

Carson City mentoring program wins 2007 Red Wagon Award

By Brandon Seng, Communications Manager, Michigan Nonprofit Association



“You can always make a difference in someone’s life through words, actions and who you are to them. Impressions last a lifetime.” This was a quote in response to a survey given by the Carson City School Mentoring Program, a 2007 Red Wagon Award Winner.

The Michigan’s Promise Red Wagon Awards are given annually to programs that exemplify one of the five promises identified by America’s Promise.

The contact point for their Community of Promise, Volunteer Connections of Montcalm County nominated this mentoring program for their recent award. The Carson City School Mentoring Program is one of the several mentoring programs affiliated with that community of promise, and Volunteer Connections names it as one of their longest running programs.

“After celebrating their ten-year-anniversary, we thought it a perfect time to highlight the success of this program,” said Denise Hubbard, Executive Director of Volunteer Connections. “Our relationship with this program goes way back to it’s start, and they continue to be very involved in serving the youth in our area.”

The program has gone beyond the traditional adult-child matching, and has implemented two other programs where high school youth mentor young children in the school system. High school juniors are now matched with middle school students, while seniors serve as “Reading Buddies” with children in lower elementary grades. Overall the program has nearly 250 youth being mentored by individuals who work to model character, positive choices, decision-making and values.

Volunteer Connections has identified this program as one that provides ongoing relationships with caring adults to the children and youth in their community. In the ten years the program has been running, it has built base of dedicated volunteers, many who have been serving as mentors since the program began.

Building a sustainable program is difficult, but through the hard work of Mentoring Coordinator Kelly Pringle and other dedicated volunteers, the Carson City School Mentoring Program has accomplished just that. They have created a program of quality that returns year after year, to make a difference in the lives of Michigan’s youth.

For more information about this program, and other volunteer opportunities in Montcalm County, visit www.mcvolunteerconnections.org.