

**Partnership of  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
AND OTHER SURROUNDING SCHOOL SYSTEMS**

**DREAM-CATCHERS  
MENTORING PROGRAM HANDBOOK**



*Last Updated: 2016*

## Acknowledgements

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## 1. INTRODUCTION: THE DREAM-CATCHERS MENTORING PROGRAM

### a. Background of the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program

In Spring 2000, George Mason University had a new Provost, Dr. Peter Stearns, who was interested in reaching out to at-risk high school students who could benefit from a college education. He enlisted a former Dean of the Graduate School of Education, Dr. Larry Bowen, who was also a former at-risk student, to spearhead this concept. The Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program was created as a direct result of a series of meetings held in the early spring of 2000 when a group of concerned Fairfax County Public Schools' Non-traditional education teachers, counselors, and principals met with Dr. Bowen and several equally concerned George Mason University faculty. Their goal was to attempt to determine how to provide an opportunity for George Mason University to reach out and assist capable at-risk high school students to obtain a college education.

In order to meet this goal, an advisory/management team was formed that consisted of the three non-traditional high school principals, the Director of Non-Traditional Education, and the Coordinator of Non-Traditional Schools from Fairfax County Public Schools. George Mason University was represented by the Director of Admissions, the Director of Financial Assistance, another faculty member and Dr. Bowen (prior to his passing). They decided to establish a formal partnership between George Mason University and Fairfax County Public Schools called "Dream-Catchers." It was co-coordinated by the Director of Non-Traditional Schools from Fairfax County Public Schools, Dr. Teresa Zutter (Director of Non-Traditional Education) and by Dr. Jane A. Razeghi, Associate Professor (now retired) from George Mason University. In addition, each of the three non-traditional education high schools (at that time) had a Dream-Catchers liaison who served as the key "staff" of the program.

In recent years, the Fairfax administrative organization has changed. **Teresa Zutter** was succeeded by **Ellen McCarthy**, Coordinator of Non-Traditional Programs, who retired in June 2012. She has been replaced by **Kathryn Salerno** who is designated as the Fairfax Dream-Catchers Coordinator. Kathryn is enthusiastic about this program and is expanding the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program to many of other non-traditional programs under her direction. In addition, Dream-Catchers is expanding its reach to include Prince William County Public Schools, where **Robert Eichorn** is designated as the PWPS Dream-Catchers Coordinator.

### b. Description of the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program

**Dream-Catchers** is a George Mason University partnership with the Fairfax County Public Schools and surrounding school systems that provides hope for capable at-risk youth enrolled in non-traditional education programs. This unique partnership identifies and supports these students in achieving their dreams of attending and graduating college through the utilization of mentors and role models from the George Mason University community and the Northern Virginia region. The program represents a **collaborative partnership** between one of the nation's largest school systems and one of the fastest growing universities in Virginia in offering the opportunity of college to students who may believe their dreams of college have evaporated. The program begins during the last two years of high school and continues throughout four years of college at George Mason University. It provides the following:

- Support for needed **academic focus**
- **Positive role models** in the workplace and at George Mason University
- Continuous support and focus on the student's **personal and academic progress**

- Assistance in obtaining **funding for college tuition** via the application process, advice, reminders and related seminars for success in these and other areas, when possible

c. Mission/Vision Statements

i. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)

Vision Statement

Fairfax County Public Schools, a world-class school system, inspires, enables, and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

Mission Statement

Looking to the Future

FCPS prepares all students for the world of the future, by giving them a broad spectrum of opportunities to prepare for education and employment beyond high school. All graduates are productive and responsible members of society, capable of competing in the global economy, and motivated to pursue learning throughout their lifetimes.

Commitment to Opportunity

FCPS values its diversity, and acknowledges that all people contribute to the well-being of the community. FCPS provides opportunities for all its students and employees to grow educationally, personally, and professionally.

Community Support

Fairfax County embraces its schools. Businesses and community members generously volunteer their time and resources to help students. Schools are integrated into the fabric of the community, and residents take pride in their schools. The success of FCPS draws businesses to Fairfax County. Citizens support the financial and capital needs of the school system.

Achievement

Fairfax County students achieve at high levels across a broad spectrum of pursuits. FCPS values a well-rounded education that goes beyond basics, and encompasses the arts, literacy, technology, and preparation for the world of work. FCPS provides a breadth and depth of opportunities to allow all students to stretch their capabilities.

Accountability

FCPS is accountable for the academic achievement of all students. FCPS measures academic progress to ensure that all students, regardless of race, poverty, language, or disability, will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary for college and/or employment. FCPS spends money wisely. FCPS directs funds to the classroom, and finds ways to improve performance across the spectrum of academic programs and business processes.

ii. Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS)

Vision Statement

It is the vision of Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) to provide equitable and effective use of existing and emerging technology to engage and challenge diverse learners in preparation for global citizenship in an increasingly complex information society. Technology supports effective communication, promotes efficient use of resources, and provides a conduit for data-driven decision making. Prince William County Public Schools:

- are committed to supporting its core missions of education, research, and service through the effective management and use of information technology resources.
- are dedicated to providing technology services division-wide to fulfill its commitment to research and education of the highest quality.
- collaborates with stakeholders in the design, development, and maintenance of an effective, flexible, and reliable technology infrastructure.
- maintain and use current and emergent technologies while providing supportive training that meet stakeholders evolving needs
- promotes equitable access to technologies across the district to support a world class education
- integrates research supported state of the art technologies division wide to enhance student achievement and promote global citizenship.

Mission Statement

Instilling 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies in Tomorrow's Successful Global Citizens.  
Prince William County Public Schools:

- cultivates a safe and respectful learning environment.
- maintains a highly trained and responsive staff that uses research-based best practices.
- creates diverse learning opportunities and monitoring student progress necessary to promote high achievement of each student.
- provides superior support to the technology infrastructure of our schools allowing educators to effectively integrate technology across subject areas.
- continues to work with the community to foster public involvement with, and understanding of our educational programs.
- ensures equitable access to technology tools district wide.
- promotes adoption of emerging technologies in academic settings to enrich instruction.

iii. George Mason University

Vision Statement

George Mason will be the university needed by a region and world driven by new social, economic, and technological realities.

#### Mission Statement

George Mason University is innovative and entrepreneurial in spirit and utilizes its multi-campus organization and location near our nation's capital to attract outstanding faculty, staff, and students.

Mason will:

Educate the new generation of leaders for the 21st century men and women capable of shaping a global community with vision, justice, and clarity.

Encourage freedom of thought, speech, and inquiry in a tolerant, respectful academic setting that values diversity.

Provide innovative and interdisciplinary undergraduate, graduate, and professional courses of study that enable students to exercise analytical and imaginative thinking and make well-founded ethical decisions.

Nurture and support a highly qualified and entrepreneurial faculty that is excellent at teaching, active in pure and applied research, capable of providing a broad range of intellectual and cultural insights, and is responsive to the needs of students and their communities.

Maintain an international reputation for superior education and public service that affirms its role as the intellectual and cultural nexus among Northern Virginia, the nation, and the world.

#### iv. Apple Federal Credit Union (AFCU) Education Foundation

##### Vision Statement

To be the premier financial institution serving the educational community.

##### Mission Statement

Through a lifelong partnership with anyone touched by education, AFCU helps members achieve their dreams by offering competitive financial solutions, with dedicated personal service. We exist, not for profit, but for the benefit of our members.

#### v. Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program

##### Vision Statement

The Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program will be the premiere mentoring program **partnership** between Fairfax County Public Schools and other area school systems and George Mason University "Changing the World, One Student at a Time."

##### Mission Statement

Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program is a University-wide partnership with the Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) and other area school systems divisions that provide hope for capable at-risk youth enrolled in nontraditional education programs. This unique partnership identifies and supports these students in achieving their dreams to attend and graduate from George Mason University. It



does so through the use of mentors and role models from the MASON community and the Northern Virginia region.

d. Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program Job Descriptions

i. Mason Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program Coordinator

The GMU Program Coordinator will:

- Work with the Fairfax Dream-Catchers Coordinator in all aspects of the program
- Oversee organizational meeting for new school year (goals & activities) in conjunction with the FCPS Dream-Catchers Coordinator & Liaisons
- Attend & co-chair Dream-Catchers liaison meetings
- Recruit members of Advisory Committee, when needed
- Schedule and plan Advisory Committee meetings, as needed
- Identify potential Dream-Catcher mentors
  - Update the recruitment email that is sent from the Provost requesting volunteer mentors from faculty & staff
  - Contact the provost's administrative assistant to request that the email (sent directly from the Provost) be sent to all Mason faculty & staff
  - Receive & acknowledge the applications from faculty & staff volunteers that result from the email (applications are attached to the email)
- Determine criteria for Mentor (career interests or major specific)
  - Facilitate the mentor recruitment process
  - Recruitment
  - Application (form)
  - Background checks (previously done by FCPS)
  - Interview
  - Selection
  - Notification
  - Facilitate, in conjunction with the Fairfax Dream-Catchers Coordinator – the matching of mentors with students (mentees)
  - Schedule the meeting with the Dream-Catcher liaisons (from Fairfax)
  - Participate in the matching process
  - Notify, in conjunction with the Dream-Catcher liaisons, the mentors of their assigned mentee
  - Assist mentors with questions and problems, when needed
- Facilitate logistics for GMU campus mentor-mentee activities
- Reserve space as required by activity
- Coordinate catering as needed
- Act as liaison between GMU administration and the Dream-Catchers Program
- Oversee public relations in GMU for the program
- Maintain updated mentor-mentee roster
- Conduct periodic GMU mentor support/sharing sessions
- Maintain contact with mentors via email and/or phone
- Oversee, in conjunction with the Mason Dream-Catcher Coordinator, evaluation of mentee-mentor evaluation
- Attend & co-chair monthly Dream Catchers Liaison meetings
- Prepare agenda with FCPC Coordinator
- Record notes/minutes of meetings

- Send out meeting reminders
  - Apply and/or assist with the preparation of grants, when needed
- ii. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program Coordinator

The FCPS Program Coordinator will:

- Work with the Mason Dream-Catchers Coordinators in all aspects of the program
- Oversee organizational meeting for new school year (goals & activities) in conjunction with the FCPS Dream-Catchers Coordinator & Liaisons
- Attend & co-chair Dream-Catchers liaison meetings
- Maintain all financial records for the AFCU Education Foundation Grant & other grants, when needed
- Collaborate with FCPS school liaisons on Dream-Catcher programs
- Facilitate, in conjunction with the Mason Dream-Catchers Coordinator – the matching of mentors with students (mentees)
- Act as liaison with FCPS administration
- Supervise School & Program Dream-Catchers Liaisons
- Oversee public relations in FCPS for the program
- Oversee, in conjunction with the Mason Dream-Catcher Coordinator, evaluation of mentee-mentor evaluation
- Apply and/or assist with the preparation of grants, when needed

- iii. Non-Traditional High School Dream-Catchers Liaisons

Dream-Catchers School liaisons will:

- Establish year's goals and activity calendar
- Market program within non-traditional schools and programs
- Facilitate mentee recruitment process
  - Recruitment
  - Application
  - Interview
  - Selection
  - Notification
- Plan and facilitate mentor-mentee workshops
- Monitor mentees
  - Academics
  - Attendance
  - Communication
  - Transportation coordination for mentees to workshops
  - Resource for mentees through post-secondary transition process
  - Link for mentee-mentor relationship
- Evaluate mentee feedback and participation
- Oversee selection, administration and awarding AFCU Education Foundation Dream-Catcher Scholarships

- iv. Mason Dream-Catchers Mentors

Who Could Be A “Dream-Catchers” Mentor?

MASON faculty and staff are sought who possess the following natural attributes that promote student success:

- the belief that every person has the right to pursue one's dreams and to better oneself through continued knowledge and skill development
- a desire to give of oneself on a meaningful and personal level to motivate successful students enrolled at nontraditional high schools in Fairfax County Public Schools seeking to attend GMU

#### What Will A "Dream-Catchers" Mentor or Role Model Be Expected to Do?

The extent of interactions with an identified student will depend on the ability to schedule time for activities and to commit to a long-term relationship with a student. Two options are available:

#### **Mentors:**

Selected MASON faculty and staff will be matched to students in their junior and/or senior years of high school according to common interests and geographic location. This relationship will continue through the completion of their university program.

If faculty and/or staff were to participate as a Dream-Catchers Mentor this year, they would be asked to spend about 2 – 4 hours per month doing such things as the following:

- Attend **mentor orientation/training** activities (including a get-acquainted and end -of-year awards reception and/or dinners)
- Spend a **few minutes each week** or every other week interacting with your mentee either through telephone and/or electronic (e-mail) conversations
- **Make time each month to meet with the mentee** for lunch, after-school, special events or other appropriate activities
- **Participate in mentor network meetings** held several times throughout the year
- **Participate** with other mentors and their mentees in **social functions** (events, seminars) sponsored by the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program

#### **Role Models:**

If faculty and/or staff were to participate as a Dream-Catchers Role Model this year, they would be asked to:

- Participate in at least one Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program event involving the mentees and mentors, perhaps speaking about their career or life experiences

#### v. Dream-Catchers Program Proposed Advisory Committee

Members of the Advisory Committee will:

- Meet as needed
- Address Dream-Catcher Program policies and issues

- Provide judicious advice and make recommendations for changes to the program as appropriate
- Provide suggestions for additional resources
- Attend and support Dream-Catcher activities when possible

**2. DREAM-CATCHERS MENTORING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND ANNUAL CYCLE OF EVENTS**

a. Annual Timeline

An annual timeline serves as a guide for program activities and helps keep the program organized and accountable. The following table is suggested as an ideal guideline, but may need to be adjusted as needed.

Month	Suggested Activities
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify meeting date for Coordinators and Liaisons to review the Dream-Catchers plans for the year</li> <li>• Organizational meeting for new school year (determine liaison monthly meeting dates, etc.)</li> <li>• Establish year's goals</li> <li>• Establish activity calendar for year</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine if enough info is available to identify potential students</li> <li>• Begin to <b>recruit mentors</b></li> <li>• Hold first Advisory Council/Steering Committee meeting (GMU/FCPS Program Coordinators), if needed</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to <b>identify potential Dream-Catcher students</b> (referrals from teachers, counselors, parents, self-referrals) in non-traditional schools &amp; designated programs</li> <li>• Have students complete <b>applications</b> and secure <b>recommendations</b></li> <li>• <b>Screen mentor applications</b> – target GMU mentors in student's area of interest (major/subject)</li> <li>• Plan and conduct <b>Mentor Orientation at GMU</b> in conjunction with coordinators &amp; liaisons</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Screen mentee (student) applications</b>, review grades from first grading period, conduct interviews, and select new Dream-Catchers students</li> <li>• Identify criteria for mentor recruitment (career interest or major specific) either from existing pool of mentors or for new recruits</li> <li>• Match mentors and mentees</li> <li>• Notify mentors of their assigned students and parents of selection</li> <li>• Hold <b>Meet and Greet</b> event for mentors and mentees at GMU to introduce assigned mentors and mentees – distribute activity calendar</li> <li>• Plan and conduct <b>college admissions process workshop</b> at GMU, possibly as part of the Meet and Greet event</li> <li>• Liaisons contact and plan visits of assigned mentors <b>at the mentee's (student's) school</b> especially for those who did not participate in the Meet and Greet event</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor mentee-mentor matches</li> <li>• Thank mentors for their involvement (in school activity)</li> <li>• Plan and conduct <b>Financial Aid Workshop at GMU for students, mentors &amp; parents</b></li> </ul>

February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>National Mentoring Month</b> – plan and conduct a fun activity for mentor and mentees</li> <li>• Compile workshop evaluations</li> <li>• Continue to monitor mentor/mentee matches</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and conduct another activity for mentor and mentees, possibly a college success workshop or activity at the Center for the Arts</li> <li>• Continue to monitor mentor/mentee matches</li> <li>• Celebrate Dream-Catchers February graduates</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and conduct <b>GMU Campus Tour</b> by Mason Leaders with a mentor/mentee lunch</li> <li>• Hold mentor support/sharing session conducted by GMU program coordinator</li> <li>• Continue to monitor mentor/mentee matches</li> <li>• Plan Mentor/Mentee Recognition Breakfast</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>National Volunteer Month</b> – organize volunteer activity for mentors and mentees to work together</li> <li>• Hold Recognition Breakfast – honor mentors and mentees, if funds are available</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather data for yearly evaluation of program</li> <li>• Plan and conduct second Dream-Catchers Advisory Committee meeting (GMU/FCPS program coordinators), if needed</li> <li>• Conduct evaluation of current year's programming and events, if possible</li> <li>• End of year luncheon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begin program design and planning for next school year</li> <li>- Set dates for next school year</li> <li>- Establish budget for next school year</li> <li>- Identify possible funding sources for operation funds, i.e, lunches for students and other event expenses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

b. Creating a Climate of Success

An effective student mentorship program must have well defined expectations and strong support from all stakeholders. Below are common characteristics of successful programs:

***Enthusiastic champions for the cause***

Program coordinators should be leaders who are well positioned in their communities, able to recruit the personnel and resources needed for the program and actively promote the program in their respective educationally settings.

School liaisons should be leaders in their school, well connected to the staff, believe in the value of a mentoring program and project a positive attitude about the worth of mentoring relationships for college bound at-risk students.

***Support from the top***

Top administrators and principals can demonstrate their belief in the program by taking part in various activities including orientations, kick-off and end of the year events, and various celebratory events as well as communicating their support of the program in their individual schools or work settings. In addition administrators and principals can find

opportunities to personally thank the mentors when they cross paths and “check in” with students being mentored.

***A team of people determined to create a successful program***

This group is made up of all the key stakeholders who provide any type of assistance throughout the year including counselors and teachers who make recommendations, parents who understand and support the program, office staff who supply administrative assistance, and the Advisory Council (Steering Committee) who help determine the direction of the program and seek and supply the resources needed.

***A plan to support mentors once the program is launched***

On-going training and support for mentors beyond the initial orientation is important. Mentors need the opportunity to meet and discuss issues that arise as well as share successes. Regular collegial email communication between the GMU program coordinator and GMU mentors is critical. In addition, mentors should have contact information for the GMU/FCPS program coordinators to quickly address any issues that may arise.

***Mentors who feel appreciated***

Throughout the year there should be opportunities to show mentors that they are appreciated. Individual as well as group recognition is a key to the success of the overall program. Thank you’s can be as simple as general “thank you” email, individual notes, or a comment from the program coordinators or school liaisons. An acknowledgment of improvement noted in the student’s performance, attendance or behavior is also great recognition for the mentor.

c. Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program Essentials

In partnership with George Mason University, the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program is a FCPS school-based mentoring program. As such the program adheres to the “best practices” and standards of quality for mentoring programs. The following standards are considered as **ESSENTIAL** components of any mentoring program.

**A statement of purpose and action plan:**

- ✓ Development of mission and vision statement
- ✓ Realistic, attainable and easy-to-understand operational plan based on the mission and vision statements
- ✓ Goals, objectives and timelines for all aspects of the plan
- ✓ Funding and resource development
- ✓ Responsibility on the part all stakeholders

**A recruitment plan for both mentors and mentees:**

- ✓ Development of criteria for mentors and mentees
- ✓ A plan and strategy for when, where and how to recruit mentors and mentees
- ✓ The plan and strategies for recruitment that portray accurate expectations and benefits of the program

**An orientation for mentors, parents and mentees:**

- ✓ The Mentor Orientation should include:
  - Program Overview
  - Description of eligibility and screening process of mentees
  - Review of FCPS Guidelines for school volunteers, Code of Ethics for Mentors, Confidentiality Agreements and Dream-Catchers student contract

- A summary of program components including the annual program timeline, any written reports required, evaluations and agreements
- Level of commitment expected
- Expectations and restrictions
- Benefits and awards
- Opportunity for questions
- ✓ The Mentee/Parent Orientation should include:
  - Program Overview
  - Description of eligibility and screening process of mentors
  - Review of FCPS Guidelines for School Volunteers, Code of Ethics for Mentors, Confidentiality Agreements and Dream-Catchers student contract
  - A summary of program components including the annual program timeline and evaluations
  - Level of commitment expected
  - Expectations and restrictions
  - Benefits and rewards
  - Opportunity for questions

**Eligibility screening for mentors:**

- ✓ An application and review process
- ✓ Face-to-face interview with GMU Program Coordinator
- ✓ Check all applicants against the Virginia sex offender registry
- ✓ Contact with references
- ✓ Suitability criteria that aligns with the program's statement of purpose and needs of the mentee population. This could include personality profile, academic interests, personal interests and skills identification, gender, age, language, level of education, career interest, and motivation for volunteering

**Eligibility screening for mentees:**

- ✓ An application and review process
- ✓ Face-to-face interview with on-site School Liaison
- ✓ Contact with references
- ✓ Suitability criteria that aligns with the program's statement of purpose. This could include personality profile, academic interests, personal interests and skills identification, gender, age, language, level of education, career interest(s), and motivation for applying for admission to the program

**A readiness and training curriculum for all mentors that includes:**

- ✓ Training provided by an experienced mentor coordinator
- ✓ Mentor "job" description
- ✓ Guidelines for mentors
- ✓ Skills development including relationship building, communication, and problem-solving
- ✓ Do's and don'ts of mentor/mentee relationship
- ✓ Sources for support as necessary

**A matching strategy that includes:**

- ✓ A link with the program's statement of purpose
- ✓ A rationale for the selected matching strategy
- ✓ Appropriate criteria for the matches including some or all of the following:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Language
  - Availability
  - Needs

- Personal interests
- Academic Interests
- Life experiences
- Career interests
- Temperament and personality
- ✓ An initial activity with the program coordinator or school liaison for mentor and mentee to meet for the first time
- ✓ Suggested activities for appropriate mentor/mentee interactions

**A monitoring process that includes:**

- ✓ A schedule for joint meetings with mentors and mentees
- ✓ A tracking system for monitoring mentor/mentee contact and activities
- ✓ Written log of visits and interactions
- ✓ Regularized input and feedback from mentors and mentees
- ✓ A process for monitoring issues

**A support, recognition and retention component that includes:**

- ✓ A formal kick-off event
- ✓ On-going peer support groups for mentors and mentees
- ✓ On-going training and development
- ✓ A forum to discuss relevant issues
- ✓ Networking opportunities for all stakeholders
- ✓ Social gatherings
- ✓ Annual recognition and appreciation event(s)

**Closure steps that include:**

- ✓ Private and confidential exit interviews to debrief the mentoring relationship between:
  - Mentee and school liaison
  - Mentor and GMU Program Coordinator
  - Mentor and mentee
- ✓ Clearly stated policy for future contacts between mentor and mentor and mentee.
- ✓ Assistance for participating in defining next steps for achieving personal goals (for mentee)

**An evaluation process based on:**

- ✓ Outcome analysis of program and mentoring relationships
- ✓ Program criteria and program objectives
- ✓ Information on needs of program coordinators, school liaisons, school administrators, parents, community partners and other supporters of the program.



### 3. FORMS AND EVALUATIONS

Note: Many of these forms are available from the Dream-Catchers Liaisons. Those included in this handbook are indicated with an asterisk (\*) below.

a. For Mentors

Background Check Waiver (typically conducted by FCPS)  
Mentor Application\*  
Mentor Closure Document  
Mentoring Program Evaluation

b. For Mentees

Activity Log  
Counselor Recommendation Form  
Family Contract\*  
Goal Setting Form  
Mentee Application\*  
Mentoring Program Evaluation  
Program Policies & Expectations for Students\*  
Teacher Recommendation Form\*  
Counselor Recommendation Form\*

c. For School Liaisons

Activity Log  
Counselor Recommendation Form  
Family Contract\*  
Mentee (Student) Application\*  
Mentoring Program Evaluation  
Program Policies & Expectations for Students\*  
Teacher Recommendation Form  
Counselor Recommendation Form\*

d. For Parents

Family Contract\*  
Program Policies & Expectations for Students

e. Possible Evaluation Questions\*

# DREAM-CATCHERS PROGRAM

## STUDENT APPLICATION

### SECTION I

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Grade level \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

School currently attending \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance counselor name \_\_\_\_\_

Father's name \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/guardian with whom you reside \_\_\_\_\_

What language(s) is spoken in your home \_\_\_\_\_

Select one:

U.S. Citizen

Permanent Resident/Non-Citizen

Non-Citizen with asylum/refugee status

Visa or Alien number

**SECTION II**

Give the names of two people who will serve as a reference for you. One should be a teacher or counselor in your school, the other could be someone who knows you in your community. By including their names below, you are giving us permission to contact them about you.

References:

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

What is this person's relationship to you? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

What is this person's relationship to you? \_\_\_\_\_



**SECTION III**

**Personal information (optional section)**

Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been in the United States? \_\_\_\_\_ years

Do you have children? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

Names of children \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your typical daily schedule?

**SECTION IV**

On a separate sheet of paper, please answer each of the following questions using about three paragraphs per answer:

- ✚ Why is it important to you to have a mentor from George Mason University this year and through your college years (if you attend George Mason University)?
- ✚ Do you have a career goal? If so please explain.
- ✚ What are your favorite activities and why?
- ✚ Any other information you wish to share with your mentor.

.....

**SIGNATURE**

I certify that all information given on this application is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge. If I am selected to the Mason Dream Catchers Program, I agree to attend the following activities during the upcoming academic year:

- Team building event held at Mason in November
- End-of-Year Recognition Breakfast held at Mason in April
- Once-a-month individual meetings with your mentor held at your school or other agreed upon location
- At least two additional Dream Catchers events held at Mason during the academic year

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

.....

Witnessed by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature

**DREAM-CATCHERS MENTORING PROGRAM**

**TEACHER AND COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION FORM**

**NOTE: PLEASE FILL IN EACH BLANK SPACE ON THIS FORM**

To \_\_\_\_\_

Concerning Student: \_\_\_\_\_

High School: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The above student is interested in participating in the George Mason University/FCPS/ Other Surrounding School Systems Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program. As part of the application process the student must submit a recommendation form from his/her teacher; please complete and return by the date indicated above.**

*Evaluate the above student for the following characteristics; your responses are confidential. Use a rating scale where 5=high, 4=above average, 3=average (requires comment), 2=marginal, and 1 = low.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Dependability (due dates, assignments)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cooperative (can work with others)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flexibility (reacts to new and unanticipated situations)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Initiative (ability to work without constant supervision)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Maturity (seriousness in approach to studies)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communication skills (oral and written)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Academic potential
- \_\_\_\_\_ Potential as a college student

Teacher/Counselor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

## Dream-Catcher Mentoring Program

### Family Contract

As the parent/guardian of a student in the Fairfax County Public Schools or surrounding school systems and the George Mason University Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program, I agree to the following requirements:

1. I will participate in scheduled student/parent meetings when requested to do so.
2. I will agree to provide on-going support for my student to comply with the rules and requirements of the Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program in the following areas:
  - a) transportation
  - b) attendance
  - c) academics
  - d) dress code
  - e) appropriate school behaviors
3. I understand that selection for and participation in this program is a privilege. The goal is for \_\_\_\_\_ to transition into \_\_\_\_\_.  
(student) (NVCC or GMU)

By signing below, the student and parent/guardian are hereby agreeing to follow the attached Program Policies and Expectations as well as the FCPS Students Rights and Responsibilities. Violations may result in loss of the opportunity to continue in this program.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School Liaison Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Dream-Catchers Mentoring Program

### Program Policies

Respect yourself  
Respect others  
Do your best

### Program Expectations

1. Be on time to program activities with appropriate materials and books.
2. No cell phone use during program activities.
3. Students are expected to call or email school liaison prior to the scheduled activity if they have an excused absence. Excessive absences from program activities will result in dismissal from the program.
4. Dress appropriately (no belly buttons exposed, tattoos, bandannas, hats, shirts displaying negative ideas).
5. Students will follow specific rules set by the school liaisons.

By signing below, the student and parent/guardian are hereby agreeing to follow the FCPS Students Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) or equivalent for other school systems. Violations may result in loss of opportunity to continue in this program.

Parent Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MASON DREAM-CATCHERS  
MENTORING PROGRAM**

**A Partnership Between George Mason University, Fairfax County Public  
Schools, and Other Surrounding School Systems**

**Confidential Mentor Application**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print) Last First Middle

**Position at George Mason University:**

\_\_\_\_\_   
Title Unit (college, school, department) Mail Stop #

**Work Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_   
Street City State Zip Code

Special interests or hobbies that you would be interested in sharing with a student:

Gender preference? \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ no specific preference

Please list any languages you speak in addition to English.

Add any **other information** you would like to share about yourself that could assist us in matching you with an eligible student:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) policy regarding the recruiting of mentors, FCPS will check with the Department of Social Services' Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry, State Police, and Department of Motor Vehicles for matters of public records regarding a potential volunteer's history. Do you object to the Mason Dream-Catchers Mentor Program, in conjunction with Fairfax County Public Schools, conducting this search?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_



**Reference:**

Do you have any objection to our contacting your current work supervisor for a reference?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Current work supervisor's name:

\_\_\_\_\_

First

\_\_\_\_\_

Last

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of employment at Mason? \_\_\_\_\_

**The undersigned acknowledges and agrees that**

1. he or she is not obligated if called upon to perform the volunteer services herein applied for, and that the Mason Dream-Catchers Mentor Program is not obligated to assign or actively seek to assign him or her a student;
2. as a part of the applicant Mason Dream-catchers Mentor Program's matching process, additional personal information may be elicited from the applicant by the Dream-Catchers Mentor Program Team;
3. in accordance and conjunction with Fairfax County Public Schools policy regarding the recruitment of mentors, the Dream-Catchers Mentor Program has the applicant's permission to contact references and to conduct background checks with the Department of Motor Vehicles, the State Police and the Child Abuse Registry;
4. he or she will limit contact with the student to the planned program; and
5. the Dream-Catchers Mentor Program reserves the right at all times to evaluate and mediate all aspects of the program, including the mentor-student relationship, in an on-going manner.

- I also understand that my commitment to serving as a mentor in Dream-Catchers includes the following:
- To participate in the Dream-Catchers program with a student for at least 6 months prior to their attendance at George Mason University and then throughout the student's 4-year program,
- To schedule time each week (or every other week) to interact with a specific student at-risk (mentee) tele-mentoring, e-mailing, etc.)
- To set aside time each month (to be determined) to meet with the mentee at lunch, after school, at a special event, etc.
- To participate in monthly or bi-monthly mentor network meetings and/or social functions with other mentors and their mentees
- Other

I declare that all of the statements made in this application are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Applicant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to:

*Dr. Karen Kitching, Mason Dream-Catchers Coordinator,  
George Mason University, School of Management  
MSN 5F4*

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Kitching at (703) 993-9038 or email her at:

[kkitchin@gmu.edu](mailto:kkitchin@gmu.edu).

## Sample Evaluation Questions

### Students:

- 1) Successful participation in scheduled mentoring activities and events? (high school/college years)
- 2) High enthusiasm for mentor involvement and relationship? (high school/college years)
- 3) Admission to institute of higher learning? Specify.
- 4) Admission to George Mason University?
- 5) Successful completion of two/four year college program?
- 6) Successful entrance to world of work?
- 7) Successful transition to adult independent living?
- 8) Successful peer coaching experiences?

### Faculty Mentors:

- 1) Successful participation in scheduled mentoring activities and events?
- 2) High enthusiasm for mentor involvement and relationship?
- 3) Willingness to continue participation and/or engage in recruitment?

### Program Design:

#### Personnel

- 1) Accurate identification of potential college-bound students?
- 2) Accurate identification of appropriate mentors?
- 3) Adequate support from non-traditional school staff?
- 4) Adequate support from GMU faculty?
- 5) Adequate matching of students to mentors?
- 6) Timely and effective responses by appropriate personnel to issues/concerns?
- 7) High support for and by involved family members associated with students?
- 8) Sufficient recognition/ celebration for all participants?

#### Training

- 9) Adequate coverage of critical orientation knowledge/issues?
- 10) Adequate quantity and quality of training seminars?
- 11) Sufficient on-going training for mentors, students, and associated family/staff?

#### Events and Activities

- (12) Meaningful activities and events as reported by students and mentors?
- (13) Successful scheduling to maximize participation by needed individuals?
- (14) Sufficient time for all participants to be fully engaged?

#### Resources ( Financial, Facility Use, Transportation, Materials and Supplies, etc.)

- (15) Sufficient funding/support for materials, consumables, etc.?
- (16) Continuation of funding sources to support program?
- (17) Adequate time/location allotted to develop relationship?
- (18) Adequate transportation support?
- (19) Sufficient public relations notification?
- (20) Adequate and efficient summative and formative assessment tools?