

**HPOG Annual Meeting**  
**Peer Mentoring and Other Retention Strategies – Bell 1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.**  
**July 24, 2019**

**Challenges:**

1. \* Communication → losing contact
2. Assistance (benefits cliff) – losing
3. Geographic location
4. Staff turnover
5. Commitment
6. Getting participants to leave their communities for work opportunities
7. Offering services that participants don't value
8. No structured peer mentoring in place
9. Keeping participants engaged
10. Lack of preparedness
11. Employment reporting
12. Transportation
13. Generational poverty

\*\*\*\*\*

**Ideas/Solutions:**

- Social media – Facebook meet-up
- Text messages
- Incentives
- Lunch-and-learns with employers and instructors
- Participant commitment forms (set expectations)
- Re-engagement-dedicated position
- Incentives for participants in peer mentoring groups
- Get past participants to conduct job shadowing
- Reward through employer to incentivize peer mentorship
- Video testimonials
- 2-gen programming
- Networking events
- Study groups
- Exam preps
- Financial planning
- Transportation
- Uniform incentives for employment incentive
- Employability workshops

- Attend graduations and build relationships
- Build relationships
- Orientation that sets clear standards—giving the “why”
  - Letting students know why this opportunity is important

\*\*\*\*\*

**Top Five Challenges:**

1. Communication
2. Assistance
3. Geographical transportation location
4. Turnover (staff)
5. Commitment

\*\*\*\*\*

**Top Five Solutions**

1. Social Media (re-engage)—Private FB groups, Messenger, texts...
2. Incentives
3. Networking events
4. Participants’ commitment for expectations
5. Re-engagement

\*\*\*\*\*

**Challenges:**

1. Maintaining regular contact and communication between coaches and participants
2. Tracking after short-term training
3. Completion with fewer requirements
4. Credentialing exam anxiety and avoidance
5. Losing applicants who are awaiting RA
6. Lack of preparedness

\*\*\*\*\*

## Strategies

1. Incentivizing participation/communication
  - a. Computers
  - b. Gift cards
2. Two-generation program
3. Networking events
  - a. Alumni
  - b. Employers
4. Family night and study groups
5. Exam prep and onsite exams

\*\*\*\*\*

## Challenges:

1. Employment Reporting
2. Retention
  - a. Child care
  - b. Mental health
  - c. Transportation
3. Generational poverty
4. Students worried about losing benefits/TANF/assistance

\*\*\*\*\*

## Solutions/Ideas

1. Using assessments to identify and address barriers up front
2. Using incentives to report employment/outcomes
  - a. Mileage assist
  - b. Uniforms
  - c. Metro cards
3. Workshops around employability
4. Attend graduations/build relationships
  - a. Meet after training/assist with employment connections

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Current Practices in Development**

1. Find peers in communities who will work with each other—has upsides in addition to downsides....
  - a. Challenges: insular communities, people not wanting to go outside of that particular area for employment, etc.
  - b. Trying to get all participants to connect with each other
    - i. Instructed programing
  - c. Offering services to participants not seeing value in tutoring services (in group setting)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Notes:**

- Very clear expectations for participant group sessions
- Accountable, monthly contact with a peer
- Finding out how participants can share resources with each other
- Graduates can provide a job shadow experience for newer participants
- Incentivize mentorships through gas cards, etc.
- Employer partnership for advancement for peers (peer mentors); employers mentor and educate potential leaders (who are participants)
- Orientations which set very clear standards of expectation for participants
- Video/photo testimonies from clients
- Forum/social media connections (from participants)