Year 4 in Review
Celebrating Cleveland’s Future
What is True2U?

True2U is a volunteer mentoring program that helps every 8th grader in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District develop good decision-making skills and encourages them to leverage their strengths and interests as they start out on their paths to high school, college, and/or career choices. Mentors use their unique backgrounds and the True2U curriculum to assist students in better understanding themselves and the opportunities available to them.

True2U is always looking for caring adults who are interested in making a positive impact in the community by connecting with Cleveland’s future. If you are interested in learning more or applying to become a mentor please visit true2umentor.org.
Thank you, thank you, thank you. True2U and its continued impact in the lives of 8th grade students in Cleveland would not be possible without the support of our volunteers, partner organizations, recruiting partners, and Cleveland Metropolitan School District educators. This program is truly a collaborative effort – one that can provide mentors to all 2,500 8th graders in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District each year – because of the incredible support of many people and organizations.

Most importantly, though, we want to celebrate our students. Through the first four years of the program we have had the pleasure to work with 7,500 young people, who continually inspire us and our volunteers. Our volunteers often join the program wanting to give back, but many tell me that after meeting and building relationships with the young people of our community they learn and get so much more from their experience than they think they provide. And that is a testament to the brilliance, resilience, talent, and openness of our students.

So, thank you to those who have contributed to True2U throughout the last four years – but mainly, thank you to our students for being who they are and sharing that with us.

Molly Feghali
Molly Feghali, Ph.D.
Program Director, True2U
Neighborhood Leadership Institute
Launched in 2015 and phased in over three years, the True2U Mentoring Program now serves all 2,500 of the eighth graders in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). Using a small group advisory model where teams of two or three mentors work with groups of 12-15 students, mentors facilitate discussions and activities in a structured curriculum. Working with their mentors, youth uncover their interests and strengths, set goals, and learn about careers. With that knowledge, the 8th graders are able to connect their interests and goals to the educational opportunities offered through the 30+ high schools in the CMSD portfolio.

Program Goals
The goals of the program are for students to:

- Better understand themselves – their strengths, interests, and values
- Build relationships
- Develop and explore career interests
- Choose high schools and pathways that align with their interests
- Envision their futures
Volunteer mentors are partnered with another mentor or two and meet with groups of students once a month, during the school day, to facilitate the True2U curriculum. Using interactive and discussion based activities, mentors and students work together to help students better understand themselves, their interests, and the variety of careers they can choose from. Everything in True2U is focused on assisting students in making well-informed decisions for their futures.

How does True2U work?

True2U: Helping Students Discover more about themselves and prepare for their futures.

- Career Awareness
- Decision Making
- High School Options
- Strengths and Interests
- Relationships
- Visioning
True2U helps students align their personal strengths, values, and interests with educational and career opportunities.

The Course of Action To Get Involved:

1. Apply on true2Umentor.org
2. Pass a short screening process
3. Attend orientation and trainings
4. Mentor 2 hours a month with students

Discover more about yourself as you help students learn about themselves!
True2U kicked off with a field trip to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo for eighth graders. Over the course of three days, all 2,500 8th graders heard about the importance of knowing who they are from recording artist and inspirational speaker, Dee-1. Students also attended a fun, animal filled presentation on the many careers available at the Zoo.
Mentoring Sessions

Over the course of seven in-school sessions, mentors and students spent time getting to know each other by:

- examining their strengths
- exploring their interests and careers pathways
- talking about making good decisions
- checking out students’ high school options
- reflecting on and embracing their core values
- building personal brands based on their values
Out of School Experiences

Each spring, program staff organize day-long field trips for every True2U school. These out of school experiences take students out of the classroom for behind-the-scenes tours of local workplaces to see first-hand the kinds of careers available to them in our local economy. A tour of a college campus in the afternoon rounds out the experience for students.

“The Out of School Experience component of the True2U program provides an opportunity for scholars to connect the dots and make real-world applications to what they’ve learned inside the classroom, bringing the objectives of True2U to life. The support of our organizational partners create invaluable learning experiences that take career and post-secondary education exploration to another level! True2U will be forever indebted to our dedicated organizational partners for their commitment in affording our scholars the opportunity to explore the possible pathways for their future.”

-Megan Williams, True2U Program Coordinator

Over the past four years-

• 69 organizations have participated in the True2U Out of School Experience.
• 17 companies have returned all 4 years to provide an introduction to their business and industry.
• 25 colleges and universities have repeatedly opened their campuses to True2U over 4 years.
• And 7,300 CMSD scholars have been exposed to the diversity of careers and post-secondary options in Northeast Ohio through this component of True2U!
Finale Celebration

The program year ended with a Finale Celebration – over the course of three days all 2,500 8th graders came together with their mentors to reflect on their experiences in the program and to focus on making a smooth transition to high school. Dee-1 joined the students again to talk about the importance of continuing to be true to yourself as you enter high school, students learned about the importance of G.P.A., and they attended a summer opportunity fair, where dozens of community organizations shared the different opportunities they offer over the summer months.
True2U Impact

True2U students consistently show statistically significant growth on the Developmental Assets Profile, or DAP. The DAP assesses a student’s sense of self and external supports. Tests are administered in the fall and spring—before and after True2U participation.

**Years 1-4**

Social Competencies

- Planning & decision-making
- Interpersonal competence
- Cultural competence
- Resistance skills
- Peaceful conflict resolution

**Years 3-4**

Positive Values

- Caring
- Equality & social justice
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Restraint
Results show that as the program has expanded, so too has its impact. In the first two years of implementation, 8th grade True2U students demonstrated significant gains in social competencies. 8th graders in years three and four also grew in social competencies, but showed additional gains in positive values and empowerment. And students in year four demonstrated that True2U has continued to expand its impact when their results indicated growth in four domains: social competencies, positive values, empowerment, AND positive identity.
Schools

In year 4, all CMSD schools with 8th graders participated.

Andrew J. Rickoff School
Adlai E. Stevenson School
Albert Bushnell Hart School
   (formerly Fullerton)
Alfred Benesch School
Almira School
Anton Grdina School
Artemus Ward School
Benjamin Franklin School
Bolton School
Buhrer Dual Language School
Campus International School
Case School
Charles Dickens School
Charles Mooney School
Clara Westropp School
Clark School
Daniel Morgan School
Denison School
Dike School of the Arts
Douglas MacArthur Girls Leadership Academy
East Clark School
Euclid Park School
Franklin D. Roosevelt PK-8 Academy
Garfield School
George Washington Carver School
Halle School
   (formerly H. Barbara Booker)
Hannah Gibbons STEM School
Harvey Rice School
Iowa Maple School
International Newcomers Academy at
   Thomas Jefferson
Joseph M. Gallagher School
Kenneth W. Clement Boys Leadership Academy
Louis Agassiz School
Luis Muñoz Marin School
Marion C. Seltzer School
Marion-Sterling School
Mary B. Martin School
Mary M. Bethune School
Memorial School
Michael R. White School
Miles Park School
Miles School
Mound School
Nathan Hale School
Newton D. Baker School
Oliver H. Perry School
Orchard STEM School
Patrick Henry School
Paul Dunbar School
Riverside School
Robert H. Jamison School
Robinson G. Jones School
Scranton School
Sunbeam School
Tremont Montessori School
Valley View Boys Leadership Academy
Wade Park School
Walton School
Warner Girls Leadership Academy
Waverly School
Whitney Young Leadership Academy
Wilbur Wright School
William Cullen Bryant School
Willow School
Willson School
Educator Highlights

“Eighth graders need as many role models as possible to help them on several fronts. The first one is the smooth and successful transition into high school. Secondly, but of equal importance, is developing a vision by setting and realizing their goals for the future. Perhaps the biggest impact True2U makes comes from the relationships formed between mentors and students. The art of conversation and meaningful dialogue goes a long way when you just need another adult to help you sort it all out. In all, True2U exposes our students to careers and opportunities they may not get otherwise.”

-David J. Slutzky, Educator
Paul L. Dunbar Pre K-8 Academy

“True2U has become a rite of passage for every District 8th grader. Community collaboration happens in many forms throughout the District and True2U is another great example of our community’s commitment to our kids. This four year program has now reached across (65) K-8 buildings, for one Thursday morning each month.

This type of in-depth collaboration between schools, organizations, and community has created the perfect acceleration point for scholars to align what they know about themselves with the future they envision. In addition, this “village” model of support for young people is critical and very valuable to our scholars. Thank you for your continued commitment and engagement.”

-Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Student Highlights

96% of students found information reviewed during a True2U session helpful.

89% of students would recommend True2U to a friend or relative.

“True2U helped me transition into high school by giving me ways to communicate. At first I used to be quiet in class...but ever since I came to True2U it taught me how to communicate more formally with other people, which helped me with teamwork. When I was in 8th grade, I realized I used to be alone by myself doing work but ever since I went through True2U I realized that with teamwork I do better than when I was alone.”

-Devon Nunoo

“If I did not go through the True2U Program, I do not think I would have had a clear mindset going into high school. All of the situations I have been through in high school – I have handled them very maturely and I feel that I learned that from True2U.”

-Kailyn Campbell
“Attracting and retaining talent is one of the top concerns of the business community. One part of the solution lies in exposing students to career pathways early and helping them make decisions that best position them for a lifetime of success. True2U plays an important role in this effort to build a strong, future talent pipeline in which our local students can one day successfully transition into careers. Education is a critical part our region’s economic growth and prosperity, and the business community proudly supports, and promotes, continued involvement in True2U.”

- Joe Roman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater Cleveland Partnership

A special thank you to our top recruiting partners for 2018-2019.

Cleveland Clinic
Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority
Cuyahoga County
Key Bank
Medical Mutual of Ohio
The Lubrizol Corporation
The Sherwin Williams Company
A very special thank you to our volunteers who have mentored with us for the last four years. We are so grateful for your commitment to the program and to the young people of our community.

Kevin Baldwin  
Barry Brooks  
Margo Davis  
Matt Dudas  
Eric Dulaney  
Patrick Gannon  
Stephanie Gates  
Laura Goers  
Domingo Gomez  
Herb Harpster  
Irene Holifield  
Tom Keir  
Marie Kittredge  
Shana Marbury  
Christina Mastromatteo  
Nan McIntyre  
Liliana Miinea  
Eureka Morton  
Vera Perkins-Hughes  
Felecia Qamar  
Craig Rimlinger  
Rosanne Rosenberger  
Vicky Walters
Expansion Programs

Over the course of the last few years, True2U has expanded in order to continue to provide support and mentoring to smaller groups of students as they enter high school.

Summer Leadership Academy
The True2U Summer Leadership Academy is a six week paid opportunity for about 30-40 students each summer. Building on their experiences in the True2U Program in 8th grade, the Summer Leadership Academy focuses on helping students continue to grow their self-awareness, communication, facilitation, and leadership skills. Students also engage in service learning projects throughout the summer. The Summer Leadership Academy is presented in partnership with Youth Opportunities Unlimited.

9th Grade Extension
Started during the 2018-2019 school year, the 9th Grade Extension program is offered once a month on a Saturday morning. By providing additional support to scholars through one-on-one mentoring, professional presentations and engaging activities, the 9th Grade Extension aims to help students succeed in high school and prepare for life beyond graduation.
True2U CollegeBound

Started in the fall of 2019, True2U CollegeBound is a partnership with Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College to provide college student mentors to tenth and eleventh graders. Mentoring occurs during monthly sessions in small groups. Each session is themed and topics include:

- Wellness
- Building healthy relationships
- Making wise choices
- Persistence
- Financial literacy
- Time management
- Career exploration
- Gratitude
Get involved in True2U

Visit true2umentor.org to apply to become a mentor, get program updates, and to be added to the True2U outreach list, or call (216) 812-8700 for the staff listed below.

Molly Feghali, Program Director  
molly@neighborhoodleadership.org  

Lindsay Hershberger, Program Manager  
lindsay@neighborhoodleadership.org  

William Lowe, Program Coordinator  
william@neighborhoodleadership.org  

Corporate partners interested in engaging with True2U—including workplace visits and employee mentoring opportunities—can reach out to Angela Finding, Senior Director, Early Talent at the Greater Cleveland Partnership, at afinding@gcpartnership.com, or (216) 592-2385.

CMSD constituents with questions can contact:

Program Manager Audrey Davis, (216) 838-0286  
Audrey.Davis@clevelandmetroschools.org  

Program Coordinator Megan Williams, (216) 838-0297  
Megan.Williams@clevelandmetroschools.org.
True2U is made possible by community leaders committed to empowering youth with a clear sense of themselves, their values and strengths, and a vision of the future built on their interests. That commitment is embodied in our leadership team, which works to recruit mentors from the business community, churches, and civic organizations.

**Leadership Team**

- **Dale Robinson Anglin**
  Program Director, Youth & Social Services
  Cleveland Foundation

- **Anthony Battaglia**
  Director of Career & College Readiness
  Cleveland Metropolitan School District

- **Katie Brennan**
  Program Officer, Education
  Cleveland Foundation

- **Audrey Davis**
  Program Manager, True2U
  Cleveland Metropolitan School District

- **Rev. Timothy Eppinger**
  Pastor, God’s Tabernacle Church
  Executive Director, Greater Cleveland Faith-Based Initiative

- **Molly Feghali, Ph.D.**
  Program Director, True2U
  Neighborhood Leadership Institute

- **Angela Finding**
  Senior Director, Early Talent
  Greater Cleveland Partnership

- **Kevin McDaniel**
  Executive Director
  Neighborhood Leadership Institute

- **Shana F. Marbury, Esq.**
  General Counsel/ Senior Vice President, Talent
  Greater Cleveland Partnership

- **Darlene Toney**
  Program Officer, Youth & Social Services
  Cleveland Foundation
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