



PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

For the LEAD Program,
Simone Jeffers
215-753-2490

sjeffers@leadprogram.org

New Jersey City Champion: Dr. Allison Jackson
908.788.8238

aja@comcast.net

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AT&T and LEAD Program Work to Keep Teens in School Hudson County Teens Will Attend AT&T Aspire Mentoring Academy in Six-City Push

Bedminster, NJ -- Nov. 27, 2012 – Essential to America’s future innovation, is maintaining a highly-educated and skilled workforce. Our teens will play a critical role in shaping the next generation of



leaders, which is why it remains critical that they stay engaged and focused in advancing their education, career and leadership skills.

With some teens opting to drop out, the LEAD Program and AT&T ASPIRE Mentoring Academy have partnered to launch a new approach for educational and career engagement known as the Inspired by LEAD (IBL) Program.

The Kick-Off event will be held Saturday, December 8th at Rutgers University, with roughly 200 Bedminster, NJ area teens. Hudson County high schools will be represented by, **Abraham Lincoln High School and Hudson Catholic. Cheryl Richardson-Evans, Principal and Bill Cunningham, Director of School Improvement, Jersey City Public Schools** are facilitating the program start. Billy Cunningham says that “applications are really starting to come in, looking forward to getting the program off the ground.” **Dr. Michael Herrera, Associate Principal at Hudson Catholic High School** believes that “the Inspired by LEAD program and AT&T will provide students at Hudson Catholic with the necessary tools and support to be successful in their college and career pathways.”

This pilot is part of six-city program to mentor students in academic and life skills. The six cities are: Bedminster, NJ, Atlanta, GA, Greensboro, NC, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX and Washington, DC. And will impact 1,000 U.S. teens in the first incubators.

The goal is to enable diverse students to convert high potential into high achievement and responsible leadership. Key to America’s ability to keep its innovative leadership in the 21st Century will be a highly educated, highly skilled workforce. A unique feature of the Inspired by LEAD / AT&T ASPIRE Mentoring Academy in NJ is the use of the IBL TRIAD Model, to facilitate student success. This strategy offers each student multiple approaches to realizing academic success and career focus. AT&T employees will engage, tutor, and mentor the students, while LEAD alumni, parents, and local school administrators will coordinate, coach and collaborate.

Additional Info on NJ IBL process: Dr. Allison Jackson-908.788.8238. aja@comcast.net

According to Ric Ramsey, President and CEO of Philadelphia based [LEAD Program](#), “We’re excited about the opportunity to enable true collaboration under the LEAD Program umbrella of support for academically low performing high school students. There are many mentoring experiences out there for youth, but none that has enabled experts like the [ICOULDBE.org](#) model coupled with the rigor applied by the [National Tutoring Association](#) and nearly 1,000 AT&T employee volunteers as mentors. This is how real impact is realized in our challenge to improve literacy in America. It’s called True Collaboration!”

During the event the students will meet with AT&T employees who will mentor them during the 2012-2013 school year through the recently launched AT&T ASPIRE Mentoring Academy. The event, which will be moderated by noted motivational speaker Marlon Smith of Success by Choice, Inc., features team-building exercises and one-on-one meetings between mentors and students.

[Aspire Mentoring Academy](#) is the key community engagement program of AT&T’s \$350 million investment in Aspire, focused on high school success leading to college and career readiness. Through the program, the company’s employees are engaging in their communities with the goal of providing **1 million hours of mentoring to students at risk of dropping out of high school.**

“We are very excited to collaborate with the LEAD Program as we mobilize our employees to provide 1 million hours of mentoring across the country,” said **Janiece Evans-Page, Assistant Vice President – Community Engagement at AT&T.** “By working with LEAD, our employees will be able to share academic and life skills and make a difference in students’ lives. This relationship will provide the opportunity for our employees to be a memorable person in a young person’s life – helping students stay on track to graduate from high school and succeed in college, the workforce and beyond.”

Throughout the program year, the student participants will meet regularly with their AT&T mentors and receive tutoring at their schools. The goal will be accomplished through use of Inspired by LEAD’s TRIAD program, one-on-one mentoring with AT&T employees and tutoring and skills development exercises. To learn more about Aspire Mentoring Academy, please visit www.att.com/aspirementoring/

New Jersey City Champion for IBL is Dr. Allison Frazier Jackson, president of Allison Jackson Associates (AJA). An independent consultant with a 25 year record of assistance to NJ schools; former city, county, and statewide educational planner, assistant dean at Princeton University School of Engineering and Applied Science, and V.P. at RCA Corporation, Dr. Jackson led the recruitment of 10 high schools for the central Jersey initiative.

The students hail from Somerset, Middlesex, Union and Hudson counties. Dr. Jackson says, “As a graduate of Abraham Lincoln High School, I am proud of the family, teachers and community that coached me toward achieving academic and business success. We will monitor progress, and provide feedback so that parents and communities know about how their students are advancing toward college and career. We hope to give the students the skills & tools they need to be competitive in the global marketplace. What’s new is that parents and tutors will train together to collaborate for the benefit of their students. January 5, 2013 is their first collaborative training session as a follow-up to the kick-off.”

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More Positive News About the High Schools:

- Abraham Lincoln High School: <http://www.abrahamlincolnhs.net/>
- Hudson Catholic High School: <http://www.hudsoncatholic.org/hcrs/>

About LEAD

LEAD Program's mission is to engage youth of diverse backgrounds to convert high potential into high achievement and responsible leadership. LEAD accomplishes this mission by fostering a vibrant community for students to gain the skills, experience and encouragement they need to fulfill their educational and professional aspirations in the fields of business, engineering, and computer science. Inspired by LEAD is designed to foster strategic partnerships with organizations that share our mission of developing youth into future leaders and providing the best education opportunities for all youth. (see: <http://www.leadprogram.org/>)

About Community Engagement at AT&T

At AT&T, Community Engagement means engaging our employees to build strong, connected, and thriving communities where we live and do business. Employees are focused on three key issues: improving educational outcomes, building sustainable communities and promoting the responsible use of technology. In 2011, employees and retirees donated 6 million hours of time to community outreach activities and pledged more than \$33 million for charities of their choice through the United Way/Employee Giving campaign. Employees also committed to more than 21,000 sustainable choices through Do One Thing (DOT), which invites employees to make small, everyday choices that add up to a big positive impact for themselves, the community and/or the company.

About Talent Development at Allison Jackson Associates (AJA)

At AJA advancement of talent, inclusion, and diversity have been themes connecting volunteer activities and service to corporate, government and nonprofit clients since 1980. We are change managers focused on: (1) improving self-esteem and self-directed learning (2) matching skills and competencies to business demands and (3) cultivating respect among diverse communities to enable collaboration for global sustainable development. In 2011 Dr. Jackson was named NJ Business Women of the Year by the National Black Women's Hook; 2010, NJ Business Woman of Achievement by the NJ State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs; 2009, Rutgers University, Hall of Fame for African-American Alumni Association. She is a graduate of the Eagleton Institute of Politics and a former Tri-State Regional Fellow. (See: www.allisonjassoicates.com)