



## ***Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate 2013-14 Program Profile***

**Purpose:** Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate (BRMA) is a district-wide student support program designed to improve the achievement of students of color by promoting success in multiple developmental realms. BRMA differs from other school district programs because our primary intervention services are provided outside of school settings and hours. BRMA's intervention model is based in social work and educational theories that emphasize the importance of developing the strengths of youths to fulfill their potential for learning and development. Since its inception in 1995, BRMA has been lauded for excellence in mentoring and school-community partnerships at the national, state, and local levels. 100% of BRMA graduates have enrolled in some form of post-secondary education.

**Description:** BRMA provides students with mentoring, advocacy, tutoring, social and cultural enrichment, college and career preparation, leadership development, and college scholarships.

- Students are selected for the program during their fourth grade year.
- Students are matched with a volunteer mentor-advocate.
- Mentor-Advocates work with parents on school advocacy activities.
- BRMA provides academic support to students through tutoring programming and individualized academic intervention plans.
- Students are offered opportunities to participate in social / cultural enrichment activities.
- Students participate in college and career exposure activities.
- Students develop leadership skills through participating in service projects.
- College scholarships are provided upon enrollment in post-secondary studies.

BRMA also operates the Blue Ribbon Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) for high school students. YLI helps student develop their leadership skills during a summer camp experience. During the school year, YLI sponsors a student-led club at each of our four high schools. The students identify and implement service projects, where they use their leadership skills. Students who show a significant commitment to the program are able to participate in an Alternative Spring Break trip that includes service projects, college tours, and cultural enrichment activities.

**Students Served:** BRMA identifies students for participation in the program during their fourth grade year and continues to support them through enrollment in post-secondary education. Students are referred by their elementary school family specialist, and are selected for the program if BRMA has an appropriate mentor for them. There are currently 122 students enrolled in the program in grades four through twelve. 63 of those students are African-American, 44 are Latino, 9 are Asian (Karen/Burmese), and 6 are multi-racial. Since our first students graduated from the high school in 2003, there are 49 students who have completed from the program. More than 80 additional students participate in the Blue Ribbon Youth Leadership Institute.

**Staff Allocation:** BRMA has four full-time staff people, two of which are funded by the school system and two of which are funded by grants. Staff positions include a high school specialist, a middle school specialist, a new match support specialist and an academic support specialist. The BRMA staff is supervised by the Director of Student Equity and Volunteer Services, who spends about one third of his time on BRMA programming. The program uses interns and contracts with external service providers to provide additional programmatic support. There are currently 112 volunteer mentors and 49 volunteer tutors working with the program.

**Funding:**

**Mark all that apply:**

53% Local

0% State

0% Federal

47% Acquired Grant

<b>2013-2014 Budget</b>			
Item	Local	Grants	Total
Salary & Benefits (based on FTEs were allocated) See above	\$221,777	\$119,890	\$341,667
Student Materials and Programming	\$41,570	\$67,790	109,360
Staff Development and Training	\$2,000	\$6,506	\$8,506
Membership/Implementation Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0
Contracted Services	\$1,400	\$31,500	\$32,900
Total	\$266,747	\$225,686	\$492,433
Cost per Student Served	\$1,320	\$1,117	\$2,437

**Outcomes:** A 2012 evaluation completed by a team from the UNC School of Education reported that 97.5% of BRMA students have completed high school and 100% of BRMA graduates have enrolled in some type of post-secondary education. The evaluation found no impact on end of grade/course test scores for BRMA students as compared to a matched sample, but it did find that BRMA students had a higher GPAs than the comparison group.

When compared to national benchmarks for mentoring relationship quality, BRMA meets or exceeds all standards. Research has shown that the strongest predictor of a mentoring relationship’s impact is its duration, and that relationships must last at least one year to have a sustainable impact on the student. BRMA far exceeds these standards. Over 90% of our mentoring relationships last beyond two years, and over 60% of students have the same mentor from the time they enter the program through high school graduation (8+ years). Also, a 2013 program evaluation showed that BRMA surpassed all national standards for mentoring relationship quality on a set of standard measurement scales. The 2013 evaluation of BRMA’s mentoring relationships, also found these significant outcomes:

- 97% of students, parents and mentors felt the program was “good or excellent.”
- 90% of students reported a better attitude towards school after being in the program.
- 95% of students reported having more options for their future.
- 97% of parents felt that the program improved the student’s leadership skills
- 97% of parents felt the program made their child a better person who was more sure of her-/himself

Full evaluation results are available on our website: [www.blueribbonmentors.org](http://www.blueribbonmentors.org)