



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](http://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



# Program Goals

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.







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

# How does True2U work?

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.

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





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](https://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!



## Program Launch

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.

### Year 4



#### Empowerment

- Community values youth
- Youth as resources
- Service to others
- Safety



#### Positive Identity

- Personal Power
- Self-esteem
- Sense of purpose
- Positive view of personal future

# 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

# Employer Highlights

*“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

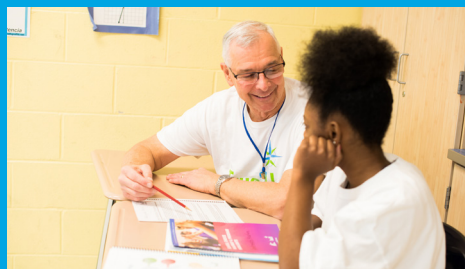
Thank  
you!

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](https://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](mailto:molly@neighborhoodleadership.org)

**Lindsay Hershberger**, Program Manager  
[lindsay@neighborhoodleadership.org](mailto:lindsay@neighborhoodleadership.org)

**William Lowe**, Program Coordinator  
[william@neighborhoodleadership.org](mailto: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](mailto:afinding@gcpartnership.com), or (216) 592-2385.

**CMSD constituents with questions can contact:**

**Program Manager Audrey Davis**, (216) 838-0286  
[Audrey.Davis@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Audrey.Davis@clevelandmetroschools.org)

**Program Coordinator Megan Williams**, (216) 838-0297  
[Megan.Williams@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Megan.Williams@clevelandmetroschools.org)



# Leadership Team

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.

**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.**

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**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



Join us!  
[true2umentor.org](http://true2umentor.org)

True2U is presented in partnership by



Greater  
Cleveland  
Partnership



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