



The UrbanFUTURE Academy Final Report Academic Year 2008-09

Data collected and analyzed by UrbanFUTURE staff.

Executive Summary



The 2008-09 academic year brought much success and learning for the UrbanFUTURE (UF) Academy. UF operated at **Fanning Middle School** (grades 6-8) and **Mann eMINTS Academy** (grades 4-5). This report is produced as a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data collected throughout the year.

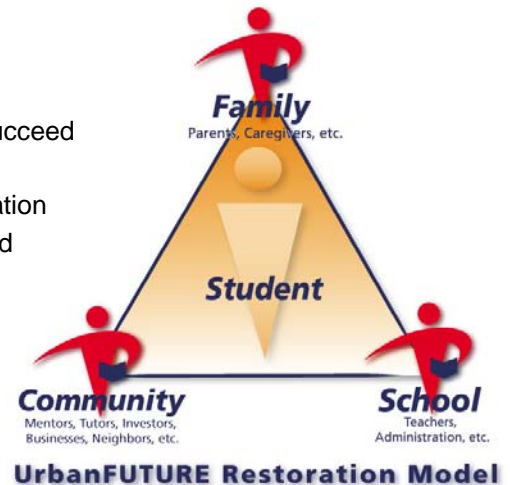
Highlighted in this report:

- Fanning students **increased their GPA 2.5 times greater** than their non-UF peers.
- Fanning students **increased reading comprehension level** by more than one grade level on average.
- Fanning students who attended all year **increased their reading level more than two grade levels!**
- **Fanning and Mann parents** attended UF Academy events in **record numbers**.
- Student **participation doubled at Mann** from last year's participation.
- Mann students **increased their GPA by nearly 8%**.
- Mann students **increased reading comprehension level by nearly a grade and a half** while their non-UF peers increased one grade level on average.

The UrbanFUTURE Framework

UrbanFUTURE helps 4th through 8th grade urban students prepare to succeed in high school and beyond by:

- Supporting **parents** in their leadership role in their children's education
- Restoring an educational collaboration between the **classroom** and the **home**, essential to academic success
- Positioning the **community** as an integral part of the educational process as mentors, tutors, neighbors and investors



UrbanFUTURE Primary Objective

All UrbanFUTURE (UF) students will possess the academic acumen to master high school along with the mindset to *see* and *believe* in their possibilities.

UrbanFUTURE Outcomes

Based on programming objectives as well as input from teachers, parents, students and volunteers, UrbanFUTURE has identified four primary outcomes on which to focus.

- **Academic Achievement:** Student enrichment in the four core subject areas.
- **Literacy:** Developing a love and skill for reading at grade level or above.
- **Parent Leadership:** Parents taking an active role in leading/supporting their child.
- **Character Formation:** Challenging students to become women and men of virtue.

All UF activities and events are designed to affect these primary outcomes. Below are highlighted some of the successes UF has experience thus far in the 2008-09 Academic Year.



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2008-09 Vital Statistics

Sites	Students	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours
Fanning Middle School (6 th -8 th Grade)	95	159	2477
Mann eMINTS Academy (4 th -5 th Grades)	41	40	1218
TOTAL	136	199	3695

“The combination of teacher, parent and student is the best idea I have seen in dealing with youth organizations.”
~ Mentor

UF @ Fanning Middle School

In September 2008, the UrbanFUTURE (UF) Academy began its second year of operation at Fanning Middle School as part of an ongoing pilot in partnership with St. Louis Public Schools. The UF Academy is a supplemental educational experience that operates programming during the regular school day, the afterschool day and in the summer. At the heart of the UF Academy is the alignment of three environments: family, school and community. Since education is the presumed “pathway to success,” UF works within the walls of the educational institution to offer students a seamless integration between regular day and supplemental (afterschool day and community) services.

The UF Academy features two core programs: One on One *INSPIRE™* Mentoring and *IMPACT™* Tutoring. It focuses on four (4) key outcomes: academic achievement, literacy, parental involvement and character formation; all four intentionally guide the activity and operation of the UF Academy and its climate of success.



Hip Hop Dance team.

In order to provide enrichment programs, the UF Academy was able to collaborate with several program providers including the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis, Ichi Ban and Associates, South City YMCA, Metro Theater Co, First Tee Golf, and artists from Springboard to Learning. Over the course of the year, the UF Academy partnered with a total of eighteen (18) organizations and individuals to provide a diverse range of enrichment opportunities for the students.

In addition to the daily afterschool activities, students explored the city of St. Louis on field trips to the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis, St. Louis Art Museum, City Museum, and Saint Louis University. Quarterly “UF Academy Showcases” highlighted successes in mentoring and tutoring and provided a forum for students to perform hip hop and martial arts routines as well as share writing and art projects. These events drew proud parents, volunteers, and teachers in history-making numbers. At the year end banquet, more than **200 people attended to celebrate student success!**

Fanning Successes

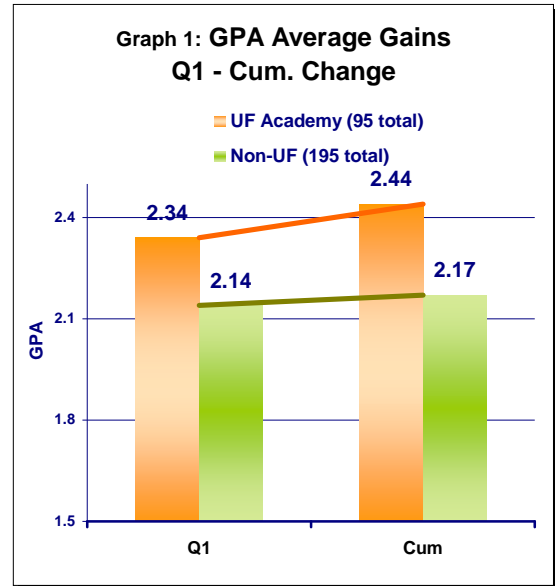
Academic Achievement

UF Academy students earned an average 2.34 GPA in quarter 1 and increased to 2.44 Cumulative¹ GPA, a **4.27% increase**. Non-UF students showed a **1.4% change** by earning an average 2.14 GPA in quarter 1 and a 2.17 cumulative GPA at the end of the year.

UF Academy students improved 67% more than non-UF students!

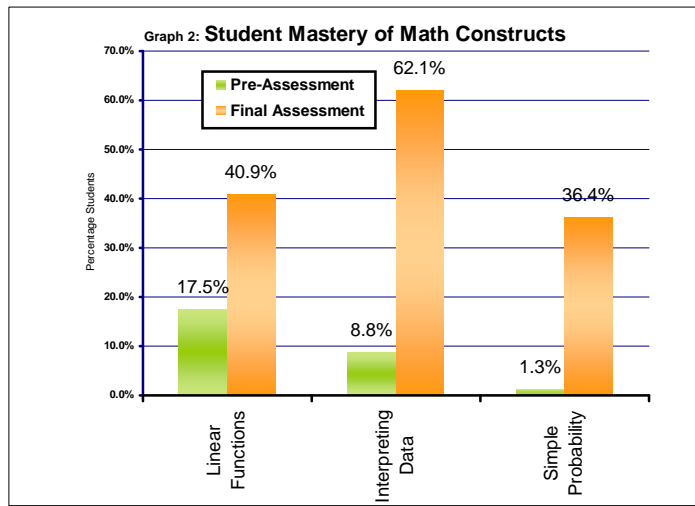


Zebedee (right), an UrbanFUTURE graduate and now a high school senior, tutors Tre'von (left).



Increased Math Assessment Scores

UrbanFUTURE used the Diagnostic Online Math Assessment² (DOMA) to measure mastery of fourteen (14) math constructs.



UF Academy students averaged mastery of 2.32 constructs at the beginning of the year. By the end of the year they mastered 4.62 constructs on average, **yielding a 2.3% point gain**.

Graph 2 illustrates the percentage of UF Academy students who mastered each construct. The most significant gains were seen in the areas of **linear functions, interpreting data, and simple probability**.

Megale's GPA increased by a whole grade point!
 "His grades and work completion have really improved with the mentorship program."
 ~ Megale's teacher



¹ Cumulative GPA is used to show overall growth throughout the year and to account for variations in quarterly classroom grades.

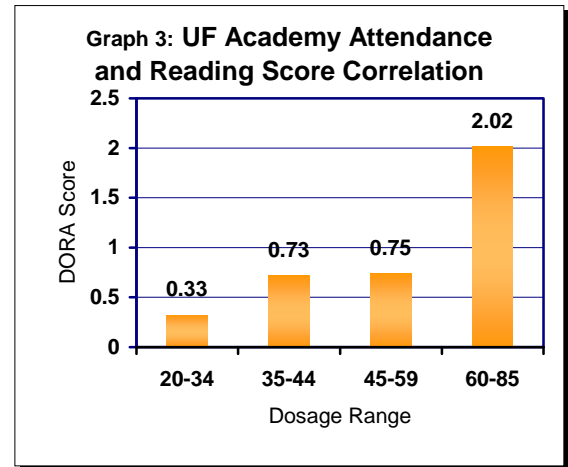
² Non-UF students were not assessed using the DOMA.

Literacy Improvement

UrbanFUTURE used the Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment³ (DORA) to measure reading comprehension. Overall, UF Academy students on average improved one grade level (1.03), increasing from a 4.07 (early 4th grade) to 5.10 (early 5th grade) by the end of the year, an **overall average increase of 1.03 grade levels**.

Graph 3 suggests a positive relationship between attendance at the UF Academy and reading comprehension improvement. Students who **attended the entire year improved their comprehension score by 2 whole grade levels!**

On average, 8th grade students improved nearly 2 full grade levels! From a low 5th grade level to



Literacy Activities

UrbanFUTURE provided two literacy competitions for students at Fanning as part of its effort to integrate the classroom with the afterschool day. The **Read to Succeed** competition engaged students in multiple homerooms for one month to increase reading on their own time. Students **logged more than 12,015 reading minutes** in one month! Parents had to verify the minutes used reading books at home, thereby involving the parents in the activity. Students even began challenging each other to achieve their literacy goals – one student read more than 2,213 minutes during the four week competition. UF Academy students tracked reading minutes throughout the year and logged a **total of 28,860 reading minutes!**



Yasse, the second place winner of the Spelling Bee, celebrating with her proud sister.

Eighteen (18) students qualified for the UrbanFUTURE sponsored **Annual Spring Spelling Bee**. Students, along with mentors and tutors, studied for four (4) weeks to prepare. The competition during the Bee was fierce as the contestants were eagerly supported by their parents, teachers, mentors and tutors.

Parental Leadership

Parental leadership is extremely important for the success of UF Academy students. Parents are required to approve their student's UF Academy schedule, talk to mentors each week to discuss student progress and are encouraged to attend school and UF Academy events and activities. While parental involvement cannot be exclusively measured by attendance at school/UF events, it is a useful indicator.

The UF Academy was launched with record turnout of **78 parents for the UF Academy Kick-Off**. Parents, anxious to enroll their children, met afterschool providers, saw class demonstrations, and enrolled their students.

³ Non-UF students were not assessed using the DORA.

UF staff and volunteers worked diligently to individually invite and encourage parents to attend Parent Teacher Conferences at Fanning. In October, **68 UF parents attended** (65% of the total Fanning parents that attended) and in March, **40 UF parents attended** (41% of the total Fanning parents that attended).

Character Formation

The *INSPIRE* mentoring program focuses specifically on character formation through the All-Star Character Curriculum. The mentoring curriculum allows students and mentors to work through several four-week modules on particular character topics. While the student and mentor learn about a topic through stories, discussion and activities, they also look for practical application through goal-setting. Topics include honesty, self-discipline, generosity, cooperation, leadership, and industriousness. On average this year, each *INSPIRE* team chose 2-3 modules on which to focus and significantly explore.



Goal Setting

Goal Setting is a significant component of the *INSPIRE* Mentoring curriculum. Quarterly goals are tailored for each student and action steps towards achievement of these goals are managed by the team. Mentors set academic goals with students to achieve a particular classroom grade, GPA or specific academic habit. Character goals are individually tailored and guided by the team to help the student develop strong character. Literacy goals were set to increase at least one grade level.

- 66% Academic goals were achieved
- 69% Character goals were achieved
- 40% Literacy goals were achieved

“Setting goals for her helped her apply herself more. I saw her grades improve greatly, and not only was I happy about this, but she was too!”
- Mentor

Satisfaction Survey Highlights

Each year, UrbanFUTURE seeks feedback from parents, students, volunteers and teachers. This information provides valuable affirmation, input and insight for change. Below are some highlights from this year's survey.

- **91% of parents** agree or strongly agree that their child's **academic performance has improved** since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **91% of parents** agree or strongly agree that their **child's attitude about school has improved** since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **95% of parents** are **satisfied or very satisfied with the UrbanFUTURE Program**.
- **95% of parents** would **recommend UrbanFUTURE** for other parents and students.
- **85% of students** would **tell their friends to sign up** for UrbanFUTURE next year.
- **54% of teachers** say that their UF students have **improved in academic performance**.
- **75% of teachers** feel that the **mentoring relationship has been beneficial** for their students.
- **75% of mentors** can see **improvement in their student's reading** since they began meeting.
- **93% of mentors** enjoy meeting with their student each week and feel their **participation is mutually beneficial**.
- **89% of tutors** enjoy meeting with their student each week and feel their **participation is mutually beneficial**.

Comments

- “UrbanFUTURE has helped with [my son’s] reading and has made it fun for him. [My son] also really enjoys Karate and chess. [His mentor] is a very positive role model.” ~Parent
- “The mentoring helped me academically.” ~Student
- “Before starting UF I had never gotten an A in Social Studies.” ~Student
- “I learned a lot, my grades got better. It helped me with my reading and I learned to try my best at my work. It taught me to help people more.” ~Student
- “I am more responsible this year than before. My mentor has been someone I can talk to, someone to help me with my problems.” ~Student
- “Connecting students with mentors, providing positive activities and tutoring.” ~Teacher
- “Following up with students, parents and teachers. Providing a safe/fun afterschool experience.” ~Teacher
- “I feel that the number one thing that UrbanFUTURE is doing well in is the amount of caring they put in to the program. They really go the extra mile for these kids by setting up activities, helping with problems at home or in school, setting them up with applying to High School, etc etc., etc., I really just can’t say enough about the staff (If I had kids I would be happy to let them participate in a program).” ~Mentor
- “UrbanFUTURE is a great program. It should be implemented in more schools.” ~Mentor
- “I have been working with my student for over a year. When we began, she never wanted to read aloud during our reading times and would read only one paragraph before insisting that I continue reading. As we end our third semester together, my student enjoys reading aloud and often wants to be the one to start reading.” ~Mentor

Fanning Success Stories

Below are just a few of our top success stories from this academic year.

Earl’s Team Rallies for Success

Early in the year, Earl’s mother, LaTeva, noticed his math grade slipping. LaTeva worked with Earl’s mentor, Darian, to set a goal of raising that grade by the end of the school year and signed Earl up for IMPACT tutoring twice a week. Darian and Earl also set a goal for Earl to study math at home a little bit each night.



LaTeva made sure that Earl went to IMPACT tutoring and she also worked with Darian to be sure that they were on the same page with Earl’s goals. LaTeva took the lead by setting high expectations for Earl’s math grade, then working with Darian, teachers and UF staff to get the right resources in place and to set action steps for reaching the ultimate goal. Earl raised his math grade to an A by the end of the year! **LaTeva says, “Darian has been a great inspiration to Earl and my family. Darian has inspired Earl to stay focused, stay on task and to never give up. Earl’s attitude, behavior, and reading habits have improved. I have seen a change in my son from beginning to end. Thanks.”**

Angela Reads to Succeed

Angela and her mentor went above and beyond this school year to focus on reading and their hard work has been greatly rewarded by their incredible success. Angela increased her reading comprehension level by three (3) grade levels over the course of the year! Angela read over 2100 minutes at home and during her mentoring sessions. Angela even accomplished all 4 of her character goals over the school year. When asked what she liked most about UrbanFUTURE, she said, “I like that people and teachers help me achieve my dreams and show that they care for me.” She also said, “UrbanFUTURE has helped me because it showed me new things I felt I could never learn. At first I wanted to give up on coming. However, they showed me it was a wonderful thing for me to do with my time.” Angela is now looking forward to starting the 9th grade at Clyde C. Miller.

UF @ Mann eMINTS Academy

The 2008-09 school year was the second of UrbanFUTURE programming at Mann eMINTS Academy. In effort to expand UF's service at Mann, we began serving students in both 4th and 5th grade, offered UF Academy classes four days a week (Monday – Thursday), and hired new programming staff to support the increase in students and programming activities.

UF's primary program at Mann this past year was One on One *INSPIRE* Mentoring. The UF Academy was introduced so that additional enrichment opportunities could be offered. The Reading Buddy program was introduced this year as a way for volunteers who started late in the year to still be matched with a student and assist in their literacy improvement. Mann students also had the opportunity to be involved in additional exciting activities. Students wrote a letter to the new US President and three of the letters were included in a children's book entitled *Kids' Letters to President Obama* published by Ballantine Books. Another major project for the Mann students was planning, promoting and serving at the Mann Elementary *YOUth Can Help, Global Youth Service Day Event*. Mann Students, along with parents, neighbors, mentors, teachers, and friends planted flowers, picked up trash in the neighborhood, painted a mural for the school, and collected canned goods for a local food bank.

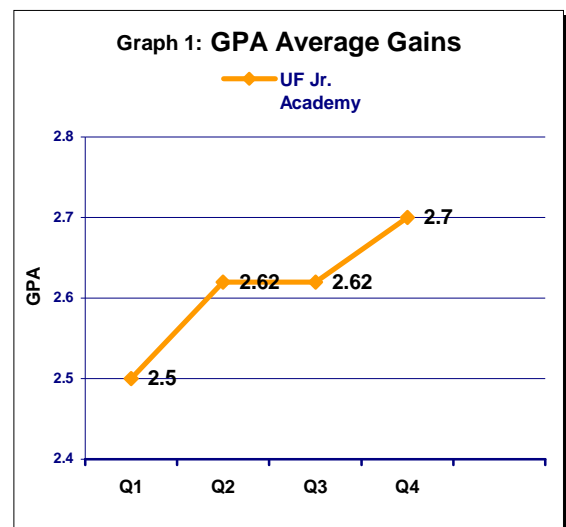


A student during YOUth Can Help Service Day.

Mann Successes

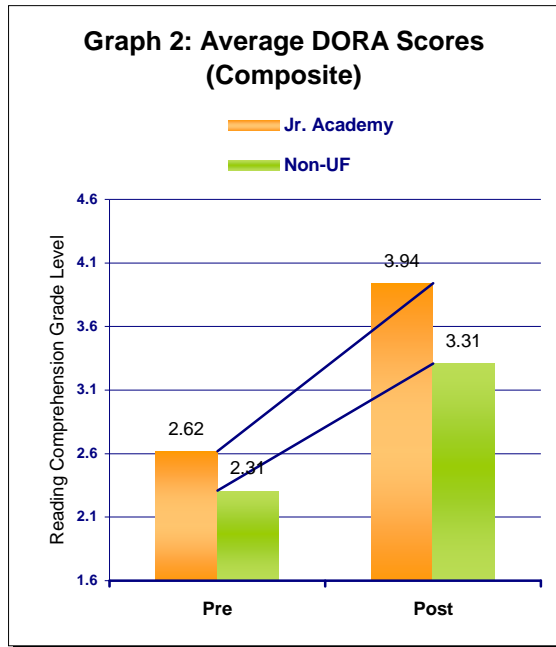
Academic Achievement

UF Academy students at Mann earned an average 2.50 GPA in quarter 1 and increased to 2.70 GPA in quarter 4, a **7.6% increase**.



“UrbanFUTURE helped me in school with my work and kept me going at it. It helped me to pay attention in class.” ~Student

Literacy



UrbanFUTURE used the Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment (DORA) to measure reading comprehension at Mann. Overall, non-UF students increased by 1.00 grade levels while UF Jr. Academy students averaged a 1.32 grade level improvement ending at approximately a 4th grade level from a mid-high 2nd grade level. **UF students improved 32% more than their non-UF peers.**

Literacy Activities

UrbanFUTURE sponsored an annual school-wide spelling bee at Mann. Each classroom (Pre-K – 6th) hosted qualifying events to select three representatives. These contestants competed in front of an excited audience of students, teachers and parents. Two Jr. Academy students were among the winners from their classes.

Students also participated in a Marathon of Minutes reading contest. Each 4th and 5th grade class was given a goal of reading 26,000 minutes as a class. In order for minutes to be counted, students needed a parent's signature verifying the amount of minutes read each week. Students were rewarded for every 1,000 minutes they read and one class reached its goal of 26,000 minutes earning a pizza party.

Students spent 20 minutes each week reading with mentors. Once a month, they would complete a graphic organizer that was aligned with Missouri Communication Arts Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs). Additionally, students were given a one page reading assignment to complete with their parents on a weekly basis. This helped to reinforce the importance of literacy at home and school.

Parental Involvement

The UF Academy at Mann was launched with record turnout of **34 parents for the UF Academy Kick-Off, that's 100%**! Parents, anxious to enroll their children, met afterschool providers, saw class demonstrations, and enrolled their students.

UF staff and volunteers worked diligently to individually invite and encourage parents to attend Parent Teacher Conferences at Fanning. In October, **10 (30%) UF parents attended** and in March, **22 (56%) UF parents attended**.

UrbanFUTURE designed and tested a Parent Leadership Continuum tool to help assess parental leadership. The tool identifies 14 indicators of parental leadership. Based on behavior and observation, team leaders rated each team to help identify areas on which to focus to better engage the parent. The tool is being reviewed and modified for additional testing and use during the 2009-10 academic year.

Parent Leadership Continuum

Parental leadership is extremely important for the success of UF Jr. Academy students. Parents are required to approve their student's UF Jr. Academy schedule, talk to mentors each week to discuss student progress

and are encouraged to attend school and UF Jr. Academy events and activities. While parental involvement cannot be exclusively measured by attendance at school/UF events, it is a useful indicator.

Character Formation

The *INSPIRE* mentoring program focuses specifically on character formation through the All-Star Character Curriculum. The mentoring curriculum allows students and mentors to work through four-week modules on particular character topics. While the student and mentor learn about a topic through stories, discussion and activities, they also look for practical application through goal-setting. Topics include self-respect, honesty, responsibility, courage, compassion, friendship, kindness and citizenship. This year, the *INSPIRE* teams **completed a total of 130 character modules**.



UF Mann Students celebrating their success!

UF is also developing a pre- and post-Character survey that will ask students and parents similar questions regarding student behavior and reading habits. The tool will enable UF staff and teams to identify and target areas of need and with cooperation and leadership from the parents, seek positive student changes by the end of the year.

Goal Setting

Goal Setting is a significant component of the *INSPIRE* Mentoring curriculum. Monthly goals are tailored for each student and action steps towards achievement of these goals are managed by the team. Mentors set academic goals with students to achieve a particular classroom grade, GPA or specific academic habits. Character goals are individually tailored and guided by the team to help the student develop strong character. Literacy goals were set to increase at least one grade level. This year, **50% of the set goals** were achieved.

Each *INSPIRE* student set a literacy goal of increasing his/her comprehension level by one grade level by the end of the year. **65% of *INSPIRE* students** achieved their literacy goal.

Satisfaction Survey Highlights

Each year, UrbanFUTURE seeks feedback from parents, students, volunteers and teachers. This information provides valuable affirmation, input and insight for change. Below are some highlights from this years surveys.

- **96% of parents** completing the survey said they would **recommend UrbanFUTURE** to other parents and students.
- **80% of parents** agree or strongly agree that their **child's academic performance** has improved since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **85% of parents** agree or strongly agree that their child's attitude about school has improved since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **95% of students** would **tell their friends to sign up for UrbanFUTURE** next year.
- **96% of mentors** enjoy meeting with their student each week and feel their **participation is mutually beneficial**.
- **100% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that students have **improved in academic performance** since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **100% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that students have **improved coming to school ready/prepared to learn** since participating in UrbanFUTURE.
- **100% of teachers** feel that the mentoring relationship has been **beneficial for their students**.

Comments:

- “My child’s reading habits have gradually increased.” ~Parent
- “[My son] has become more independent doing his homework, he has become more confident in himself, and his overall attitude has improved.” ~Parent
- “[My son] does his homework every night, his attitude is much better, his reading is real good [sic], his behavior has really changed a whole lot. Being a better leader, showing respect.” ~Parent
- “Communication between mentors and parents is strong.” ~Parent
- “The mentor helped me stay on her about reading and homework.” ~Parent
- “It helped me because I did not like reading and now I do!” ~Student
- “Before I went to UrbanFUTURE my reading was down. I could not remember what I read but now I know the whole story if I read a story.” ~Student
- “UrbanFUTURE helped me be more nice [sic] to my friends and teachers. And it helped me do my homework on time. It kinda helped my reading and math grade go to an A+ or A on my report card.” ~Student
- “I do my homework a lot now. I really can control my anger a little bit more.” ~Student
- “UrbanFUTURE help me by being more patient at home.” ~Student
- “The framework is in place to make a difference in these kids lives.” ~Mentor
- “I am very thankful for the impact UrbanFUTURE has had on our students and on our school. They are very positive and have greatly improved the confidence of our students. Thank you very much.” ~Teacher
- “I have a student who is dyslexic and since he has been in UrbanFUTURE, he has turned his whole attitude around about his academics. He has brought his grades up wonderfully.” ~Teacher

Mann Success Stories

Below are just a few of our top success stories from this academic year.

Terrique’s Strong Character

Terrique has been an *INSPIRE* student since January of 2008. However, this year, Terrique has really taken his character and academic growth to a new level. “I just decided to change,” Terrique says with a shrug, proving that the first step in growth really is the student *choosing* success.

Terrique’s teacher, Ms. Beverly, agrees. “His attitude toward academics has changed and his attitude toward his classmates has changed. He’s not argumentative. He’s more compassionate, more concerned...He’s determined. That’s what I love about him. Every day he tries hard.” Matt, his mentor of two years, has noticed the growth as well. “Terrique’s reading has improved significantly. That shows how hard everyone on the team, especially Terrique, has been working.”

Much of that growth in reading is at the encouragement of Trinity, Terrique’s mother. She encourages him to read at home frequently. The character lessons that Terrique has been doing with Matt, in conjunction with his step-father’s encouragement at home, have led Terrique to take on a community service project of his own.

“I’m cleaning up an empty lot by our house,” Terrique explains, “The city’s not taking care of it, and it isn’t right to let it get that bad. So I’m doing it.”

Terrique and his team have made great strides this year. Terrique demonstrates daily that when students *choose* success, they achieve it.

Gloria Tackles Confidence

At the beginning of the year, Gloria was a sweet girl and a responsible student. Even with these traits, she lacked confidence in her abilities especially as a reader. Her mentor, Elizabeth, brought a great deal of enthusiasm to each session. Elizabeth would ask Gloria how her day was and what was going on at school, to which Gloria would often reply in a sing-songy “I don’t know.”

The two elected to read *Charlotte’s Web* throughout the year. Similar to her responses to Elizabeth’s questions, Gloria read aloud with little emotion; however, Elizabeth continued to model reading with inflection and enthusiasm. Gloria began to take a greater interest in the story, learning many new words along the way.

As the year progressed, Gloria began opening up to Elizabeth and even spending more time each week talking about her classes and her interests. She also showed greater confidence in her reading ability and would read passages with greater fluency and emotion in her voice. Gloria’s teacher, Ms. Bell, noted that Gloria seemed more confident in herself and showed great improvement in the classroom. Elizabeth’s consistent encouragement and positive attention has given Gloria a greater sense of her own self-worth and potential.

With the help of her mentor and support from her mother, Gloria accomplished every goal she set this year. She stayed positive even when she made a mistake, she improved her basic math skills, had a perfect 4.0 GPA in the 4th quarter, and raised her comprehension score by 1 grade level. In recognition of her focus and achievement, Gloria was awarded the UrbanFUTURE Student of the Year at the end of the year celebration. Way to go Gloria!

Antonio is ready to take on 6th grade!

Antonio is not afraid to tell anyone, adults included, his opinion or how he feels about anything. Sometimes his sharp tongue has gotten him into trouble with his parents and his teachers. Starting early in the 2nd semester, Antonio began meeting with his newly assigned mentor, Gene, on a weekly basis. Gene worked hard early on to build a strong relationship with Antonio and his parents, Lolita and Donald.

Antonio put up a fight with Gene when it came to reading during their mentoring sessions. Gene found out he wasn’t the only one that had a hard time getting Antonio to read. Lolita informed Gene that Antonio rarely read at home. The turning point came during a very difficult conversation that took place when Gene attended parent-teacher conferences with Antonio’s parents and his teacher Ms. Rohring. Gene admits that sitting in on the conference was difficult, but he said it assisted everyone in the team understand their role in helping Antonio become a better and more consistent student.

After conferences, Lolita had Antonio read for 20 minutes before doing anything else when he got home. Gene and Antonio worked together to find reading material that interested him. They began to read books on space and science. Now Antonio eagerly awaits his meeting with Gene to read and discuss anything and everything that is on his mind. While Antonio still is exploring his possibilities, he has begun to develop a love of and habit for reading instilled by his parents, his teacher and his mentor.