

# The Center for Service-Learning (CSL) at IU East

Engaging students with the community through tutoring and mentoring programs for K-12 students

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The Center for Service-Learning (CSL) at IU East works with 20-80 service-learning students every semester from course-based assignments, including students from Education M300 Teaching in a Pluralistic Society, as well as students in Criminal Justice, Psychology, or Spanish courses. We meet with each student to find a service-learning experience that fits with their schedule, location, and course objectives. Students' experiences in the community often lead to new partnerships in the small towns in the wider IU East service area. The Center strives to meet the needs of our well-established and new service partnerships. The most significant work we do every day with our students, however, is through our K-12 tutoring programs.

Tutoring programs are comprised of Math Counts! (funded by the Stamm Koechlein Family Foundation); Indiana Kids for 6th-12th graders

and funded through a Serve Indiana Grant; Work Study (the reading tutoring helps fulfill the required community service component of the program); and volunteers. A new program for Spring/Summer 2020, also funded by a Stamm Koechlein Family Foundation grant, is the K-5 Tutoring Program.

## **BENEFITS OF SERVICE LEARNING FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

In fall semester 2019, 38 IU East tutors/mentors worked at the IU East on-campus after school program and at many area schools and community youth organizations. Students served 1,977 hours with a total of 3,000 interactions with young people. Tutors/mentors provided outreach services to 5 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 2 high schools, as well as Girls Inc of Wayne County. Tutors also

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**IU East mentor Bailey Wilkison with mentoring group.** Photo credit: IU East

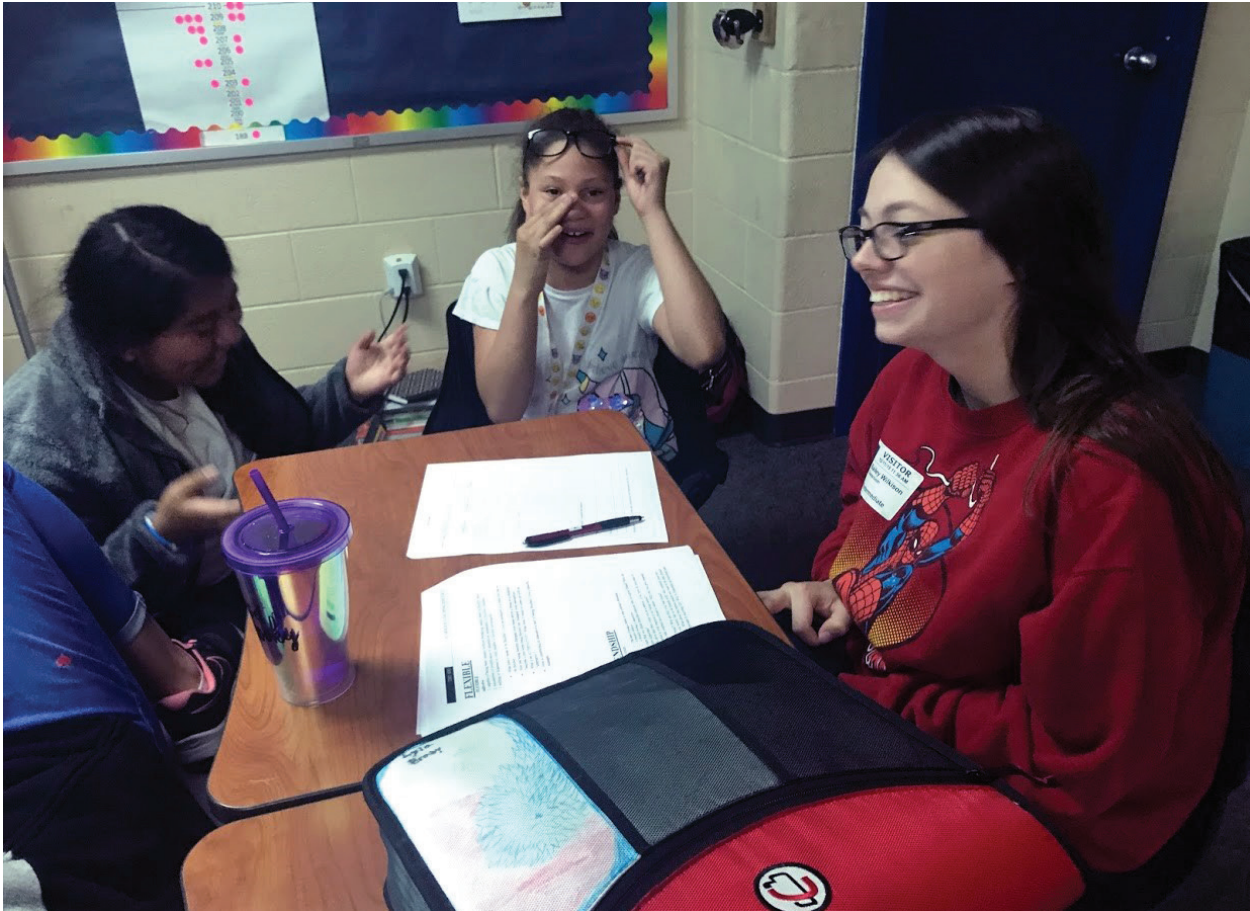
answered requests for support from Townsend’s Harambee after-school program and Amigos Richmond Latino Center programs. Tutors also organize monthly group mentoring at Hibberd Early College Academy, in which 15 mentors work with 3-5 students each, in Socratic discussions. In Spring 2020, IU East is meeting new requests from Dennis Middle School, providing 3 bilingual students and 2 Spanish language students to assist Dennis’ English Language Learner students in the classroom.

K-12 students, their caregivers, school teachers, and after-school program coordinators find our tutor/mentor programs to be of great benefit increasing not only students’ academic performance, but also their college and career opportunities. Students who have worked with IU East tutors and mentors perceive improvement in math, English and sciences, and agree that mentors provide guidance about how to solve problems, as well as define and achieve their college and career goals. They are also perceived by students as good role models who help them

keep on track with their academic goals. Students express that the program increases their awareness of career options beyond high school and their confidence that they will achieve most of their goals. As one of the students said, “I especially liked getting my grades up, turning homework in on time, and talking to someone while I do my work.”

Similarly, parents shared that their children’s participation in our programs have helped their students make progress in classes and be more aware of available college and career options. They also noticed how their children like school more and show more interest in finishing high school. One of the parents commented, “Tutoring has had a positive impact on [my daughter]. [She] is more confident in her assignments due to learning about how to do them through tutoring.”

School teachers, principals, and after-school program coordinators find that IU East tutoring and mentoring programs are a great resource to accomplish their goals to improve student



**IU East mentor Bailey Wilkison with mentoring group.** Photo credit: IU East

academic performance. Hunter Lambright, a teacher at Richmond High School expressed, “We have many students who have trouble learning math in English because Spanish is their primary language. Eric is an incredible benefit for our students because he can help with not only the math, but with some of the difficulty in translation. His presence in the classroom has helped keep some of these students from slipping through the cracks and getting frustrated.”

Marci Lindahl, CIS Coordinator at Test Middle School commented, “This service is invaluable. Our students benefit greatly with having mentors/tutors to help them academically one on one or in a small group. Our working parents benefit immensely by having tutors/mentors come to the school rather than having to take them to another facility.”

In addition to tutoring, many of our students develop mentoring relationships with the younger students, serving as role models and having discussions about issues that might include healthy choices, friends, priorities, coping skills, as well as college/career goals and readiness.

Deana Hatfield from Girls Inc. mentioned, “Students help us give girls a safe place to go after school/breaks/summer while facilitating programs that range from economic literacy, Operation Smart, Leadership and Community Action, and Friendly Persuasion.” Claudia Edwards of Amigos, the Richmond Latino Center, said “By providing [support and mentoring], we are helping shape responsible and caring adults which ultimately benefits the whole community.”





**School of Education faculty member Dr. Denice Honaker provides tutor training at the beginning of each semester.** Photo credit: IU East

## **BENEFITS FOR IU EAST TUTORS/ MENTORS**

Service learning allows tutors/mentors to develop skills that will help them in their futures. According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2018, service learning is the High Impact Practice (HIP) that most graduating seniors at IU East experience during their college careers.<sup>1</sup>

Tutors/mentor have expressed that because of their participation in the tutoring/mentoring programs, they feel they are better at being accountable, caring about others, showing leadership, listening to others, and generating alternative solutions to problems. They also said they are better at managing their time, supporting local community, organizing their work, and

communicating. Tutors/mentors have expressed the value of helping K-12 students in their learning and goal accomplishment as well as building relationships and working with diverse students. Bailey Wilkison, a Social Work major, said, "Service-learning is currently helping to inform my future decisions regarding what individuals I will work with and how I can better impact those people. I previously had little social work-related experience and service-learning has helped me to expand that scope. Putting my skills to use and practicing ways in which I can assist others has been beneficial to my education as a whole."

IU East offers tutors/mentors professional development workshops, providing the tools needed to successfully work with younger, diverse students in the community.

<sup>1</sup>NSSE 2018 Snapshot. Indiana University East. <https://www.iue.edu/academics/ir/documents/NSSE2018report.pdf>