Community Member Matching Guide

NCWIT AspireIT K-12 Outreach Program

Peer mentorship is a core value of AspireIT, but maybe you aren’t sure where to find or approach mentors in your community. This Community Member Matching Guide will walk you through the initial steps you can take to find mentors in your community and instruct you on how to request assistance with your program by sharing your opportunity with Aspirations in Computing Community Members.

Determine Needs:
You should first consider your program’s needs before trying to find a mentor to assist. Are you looking for general assistance/volunteers? A guest speaker/presenter? Or someone who will actually RUN the program? These are all important items to think about before making a request. No matter what you need it is important to divide the work and consider any mentor’s time. They likely have a lot of responsibilities and maintaining balance is vital to ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

Start Small:
We encourage you to start small and build from there. For example, you may want to run an Hour of Code event to gauge interest in your community. This will help you determine how many participants you can anticipate and how many volunteers and mentors you will need to accomplish your goals. An event like this is also a great way to find specific individuals who can help with the facilitation of your program.

Be Proactive:
When attempting to find a peer mentor, you should consider what options may be available to you in your community. Aside from smaller community events like Hour of Code, there are a variety of different possibilities that may be available to you.

- Ask around in your school or school district to see if anyone is interested in leadership opportunities and want to help facilitate a computing program.
- Consider college students at local universities studying computer science. Reaching out to universities who are NCWIT Academic Alliance members may be a good place to start in order to gauge interest.
- Utilize resources highlighted in the “Connect with Others” section of the AspireIT Toolkit to find potential volunteers in your area or female role models in STEM.
- Post your opportunity using the AspireIT Peer Mentor Matching Form and have us share with Community Members in your region who might be able to assist with your program.
AiC Community Member Matching:
NCWIT provides a mechanism by which you can share your needs with our 20,000+ community members. While we will work to help promote needs to encourage connections, this is a self-serve process and merely another way to get your needs in front of a targeted audience.

The more info and lead time you can provide, the better success you will have in finding a good match. Here are some key elements to consider when creating your listing:

- **Mentor Type** – Are you looking for general assistance, a guest speaker, or a primary facilitator?
- **Location** – Where will the program take place? City/State/Physical Location – the more specific the better.
- **Dates** – When will the program take place?
- **Participant Grades** – This is important for mentors to understand who they would be working with.
- **Curriculum/Activities** – This is also important for mentors to understand what is being covered to determine whether they are suited for assisting with the content.
- **Time Commitment** – What is the expected total time commitment needed from the mentor start to finish?

We recommend that you post at least 6 weeks prior to your event. We will work to highlight your posting but are not guaranteeing a match for your program. We will not provide you with any Community Member information but rather share your details and allow them to reach out. We are simply making initial connections and are not part of any partnership that arises.