Dear Parents/Guardians,

Illini Mentor Program (IMP) is an award-winning registered student organization at the University of Illinois dedicated to fostering meaningful and consistent mentoring relationships between university students and children in the local community with the goal of supporting learning, growth, skill-building, and interracial and cultural understanding. IMP has operated site-based mentoring programs successfully since 2005 with active partnerships at Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club and Dr. Preston L. Williams Elementary School.

In collaboration with Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club, IMP will operate a site-based mentoring program at the 201 E. Park St. facility on Saturdays from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. for children (ages 8-10) during the 2021-22 academic year. The mentoring program is available free of charge to children enrolled at the Club.

Mentees receive one-on-one attention from a designated mentor throughout the school year, and these relationships often continue for more than one year in the program. The program emphasizes academic support, reading, and enrichment activities to build developmental assets that will help children to become healthy, successful, and responsible citizens. Each session provides individualized attention for academic support as well as group activities that mentors and mentees participate in together. Example activities include themes such as the arts, STEM, culture and diversity, self-esteem, health and nutrition, stress management, communication and interpersonal skills, and service to the community. IMP’s site supervisors provide support for each session, and they are available to help family members with questions and concerns.

All University of Illinois student mentors commit to providing quality mentoring for the school year and submit to a criminal background check in accordance with the Club’s policies and an application and interview process. Mentors receive supervision and participate regularly in reflection and development activities to enhance their mentoring skills. Mentors also engage in fundraising and committee work to provide program materials and to plan group activities.

Some expectations for participation in IMP include the following:

- Parents/guardians will help to set goals and expectations in consultation with the mentor/mentee (during a program orientation and other communications).
- Parents/guardians will ensure that children make it to the program regularly and on time. More than three absences may result in removal from the program. Parents are expected to notify the mentor or site supervisor ahead of time of absences/late arrivals.
- Children will come prepared with homework or academic materials in a subject that they want to focus on (when available).
- Children will come with a positive attitude, openness to new activities, and appropriate behavior. Repeated disciplinary problems may result in removal from the program.
If you would like your child to be considered for a spot, please register/complete an application on the Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club [website](#). Please note that your child may become a Club member and participate in IMP even if there is a waiting list for the Club’s general academic program. If you have more than one child whom you would like to sign up, please submit a separate application for each child. The **deadline for mentee applications is Sunday, August 29.**

**Save the Date:** Mentoring will begin **Saturday, September 25.** We request that parents/guardians attend a 30-minute **mandatory orientation** at the end of this session, from 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. We have learned that this is an important part of building a strong foundation for the mentoring experience. Orientation will include an opportunity to learn more about the program, meet your child’s mentor, and engage in brief discussion with your child and the mentor to build a connection, set goals for mentoring, and establish expectations for communications. IMP will provide refreshments for the orientation.

After completion of mentor recruitment in mid-September, IMP will notify parents/guardians when children are matched with mentors. Due to space limitations and the availability of mentors, we may not be able to accommodate all families. IMP will create a waiting list and contact families as additional spots open during the school year. IMP grants priority to children who participated in the program previously.

Virtual 20-min information sessions with an opportunity for Q&A are available on the following dates: July 8 (Thurs) at 7 p.m., July 10 (Sat) at 10 a.m., and Aug 12 (Thurs) at 7 p.m. [Zoom Link](#) (Meeting ID: 82406752481; Password: 919946)

For questions, please contact IMP’s student president, Arohi Deshpande (arohiad2@illinois.edu or call/text at 630-452-2104). Dale DeVries, Director of Elementary Services at the Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club, is the point of contact for additional questions about the Club and membership (ddevries@dmbgc.org or 217-355-5437).

Hope to see your child participate in Illini Mentor Program this year!