Power of Self-Compassion

By Sonja Wildwood, MA, LPCC | she/her/hers pronouns

"Unlike self-criticism which asks, if you are good enough, self-compassion asks, what is good for you?" – Kristin Neff

Many of us were raised in a culture where self-compassion was not a concept widely known or talked about in a positive light. In some realms, even now, the sense is that self-compassion equates with self-pity and weakness. Research in the last decade tells us much different. As it turns out, self-compassion - the act of treating yourself with kindness and understanding (perhaps how you might treat a dear friend who is suffering), is incredibly powerful. Research has shown that people who use self-compassion have better mental and physical health, better relationships, less anxiety and depression, more life satisfaction and motivation, increased resilience, and are just happier.

In a sense, it is a form of emotional intelligence and strength, allowing yourself to have and feel the feelings rather than pushing them away or criticizing yourself for being human (which often sets our bodies into a stress response). This act can help you to eventually gain perspective, resilience, confidence, and more. Someone once shared the powerful and visual statement of "walking alongside yourself." Take a moment and imagine that. Now, imagine the young people in your life also having the ability to be kind to themselves and the outcomes listed above. Our kids are always watching and taking in how to respond to the world. What better way to model and teach them than to practice this act in our everyday lives?



Kristin Neff, the pioneer of self-compassion research, says there are three components to self-compassion:

1. Self-kindness (being warm and understanding toward yourself in the face of suffering, failure, etc. rather than ignoring or self-criticism)
2. Common humanity (knowing that all humans suffer and make mistakes, we are not alone)
3. Mindfulness (the ability to be open, receptive, and non-judgmental – take it all in as is and gain perspective)

As we are all coming into a time of continued transition and uncertainty after such a challenging year and a half, there is not a better time to be kinder and more loving toward ourselves and to model that powerful self-compassion to our youth.

To learn more about self-compassion including strategies and videos check out:

<https://self-compassion.org/>.



Sonja Wildwood is a mentor and a clinical therapist working in our community. She is the mental health consultant for Mentor North. Do you have questions or are you interested in support? Contact Sonja at 218-409-6377 or sonjawildwoodtherapy@gmail.com.

Matchiversaries

Mentee	Mentor	Match Date
Larisa	Abigail DeLisle	10/13/2016
Ariyah	Kim Bernacki	11/01/2016
Koral Crou	Cora VandeWege	11/11/2016
Kaelie	Billie Reinbold & Trapper Ward	12/07/2016
Serrenity	Sonja Wildwood	10/12/2017
Jarika	Sasha Howell	11/10/2017
Darrian	Greg Cooper	11/23/2018
James	Micah Schwecke	10/25/2019
Samantha	Jocelyn Nelson	10/30/2019
Isaiah	Tianna Day	11/06/2019
Kialyn	Karen Valdez	11/13/2019
Nolan	Jodie Johnson	10/28/2020
Robbie	Samantha & Kenneth Karaba	11/07/2020
Lily	Emily Rahrick	12/04/2020
Cameron	Darren Borowski	12/15/2020
Aryanna	Jen Ondrus	12/16/2020

Congratulations Matches!



Megan and Kamilla

Megan and Kamilla were matched
in August 2021!



Matches having
fun together over the
summer!





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**Celebrate Youth
Celebrate Relationships**

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Learn more about pronouns and why they matter at mypronouns.org.



For the latest events and updates, be sure to check us out on social media. Find us @mentornorth on Instagram and Twitter and @mentorduluth and @mentorsuperior on Facebook.

Mentor Duluth, Mentor Superior, Five Points, and Mutual Mentoring are programs of Mentor North.