



– FROM THE DESK OF –
NINA NICOLE LONGINO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, iMENTOR CHICAGO

Dear iMentor Chicago Community,

We are the change we've been waiting for. I am so grateful that you made the choice to step up and mentor a CPS student. Every year, close to 2,000 mentors make meaningful connections with students in our five CPS partner schools and through our post-secondary pathways program. As a dedicated volunteer mentor helping to increase graduation rates and college enrollment for students, you are part of the REAL Chicago.

This year, 76% of iMentor students will be the first in their families to attend college and Fall 2022 marks the beginning of another year of impactful mentoring relationships. We can't wait to see what our students will accomplish with your support in the months to come! This year is an especially exciting time for iMentor Chicago, as we launch our partnership with Chicago Tech Academy High School, our fifth partner school. We enter this partnership with excitement to expand technology careers to our high school students and are thrilled with the collaborative spirit between Chicago Tech's school administration and our brilliant team.

And we're continuing to grow! We have ambitious and scalable plans to expand into three more schools by 2024. The launch of our Growth Fund campaign will serve as our roadmap along the way. With new partnerships comes the opportunity to introduce even more students, families and communities to our Next Gen Leaders initiative, a collaboration with five vanguard companies in leading Chicago industries that are poised to offer career training and jobs for our students and their families.

iMentor Chicago knows that a program like ours represents a counternarrative to the negative characterization of our city. We are not just the provocative, turbulent headlines that saturate 24-hour news cycles. We are a city where our young people are striving for success, and they are surrounded by caring adults who are invested in their well-being. This is the REAL Chicago. And we need caring adults in this city to continue representing the real Chicago way.

That's why we're raising a mentor recruitment call-to-action this season. Our team entered this year with a lofty goal to recruit 800 new mentors to match with our students this year. We hope you have been seeing iMentor all over the city in support of this effort! We've made incredible progress...but we're not done! We need your help recruiting the remaining 100 new mentors to match with students this year. We're so close to our goal! We just need an additional 100 caring volunteers to support our youth – our Talent for Tomorrow. Please [share this LinkedIn mentor recruitment post](#) with your network to help spread iMentor to your friends and family.

Thank you so much for playing such an integral role in the iMentor Chicago story. More importantly, thank you for playing a critical role in the lives of our young people. It's truly amazing to see mentors and students interacting at school again. Sharing knowledge, laughter, and joy. You make this happen by building a trusting relationship with your student. And that trust translates into amazing outcomes for our students. Even during the pandemic, our students persisted in college at a rate of 85%! That shows that our program is working. What you are doing is working. And we need more people like you.

We thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

Nina Nicole Longino