



JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER

The Justice Resource Center (JRC) is New York City's leading provider of law-related and civic education programs that are geared to a diverse school-age population.

Our dynamic, student centered law-related and civic education programs cultivate future leaders as students learn about the functions of government, their roles and responsibilities as citizens and develop a heightened respect for the law.

Our comprehensive programs include curricula aligned to the Common Core, competitions, teacher professional development workshops, student performance-based assessments and legal community support.

What is MENTOR?

The MENTOR program partners lawyers from law firms, corporate legal departments, and government agencies with schools. Originating in New York City in 1982, the program has enjoyed steady growth nationally and internationally.



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MENTOR:
LAW FIRM / SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

NYC MENTOR

The Justice Resource Center continues to support MENTOR's original purpose of guiding students to recognize the impact of the law on their lives, increase their knowledge and appreciation of the legal system, and provide information on possible law-related careers. To achieve these goals, the NYC MENTOR program engages in four basic activities:

- 1.** A lawyer visit to the school, serving as a guest lecturer for the students' designated class. Students learn about relevant and influential legal topics and are able to connect their classroom knowledge with real-world cases.
- 2.** A school visit is made to the law firm or agency, enabling students to be exposed to various careers. Lunch with the partners or lead agency personnel helps to "demystify" the legal profession. Students are encouraged to ask questions about legal career tracks and observe the inner-workings of a firm.
- 3.** An attorney guides students and serves as a resource on a visit of the federal courthouse. Students observe a court proceeding and meet with a federal judge in chambers. The Federal Bar Council's Public Service Committee, in conjunction with the Justice Resource Center, sponsors the Federal Courts Visit program for high school students. The Federal Bar Council is an organization of lawyers who practice in federal courts within the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. It was a founding sponsor of MENTOR and has provided lawyer participation and program support for the Justice Resource Center since its inception.
- 4.** An elective activity is planned and held. In New York City, the elective activity is the MENTOR Moot Court Competition, co-sponsored by Fordham University Law School. Student teams coached by their MENTOR law firms compete in multiple-elimination rounds, arguing a difficult and timely appellate case. Past topics include "stop and frisk", copyright law, search and seizure, and a variety of first amendment cases. Judges from the United States Court of Appeals Second Circuit volunteer to preside over the final round.

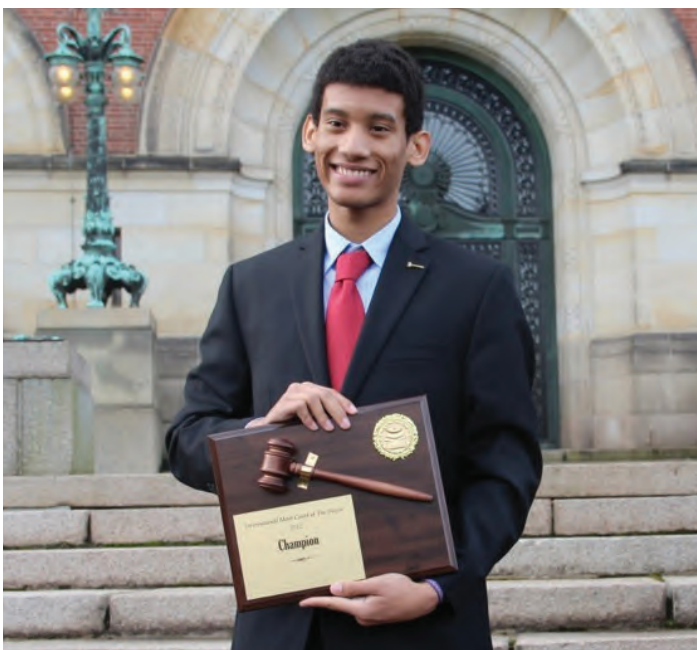
While all MENTOR attorneys participate in these four activities, some volunteer to go above and beyond the basic activities. MENTOR attorneys organize trips to Washington DC., chaperone students to law-related events, and sponsor educational activities.

NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL MENTOR

MENTOR has been replicated in many states across the U.S. as well as in countries around the world. Nationally, many states' MENTOR program components are now part of their legal education curriculum. Internationally, MENTOR is part of the Civitas Venezuela; Buenos Aires, Argentina; The Hague, Netherlands; Gdynia and Warsaw, Poland; and St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia, civic education programs. In addition, the Justice Resource Center in partnership with The Hague will be hosting the second High School International Moot Court competition at The Hague in January 2014. Students accompanied by teachers, attorneys and judges gather from different countries to argue an appellate case about a controversial issue using international law. The final round takes place at the Peace Palace with International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and International Criminal Court (ICC) judges presiding. If you are interested in any of these national or international activities, the Justice Resource Center would like to help bring the MENTOR program to your community.

CONTACT US

If you are interested in joining the MENTOR program or would like to learn more, please contact Debra Lesser at: dlesser@schools.nyc.gov.



BENEFITS

For the past four decades, the MENTOR program has been successful in meeting its goals. The program provides an opportunity for the wealth of knowledge and talent within a firm to be fully utilized through coaching, guiding or teaching students. Attorneys connect to their local schools and foster positive relationships between the legal and education communities. In addition, attorneys network with other firms and meet the judges and court personnel whose support and participation are extremely meaningful to MENTOR. Very little special preparation is required from participating firms and expense is minimal. Typically, one senior lawyer supervises the program and a junior associate or paralegal assists in the administration. MENTOR is an outstanding example of the practical and useful participation of lawyers in public school education.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Throughout the program's history, students and educators have shared what MENTOR has meant to the student participants:

"I've completed the survey, but nowhere was I able to fully express the excitement of the... team with what they saw [in Federal Court] today... By the end of the day, other teachers were telling me how the kids had been telling them, along with other students, about the amazing things they had seen and heard. Thank you for this day. It was fascinating." - Michael Kaniecki, Global Learning Collaborative High School history teacher

"Students' perceptions of 'things they learned in MENTOR' correspond quite closely to many of the program's goals... the effect on some students' behavior that they attributed to MENTOR suggests that the program may be fulfilling an additional goal of teaching students to recognize the impact of the law on their daily lives." - Evaluation Unit, New York City Board of Education

