

Mentors Matter



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MARYGROVE'S MENTORING PROGRAM:

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CHANCES ARE Richard and Tyrone's paths would have never crossed.

Richard was a retired businessman enjoying a slower pace, spending time with his wife and friends and dabbling in hobbies he'd never had time for before. Tyrone was 16, a resident in Cedar "Cottage," and for the first time not having to prove himself on the streets. Richard began to feel called to do more things that mattered. He had been a Shriner clown and volunteered for other youth organizations, but felt he could do more. Tyrone was learning what it was like to feel safe, have healthy relationships, and excel in school. He was learning how to respect himself and feel more confident about his future.

When Richard was introduced to Tyrone, he had to pass a few of Tyrone's "tests." A lot of people in Tyrone's life had let him down, so trust was earned, not granted. In Tyrone's world, adults had issues of their own and friends he thought he could trust had brought him into the world of gangs, crime and ultimately, juvenile detention. But proving trustworthiness wasn't hard for Richard. He showed up when he said he would, he listened and supported Tyrone without judgment. And when Tyrone accomplished what he needed to at Marygrove and went back home, Richard continued to be part of his life as a mentor and friend.

It's obvious Richard and Tyrone are grateful for each other. Conversation is easy between the two, and jokes and playful barbs are exchanged regularly. Richard listens when Tyrone describes his interest in having a music career, and Tyrone does the same when Richard shares stories. Two men from very different walks of life, happy to walk together for whatever comes up on the road ahead.

MANY RESIDENTS HAVE FEW—if any—people they can rely on outside of their Marygrove family. The primary role of a mentor is to be a warm and caring presence in a child's life during a time they feel vulnerable and alone. Whether it's an on-campus visit, a walk in a local park or to grab a burger, a mentor is someone who supports a child's journey toward hope and healing.

Information about Marygrove's Mentoring Program can be found online at marygrovechildren.org/who-we-are/mentor/