

It takes **all** of us.



# Strategic Plan Summary

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2024



## Mission



Facilitate equitable growth in academics, social emotional skills, and self-esteem through mutually beneficial mentoring relationships. We believe in cultivating a brave space that amplifies the voices of young agents of change in a diverse and inclusive community.

## Vision



Be a leading nonprofit for fostering belonging alongside young people, families, and community.



# Strategic Plan: 2021-2024



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# Leadership Letter



After being at Affinity Mentoring for the past six years I now have the privilege of stepping into the Interim Executive Director position. I am thrilled and honored to come alongside such a dedicated and resilient team, the community, and the families served through Affinity Mentoring, and to continue achieving goals set out in our Strategic Plan. This report highlights the incredible steps our team has made towards our Strategic Plan goals in just over two years, but I want to share some of the things that happened this past school year.

As students continue to require extensive social-emotional support to continue recovering both emotionally and educationally from the long-term impacts of COVID, Affinity chose to partner alongside Safe Haven Ministries in Grand Rapids to expand their GERI (Grow Engage Read Imagine) program.

With the need for more mentors we continue to recruit in Wyoming as well as Grand Rapids. We have new Community Partners like Fifth Wheel Fright who continue to make a difference in the lives of mentees.

In the 2022-2023 school year, 137 students received one hour of weekly mentoring either virtually or in person at one of our five mentor centers. We were able to host two very important and meaningful family engagement opportunities for the first time in over two years, including our Fall Family Dinner and Year-End Celebration, which each had over 170 attendees! By providing these events mentees, mentors, and their families are able to continue to cultivate a long-lasting relationship.

We acknowledge that due to the transitions within Affinity staffing and the long-term impacts of COVID on students, families, and schools, and local building construction in some of our sites, we have not yet completed all of our goals laid out in our Strategic Plan. However, we have a plan set in place to ensure that we continue to meet our action steps and milestones, even if it takes us a bit longer than we anticipated. We will continue to grow both within Affinity Mentoring and the community that we serve.

Just a few of the key goals that you can look out for this year include us continuing our DEI training series for the years 23-24 with a focus on LGBTQ issues, as well as a continued growth in our total number of mentor matches. Also, the methodology and resources already established by the Godfrey Lee Middle School steering committee will be used to help establish a new Middle School Steering Committee in the Burton Middle School site during the 2023-2024 school year with the knowledge and practice that we have from our pilot at Godfrey Lee Middle School.

Our work relies heavily on collaborative efforts. We invite you to join us in our work by following us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Also, sign up for our monthly newsletter and get regular updates from our leadership, staff, mentors, and families.

**Rocio Moreno, Interim Executive Director**  
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# Timeline of Strategic Planning Process

**FEB 2019:** Affinity nearly doubles the previous years' year-end giving campaign.

**OCT 2019:** Nonprofit Technical Assistance Grant is awarded to contract with Kennari Consulting to create advancement and capacity building plans.

**MAY 2020:** BOD hires new Executive Director, Cassandra Kiger.

**JUL 2020:** BOD creates Finance, Governance, and Executive Committees.

**SEP 2020:** Staff and BOD begin strategic planning process.

**OCT 2020:** Staff launches new fundraising event Cuentos y Comida, Affinity's first bilingual fundraising event.

**JAN 2021:** Staff co-create Affinity's new mission and vision to more accurately reflect the organization's work, with BOD approval.

**FEB 2021:** For the third year in a row, Affinity exceeds increased year-end giving goals.

**JUN 2021:** Staff create Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Events, and Donor Development Committees.

## 2019

**APR 2019:** The annual gala is revamped to be more mission-focused and include more stories of impact, students, and mentors. Event is renamed, Better Together Benefit Dinner.

**OCT 2019:** Board of Directors (BOD) undergoes a comprehensive assessment and creates an actionable plan.

## 2020

**JUN 2020:** Successful completion of 2017-2019 strategic plan.

**AUG 2020:** Monthly recurring giving continues to increase annually and maintains high donor retention rate.

**OCT 2020:** GLPS requests middle school mentoring program.

## 2021

**JAN 2021:** Community Listening Project (CLP) is launched in English and Spanish. Gathered data informs strategic planning.

**JUN 2021:** Development team creates comprehensive Advancement Plan to support Affinity's growth and expansion. BOD reviews in detail the proposed strategic plan and accompanying budgets and approves them with a full confidence vote.

## 2022

# Community

Give space and priority for the community to determine and support the future of Affinity Mentoring.



## 1. Identifying gaps in corporate/community partnerships with specific communities and intentionally creating space, such as:

- ▶ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC),
- ▶ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+), and
- ▶ Small Businesses

## 2. Create a regular cycle of public feedback on our work, and give power to the community to speak into where we will direct our resources and which projects we will prioritize.

- ▶ Plan, build, and implement an advisory committee with parents and mentees  
Disseminate Community Listening Survey annually in English and Spanish
- ▶ Connect with Affinity Mentoring alumni
- ▶ Increase partners and network within Wyoming and surrounding area
- ▶ Grow connections with local higher education institutions

## 3. Add key community members to board of directors and committees to better represent our service areas in our future growth, such as:

- ▶ BIPOC business owners,
- ▶ Mentors and/or school alumni, and
- ▶ Education leaders



## Progress Made:

- ▶ Streamlined community partners forms, onboarding and training for all community partners of all sizes
- ▶ At the 2021 CYC and 2022 BT we transitioned to nearly all vendors being BIPOC owned
- ▶ Have collected, analyzed, and integrated a two-year data set from the Community Listening Project and integrated it into our work
- ▶ Hired one AM mentee alumni and one Affinity parent alumni
- ▶ Expanded GLPS mentoring into the elementary and middle schools
- ▶ Partnered with GVSU and KDL for events and DEI trainings
- ▶ Expanded and diversified the Affinity board, including BIPOC business owners

# Data

Process and procedure improvement and data reinvigoration to streamline and reduce administrative costs while ensuring quality programming.

## 1. Organize, refine, and streamline policies and procedures

- ▶ Incorporate new Human Resources role
- ▶ Develop Program Director role to manage executive-level programming

## 2. Database system build

- ▶ Decrease repetitive tasks and overhead costs
- ▶ Increase face-to-face and relationship-building time

## 3. Utilizing data for decision-making

- ▶ Support communications with data
- ▶ Build and maintain repetitive and varied qualitative and quantitative programming data yearly to compare within each school year as well as longitudinally

## Progress Made:

- ▶ Sustainably added Office Coordinator and Program Director roles
- ▶ Created Standard Operating Procedures for every job description and all key functions
- ▶ Created project and program automating and tracking tools to increase efficiency and decrease repetitive tasks
- ▶ Decreased time spent for Site Coordinators on data collection and event planning by adding Program Director role, increasing face-to-face time with mentor matches
- ▶ Improved standards for communications by using a data-informed process and maintaining consistent and regular data cycles



# Equity

Make equity the foundation of every aspect of work and decision-making at Affinity Mentoring.



## 1. Develop public support plan and follow-up actions for groups of people in our service areas who are often dismissed or unsafe in our community (i.e. immigrant, LGBTQIA+ and Black communities).

- ▶ Board training and development design, plan, and implementation
- ▶ Include community partners in equity focus and training
- ▶ LGBTQIA+ public support plan and follow up actions

## 2. Build Internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) staff-led committee.

- ▶ Review program accessibility for great inclusion of students (i.e. special education, speech concerns, etc.)
- ▶ Provide all materials in at minimum English and Spanish
- ▶ Improve equity standards for wages for all positions, with policies for regular review

## 3. Create communications campaigns for:

- ▶ Specific needs for Middle School mentees
- ▶ Students' social emotional needs after COVID

## 4. Connecting mentoring to the future, diverse workforce.

- ▶ Director analysis of DEI training needs for mentors and implementation of training plans



## Progress Made:

- ▶ All board, staff, mentors, and partners were invited to participate in our Anti-Racism training series, as planned and selected by the new internal DEI Committee
- ▶ The website, all mentee/parent contacts, and all programming were made bilingual, and Cuentos y Comida, Mentor Appreciation Night, and Better Together were all either bilingual or with language access options, and will continue to be
- ▶ A full analysis of the local job market was completed and pay scales for all positions were updated to be more equitable and sustainable
- ▶ A new blind hiring process was established and has been used for all new hires
- ▶ Established and piloted an internal, staff-led DEI Committee
- ▶ Mentor racial/ethnic diversity increased by 4%
- ▶ Completed communication campaigns for SEL and Middle School students
- ▶ Internal Anti-Racism analysis completed by staff and director, and two year DEI internal/external DEI training plan created



# Financial Sustainability

Procure varied and consistent income to ensure consistency and follow through in all programming.



## 1. Build Major Donor/Donor Retention Committee

- ▶ Focus on donor retention and donor stewardship
- ▶ Continue to diversify donor base
- ▶ Expand monthly giving program

## 2. Build Events Committee to support and increase revenue at annual fundraising events

- ▶ Continue to diversify donor base
- ▶ Repeat and expand Cuentos y Comida community-based fundraising event

## 3. Create and utilize yearly Advancement Plan

- ▶ Strategically incorporate board members' skills, talents and connection for growth and sustainability
- ▶ Provide opportunities for smaller businesses to become community partners

## 4. Explore income-generating revenue streams

- ▶ Apply to speak at conferences and lead workshops
- ▶ Begin process for consultation work



## Progress Made:

- ▶ Tripled revenue and increased attendance for Cuentos y Comida, our bilingual, community-based fundraising event
- ▶ Established Events and Donor Relations Board Committees
- ▶ Streamlined community partners forms, onboarding and training for all community partners of all sizes



# Growth

Increase programming capacity based on school relationships and community support.



## 1. Build and Launch Godfrey Lee Middle School Mentoring Program

- ▶ Pilot Middle School Mentoring Steering Committee and launch a communications campaign highlighting specific needs of Middle School mentees and the Social Emotional need after COVID-19.
- ▶ Launch GLPS Middle School Mentoring Site.

## 2. Godfrey Lee Elementary School Mentoring Program

- ▶ Grow mentoring from the Early Childhood Center site in the GLPS Elementary School.



## Progress Made:

- ▶ Opened Godfrey Lee Elementary and Middle School Mentoring sites
- ▶ Piloted the Middle School Mentoring Steering Committee at Godfrey Lee Middle School which helped set up the GLMS mentoring site
- ▶ Established new ways to match middle school mentees, and determined what activities should take place during mentoring for middle schoolers





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