

Seeking Mentors for Illinois Promise Freshmen AY 15-16

Purpose of the Mentoring Program

The purpose of the mentoring program is to ease college transition and improve retention rates for freshmen Illinois Promise (I-Promise) students through a one-on-one mentoring relationship with either a peer or an adult. Adult mentors are current or retired faculty, academic professionals, and community leaders.

Background on Illinois Promise

High-achieving, very low-income students (who are at or below the poverty level) are awarded the I-Promise scholarship. Since the program's inception in 2005, key educational expenses, including tuition, fees, room and board, and books and supplies have been covered through a combination of federal, state, institutional, and private and corporate donor support.

In addition to the financial support, since 2008 I-Promise students have been offered enrichment programs and a community of support to help them succeed on campus. As part of this community of support, in AY 09-10 a mentoring program was launched for any I-Promise freshman student who desired a mentor. Since then, the mentoring program has voluntary student participation ranging from 25 to 45 percent. Last year, over 130 volunteers served as mentors.

The vast majority of I-Promise students are first-generation college students. Thus far, no student who qualified has been denied the scholarship. Over 1000 I-Promise students have graduated. In AY 14-15, more than 900 I-Promise students were enrolled on campus.

What Does Serving as a Mentor Involve?

- Making a one-year academic commitment, with meeting at a minimum of one hour every month during the academic year.
- Serving as a resource and role model to your mentee.
- Participating in two-hour orientation training in the fall.
- Completing an online mid-year and end-of-year evaluation survey.

I'm Interested in Mentoring! What are the Next Steps?

- Schedule a 20-minute interview with Susan Gershenfeld, Director Illinois Promise Student Services – sgershen@illinois.edu
- Submit a biosketch and photo to Susan.
- Most matches will be made within the first two weeks of the academic year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Any questions can be directed to Susan – 217.244.7719.