



March 24, 2016

Dear Friends,

Recent research suggests that even if we could double the current number of volunteer adult mentors, programs would still be reaching less than 10% of the young people in need. Researcher Jean Rhodes [concludes](#), "Although volunteer mentoring will always have a vital role to play in the lives of children, the sum total of our individual acts of kindness will never compensate for the kinds of systemic changes that are also needed."

CSS suggests the widespread activation of young people as peer mentors within schools as a powerful systemic change with great potential to help close this gap. We explore the power and impact of school-based peer mentoring in two new entries posted on the blogs of the [National Mentoring Resource Center](#) and [Character.org](#).



In addition, I am so pleased to share that two of our long-time partners have received national recognition for their effective use of our peer mentoring and student leadership strategies:

- **Baltimore City Public Schools** is the recipient of a [2016 Districts of Distinction award](#) for its implementation of CSS's Peer Group Connection (PGC). Districts of Distinction is a national recognition program created by *District Administration*, the most widely received, most regularly read publication for K12 district-level school leaders nationwide. The program honors school districts that are leading the way with innovative projects that are yielding quantifiable benefits. Baltimore City has partnered with CSS since 2012 to implement PGC. This year alone, nearly 200 peer leaders are providing mentoring and support to approximately 1,500 ninth grade students across the district in 12 high schools.
- **East Side High School in Newark, New Jersey** was recognized as part of [Teach For All's 1,000 Student Leaders campaign](#) which celebrates and explores the power and potential of



student leadership. PGC peer leaders at East Side planned and executed a PGC Family Night event designed to bring together students and their families and encourage positive parent-teen communication. The 2016 event brought together over 150 students and caretakers and raised \$1,000 for St. John's Soup Kitchen.



As we continue to scale the impact of our peer mentoring and other school-based solutions, CSS is proud to be the recipient of a Board

Recruitment Service Grant from the [Taproot Foundation](#). Through this grant, Taproot will provide to CSS pro bono consulting to help us enhance our efforts to further develop a highly-skilled and passionate Board of Trustees to support our ambitious plans for growth.

I hope you will check out our [upcoming webinar](#) on school-based mentoring for students placed at elevated risk of dropping out of school. And please see [here](#) for details on our open Community School Director position in Brooklyn, NY and [other open positions](#) at CSS. Finally, please join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel".

Daniel F. Oscar
CEO

P.S. As always, if you'd like additional information about anything you've read, simply hit reply and let me know. I look forward to hearing from you!