



MentorStark Announces Leadership Transition

MentorStark announces a leadership transition, including the retirement of founder and executive director, Laurie Moline, and the appointment of Cassie Ausperk as the new executive director, effective May 25, 2026.

“MentorStark was born from Laurie’s ability to see a gap in our community and her determination to address it. She began by showing up each day and doing the work, and from that commitment, an organization took shape that will continue to carry her vision forward as leadership evolves and the needs of young people grow and change. Her impact has touched countless lives. On behalf of myself and the MentorStark Board and team, we thank Laurie for years of dedication and service,” said Justin Lepley, chairman of the MentorStark Board of Directors.



Ausperk, who currently serves as Organizational Advancement Coordinator, takes the reins at an opportune time for MentorStark, following the successful completion of a comprehensive strategic planning process, funded by a grant from Sisters of Charity Foundation, that has positioned the organization for continued growth and long-term impact. Moline will work with the Board and team to ensure a seamless transition and continue to stay affiliated with MentorStark as an independent contractor supporting strategic initiatives and special projects.

“Cassie brings the exact combination of skill, heart, vision and connection that MentorStark needs in leadership at this moment,” said Lepley. “Cassie’s commitment to young people, her collaborative mindset, and her understanding of our community, alongside Opportunity Guide Isaiah Smith’s mentoring and career championing skills, makes them the ideal team to propel the organization forward.” You can read more from our retiring Executive Director below.

Don't Miss the Bourbon Bonanza Raffle

Calling all bourbon lovers — this is the one you don’t want to miss! We’re excited to announce our **Bourbon Bonanza Raffle Basket**, packed with a collection of rare, high-demand Buffalo Trace Distillery bourbons — the kind you don’t typically find sitting on store shelves. Whether you’re a seasoned collector, a curious connoisseur, or just feeling lucky, this lineup is stacked with some seriously sought-after bottles, including favorites like Blanton’s, E.H. Taylor, Eagle Rare, Wellar, and more.

Raffle Details:

- \$50 per ticket
- Only 200 tickets available
- Drawing held on May 22

This is a limited chance to win big while supporting a great cause — all proceeds benefit the MentorStark Opportunity Club. Don't wait — once the tickets are gone, they're gone. Secure your spot, take your shot, and you just might walk away with an incredible bourbon collection! Click [here](#) to purchase tickets or email cassie@mentorstark.org for more information.

MENTORSTARK

**BOURBON BANANZA
RAFFLE**



FEATURING:

- 1- 750ML BLANTON'S
- 1- 750ML E.H. TAYLOR
- 1- 750ML EAGLE RARE
- 1- 1.75L BUFFALO TRACE
- 1- 1.75L WELLAR SPECIAL RESERVE
- 1- 750ML WELLAR ANTIQUE 107
- 1- 750ML SAZERAC RYE

**\$50 EACH
ONLY 200 TICKETS SOLD
DRAWING MAY 22ND**

Tickets sold will fund MentorStark Opportunity Club

MentorStark Hosts Inaugural Walk & Talk: A Mega Mentoring Event

MentorStark proudly introduced an innovative approach to mentorship with its inaugural *Walk & Talk: A Mega Mentoring Event*, held on Sunday, April 19 at the Canton City Schools' Bulldog Activity Center. From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., the space came alive with meaningful conversations, movement, and community connection. Designed for young people ranging from middle school age to 27, Walk & Talk created a welcoming environment where participants could engage with professionals and trusted adults through one-on-one or small group mentoring discussions.

More than 50 mentors volunteered their time, representing 13 diverse career pathways and offering valuable insights, encouragement, and guidance. What set this event apart was its dynamic, movement-based format. Conversations unfolded naturally—whether participants were walking the indoor track, shooting hoops, or sitting together at tables. This “flash mentoring” model, combined with physical activity, fostered a relaxed and engaging atmosphere that helped break down barriers and accelerate relationship-building.

MentorStark extends sincere gratitude to event sponsors CSE Federal Credit Union and Ohio Gratings, Inc., as well as the many in-kind donors and dedicated volunteers who made this event possible. Their support helped bring this unique and impactful experience to life for our community.





From Classroom to Community: Timken Young Professionals Inspire Students



After attending a Lunch & Learn training "Building Resiliency: A How-To Guide for Safe Adults" with Executive Director Laurie Moline this March, members of The Timken Company's Young Professionals Network turned inspiration into action. On April 14, they partnered with MentorStark and engineering and business CTE students from Canton City School District for an engaging and impactful afternoon at the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank.

The event offered students a valuable glimpse into Timken's legacy and the wide range of roles young professionals hold within the company. Conversations highlighted the importance of problem-solving, attention to detail, and the fundamentals of bearing assembly—core principles that drive both manufacturing excellence and career success. Students didn't just listen—they applied what they learned through a hands-on project designed to challenge their critical thinking and teamwork skills.

The experience concluded with a shared act of service. Students and young professionals worked side by side to sort 4,047 donations, totaling 2,373 pounds of food, in support of the local community. It was a powerful reminder that professional growth and community impact can go hand in hand, especially when the next generation is invited to the table.

April Inside Looks: Real World Experiences with Impact

MentorStark's April *Inside Look* events continued to provide students with powerful, real-world learning opportunities—this month featuring four impactful experiences across corrections, sports medicine, and higher education pathways.

A Look at Corrections Careers

A huge thank you to Warden Anthony Davis and his incredible team for hosting MentorStark Opportunity Club members alongside Canton City School District Law & Public Safety CTE students for an in-depth tour of Trumbull Correctional Institution.

During this immersive experience, students gained valuable insight into the wide range of career opportunities within the corrections field. They received meaningful advice from professionals on how to stand out as they begin their career journeys and had the unique opportunity to tour the facility, engage in thoughtful

conversations with both staff and inmates, and explore the institution's education, volunteer, and apprenticeship programs.

One standout moment? Learning about the facility's inmate-run garden, which produces more than 8,152 pounds of fresh produce each year—all donated to local community food banks. It was a powerful example of rehabilitation, responsibility, and community impact in action.

Widening Exposure for Sports Medicine Students

Canton City School District Sports Medicine CTE senior students joined MentorStark for two incredible Inside Look visits, to First Tee Canton and Center Ice Sports Complex .

A special thank you to Mindy Pamer from First Tee Canton for providing an engaging tour and sharing insights into the many programs offered. Students also had the unique opportunity to learn from retired professional golfer Tyler Light, who spoke about the body dynamics of golf, injury prevention and recovery, and the important role trainers play in both the physical and mental sides of the game.

To top it off, students gained hands-on experience developing their golf skills using First Tee's indoor training facilities—bringing classroom concepts to life in a fun and interactive way.

We also had a great time chilling at Center Ice Sports Complex in North Canton. General manager Tom Schervish and his team shared insights on hockey and figure skating conditioning, injury prevention and injury recovery, as well as a behind the scenes look at rink operations. Students later took to the ice to try out their skating skills! Thank you to Tom and the staff at Center Ice for a great afternoon!

Exploring Sports-Related Majors at Mt. Union

We are also incredibly grateful to the University of Mount Union for hosting students from our MentorStark Opportunity Club at Jackson Local Schools for a visit focused on sports management and sports media degree programs.

Students heard from admissions staff and faculty, including MentorStark Board Chairman Justin Lepley, who teaches business and entrepreneurship courses at Mount Union. The visit included a full campus tour, a behind-the-scenes look at the university's radio station and athletic facilities, and the opportunity to connect with current students and faculty over a meal in Mount's beautiful cafeteria.

These Inside Look experiences provide our Opportunity Club members with valuable exposure to career pathways and post-secondary options while building relationships, helping them make informed decisions about their futures. We are grateful to all of our community partners for opening their doors and investing in the success of our students.





A Note From Our Executive Director

As most local founders will tell you, founding and running a non-profit is no joke! From developing a Board to figuring out funding, payroll, accounting, programming, marketing, IT and everything else it takes to make an organization sustainable, it takes grit and resilience and a steadfast belief in the mission in order to weather the ups and downs. That's why I have been passionate about advocating for mentoring and youth programs in the community, especially those grassroots programs that work to fill gaps in programming and access. I am also a strong believer in best practices and the importance of evidence-based youth development theory in programming, so being able to share resources and research through this role is something I have truly appreciated.



Laurie Moline

Mentor
Mentoring Advocate
MENTORSTARK Founder

But, for me, it has been the relationships with the young people we serve that has ultimately driven my passion for this work. From my newest mentoring relationships with current high schoolers to those relationships that have lasted over a decade, my mentoring friendships have broadened my perspectives, my understanding, and my world. My life is so much richer because of these relationships.

As I step away from executive leadership at MentorStark, I do so with deep gratitude and complete confidence in the organization's next chapter. I have known Cassie for decades. She has the heart, vision and skill to advance the work, guided by a sound strategic plan and a capable Board of Directors. I am profoundly thankful to our Board, to Isaiah, who has been an integral part of our growth, our school district partner administrators and teachers, our employer, community and youth program partners, and the many supporters whose belief in our mission has made this work possible.

My parting wish is that Stark County becomes a community that embraces a "mentoring mindset"- where every citizen recognizes their responsibility and power to invest in the young people in their lives. By learning about youth development, listening to our young people, and leveraging our own wisdom, resources and social capital, we can help our next generation build the skills, confidence, character, and connections that can allow them to reach their greatest potential. I look forward to continuing to support MentorStark and all the local organizations who work to make that vision a reality.



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