



J.W. Fanning Institute  
for Leadership Development  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



**MENTOR**  
GEORGIA

## MENTOR Georgia Summit: [re]ENGAGE

*Georgia Center for Continuing Education – Athens, GA August 31, 2023*

**Check-in & Registration, Hill Atrium, 8:15 – 9 A.M.**

**Welcome & Opening Plenary Session, Mahler Hall, 9 – 9:50 A.M.**

**Kick-off** - Leslie Hale

**Fanning Institute Welcome** - Matthew Bishop

**Well-come: A Wellness Check-In** - Desiree Robertson

**Mentorship By Design** - Christopher and Jabez Jenkins

**From Douglasville to Capitol Hill** - Major Remoshay Nelson

**Refreshment Break, Hill Atrium, 9:50 – 10:10 A.M.**

**Morning Breakout Session 1, 10:10 – 11:25 A.M.**

**Track 1: It's All About Relationships** - Room R

**Track 2: Moving from Mental Health to Mental Wellness** - Room Q

**Track 3: Forging and Managing Strategic Partnerships: a panel discussion** - Room F/G

**Morning Breakout Session 2, 11:35 A.M. – 12:50 P.M.**

**Track 1: Elevate Your Mentors: Drafting a Blueprint Toward Becoming a Better Mentor** - Room F/G

**Track 2: Youth Engagement: Climbing the Ladder** - Room Q

**Track 3: Understanding and Navigating the Georgia Child Welfare System** - Mahler Hall

**Lunch & Excellence in Mentoring Celebration, Magnolia Ballroom, 1 – 2:20 P.M.**

**Emcee** - Christopher Margadonna

**Speaker** - Tim Wills

**Excellence in Mentoring Awards Presentation**

**Afternoon Breakout Session, 2:35 – 3:50 P.M.**

**Track 1: Power Up Your Program with TA** - Room R

**Track 2: Driving Positive Outcomes through Motivational Interviewing** - Room Q

**Track 3: Family and Caregiver Engagement: A Panel Discussion** - Room F/G

**Closing Plenary Session, Mahler Hall, 4 – 4:45 P.M.**

**Introduction of Keynote** - Marie Davis & Mary Ellen Gomes

**Don't Be a Lone Wolf** - Ron Green

**Closing & Call to Action** - Leslie Hale

**Optional Happy Hour, Bulldog Bistro, 5 – 6 P.M.**

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## Keynote and workshop details

### Keynotes

#### **“Mentorship by Design”**

*Christopher & Jabez Jenkins, Designers & Owners, Kings & Gents Accessories  
Welcome & Kickoff*

#### **“From Douglasville to Capitol Hill”**

*Major Remoshay Nelson, Air Force Public Affairs Officer and Legislative Fellow,  
Headquarters Air Force  
Welcome & Kickoff*

#### **“Celebrating Mentoring, Amplifying Engagement”**

*Tim Wills, Chief Impact Officer, MENTOR National  
Lunchtime Excellence in Mentoring Celebration*

#### **"Don't Be a Lone Wolf"**

*Ron Green, Youth Program Developer, Four Corners Group, Inc.  
Closing Plenary*

### Workshop Tracks & Descriptions

#### **Track 1: Engaging systems and tools to build capacity**

##### **It's All About Relationships: Fostering Engagement and Creating Community**

*Christopher Margadonna, M.Ed, Senior Director of Training & Partnerships, MENTOR Rhode Island*

*Morning Breakout I (10:10-11:25 a.m.)  
Room R (Second Floor)*

Even though we value them, we all cringe at the word icebreaker. We may find them to be awkward and trivial, but imagine a world where you could interact and get to know people in a fun and safe setting. At MENTOR Rhode Island we like to say that mentoring is all about relationships. To build strong relationships with anyone, you need to have the right tools. From great ways to break the ice to active listening, this workshop will share the tools of the trade for building stronger relationships within a program.

##### **Elevate Your Mentors: Drafting A Blueprint Toward Becoming a Better Mentor**

*Desireé Robertson, MENTOR National, Director of Training & Product Design*

*Morning Breakout II (11:35 a.m.-12:50 p.m.)  
Room F/G (Second Floor)*

Join us for an informative and interactive session on MENTOR's publication: *Becoming a Better Mentor: Strategies to Be There for Young People*. This publication is a free resource written by experts in the field to benefit any adult looking to support young people. Full of real-world advice and evidence-based strategies, it provides mentors with tangible strategies to “be there” for young people. Learn what the publication says about – and brainstorm how

you can utilize – the core skills, key principles, and critical practices of mentoring – from understanding effective online communication and practicing cultural humility to elevating youth voice and providing emotional support.

### **Power Up Your Program with TA**

*Elton Dixon, President, Enay Coaching, MENTOR Georgia technical assistance consultant  
Mary Ellen Gomes, Owner, Verella Consulting, MENTOR Georgia technical assistance consultant*

*Afternoon Breakout (2:35-3:50 p.m.)  
Room R (Second Floor)*

This session will provide participants with a working knowledge of the key aspects of the Technical Assistance (TA) process. Technical Assistance, managed statewide by MENTOR Georgia, is available to any youth mentoring program serving youth under age 18 as a way to support continuous quality improvement in the area of mentoring best practices. This will be a fun interactive session designed to excite and encourage participants of the benefits of utilizing no-cost, federally-funded TA for programs.

## **Track 2: Engaging youth to grow impact**

### **Moving From Mental Health to Mental Wellness**

*Dr. Samuel McQuillin, Associate Professor, University of South Carolina  
Morning Breakout I (10:10-11:25 a.m.)  
Room Q (Second Floor)*

This presentation will review the child and adolescent mental health crisis and the role of mentoring in promoting mental health and wellness. Attendees will learn how to leverage mentoring relationships to improve youth social, emotional, academic, and behavioral functioning. Emphasis will be placed on program structures, including training and supervision, necessary to provide health promoting safe, stable, supportive relationships.

### **Youth Engagement: Climbing the Ladder**

*Elise Brockenberry, Graduate Student – Community Psychology, Georgia State University  
Rylee Dickinson, Graduate Student – Public Health, The University of Georgia  
Kalani Franklin, Graduate Student – Health Administration, The University of Georgia  
Morning Breakout II (11:35 a.m.-12:50 p.m.)  
Room Q (Second Floor)*

This interactive session will engage attendees around the diverse levels of youth involvement and engagement in activities, particularly in mentorship. Throughout the session, participants will recognize the significance of increased student engagement in mentorship planning and decision-making. By fostering meaningful engagement and active involvement, the workshop aims to inspire attendees to approach mentorship with a fresh perspective.

### **Driving Positive Outcomes through Motivational Interviewing**

*Dr. Samuel McQuillin, Associate Professor, University of South Carolina  
Afternoon Breakout (2:35-3:50 p.m.)  
Room Q (Second Floor)*

Attendees will learn about the conversation style of Motivational Interviewing, which is an evidence-based, person-centered approach to having conversations about behavior change. Attendees will learn the fundamentals of Motivational Interviewing and practical skills for using this style of conversation with youth in mentoring relationships. Attendees will learn about resources for training and supporting mentors in the use of this approach.

## **Track 3: Engaging stakeholders to extend reach**

### **Forging and Managing Strategic Partnerships: A panel discussion**

*Moderator: Desiree Robertson, Director of Training and Product Design, MENTOR National Morning Breakout I (10:10-11:25 a.m.)  
Room F/G (Second Floor)*

Panelists:

- *Rita Breen, Charitable Giving Executive Director, Georgia Power*
- *Upenda Dubose, Director of Corporate and Community Engagement, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta*
- *Leroy Tré Hutchins, Board of Education Member, Cobb County Board of Education*
- *James Rayford, Director of Academic Support, Gwinnett County Public Schools*
- *Toya Rusell-Phillips, Founder & CEO, Girls of Excellence, Inc.*
- *Xernona Thomas, Executive Director, The College Factory, Head of Schools, Downtown Academy*

Panel discussion featuring professionals from mentoring programs, school districts, business, and funding communities, sharing how they make and manage strategic partnerships to support youth mentoring.

### **Understanding and Navigating the Georgia Child Welfare System**

*David Meyers, Public Service Faculty, J.W. Fanning Institute at UGA  
Morning Breakout II (11:35 a.m.-12:50 p.m.)  
Mahler Hall (First Floor)*

This session will focus on sharing information and resources about the Georgia Child Welfare System. Specific topics will include: an overview of the how the Georgia DFCS system is organized, sources of available data about the system as a whole, and specific resources that exist to support older youth in care. An interactive discussion on how mentor programs intersect with the system and how programs can build relationships and use available data to strengthen programs will close the session.

### **Family & Caregiver Engagement: A panel discussion**

*Moderator: Amara Lynch, Educational Consultant  
Afternoon Breakout (2:35-3:50 p.m.)  
Room F/G (Second Floor)*

Panelists:

- *Aydee Bailey, Family Life Director, Team Up Mentoring*
- *JeJuan Stewart, CEO & Lead Consultant, EAGLE 7 Consulting*
- *Sandy Welfare, Chief Development Officer & Diversity Strategist, Women Who Code*

Panel discussion programmatic practices and perspectives around family and caregiver engagement.



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**MENTOR Georgia Summit: [re]ENGAGE – Speaker and panelist  
biographies**  
**August 31, 2023**  
*9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*



**Aydee Bailey:** Aydee Bailey, the Family Life Director at Team Up Mentoring, is a former foster youth from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. With an associate's degree in social work and a bachelor's degree in psychology, she is dedicated to empowering disadvantaged youth and caregivers. As she pursues a master's degree in clinical social work, her personal experiences, and unwavering commitment drive her to create positive change. As a proud mother and wife, she continues to uplift lives, foster hope, and build brighter futures for all.



**Matthew Bishop:** As director of the Fanning Institute, Matthew guides the institute's strategic direction and programmatic operations to fulfill its mission to strengthen communities, organizations, and individuals through leadership development. With an extensive background in leadership, community economic development, community visioning, strategic planning, and group facilitation processes, he leads the institute's efforts to design and deliver leadership programs that focus on community, nonprofit, and youth audiences.



**Rita Breen:** Rita is the Charitable Giving Executive Director for Georgia Power, with responsibilities for Georgia Power and Southern Company Charitable Foundations, focusing on strategic philanthropy programs, impact investments, and foundation operations.



**Elise Brockenberry:** Elise Brockenberry is a graduate student at Georgia State University pursuing a doctoral degree in Community Psychology. She is passionate about working within communities to expand access to resources, specifically for youth.





**Marie Davis:** Marie Davis is an Atlanta native and the executive director of Path to Shine, Inc. After obtaining a Social Work degree at the University of Georgia, she served as a foster care coordinator for the State of Georgia. She has additionally worked in the private industry, at a financial firm and for a local developer. Marie has served as the Director of Mentoring for the Hall County nonprofit Center Point, as a Technical Assistance provider for MENTOR National, and a member of the MENTOR Georgia Provider Council. Program innovation and designing ways to serve all children through mentorship are what she loves best about her job.



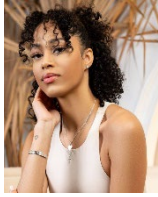
**Rylee Dickinson:** Rylee supports the mentoring movement in her current role as a Graduate Assistant for MENTOR Georgia at the J.W. Fanning Institute. She is a proud Double Dawg as she received her Bachelor of Social Work from UGA in 2022 and is currently a student in the Master of Public Health Program. Rylee cares deeply about communal well-being and the ways we contribute to sustainable health through advocacy. In her free time, Rylee participates in a local dance company, and prioritizes reading and walking every day.



**Elton Dixon:** Following a six-year United States Air Force career, Elton became the co-founder and president of Enay Coaching, LLC, delivering business coaching to organizations looking to develop their teams and transform their businesses from the inside out. He emphasizes education coaching, and academic services featuring development, programs, and resources for educators and students (especially youth in foster care) and families seeking to cultivate a legacy of servanthood. He received his B.S. in Aerospace Physiology from the United States Air Force Academy in 1996, and his M.S. in Strategic Intelligence from the Joint Military Intelligence College in 2000.



**Upenda Dubose:** Upenda began her professional career in the Banking and IT industries as a Business Analyst. She later realized her passion for youth development, education, and the important intersection of community partnerships. After more than a decade of managing resource development in Atlanta Public Schools, she identified both a gap and an opportunity to provide more mentors for students. She has now transitioned her expertise to support the growth of and access to quality youth mentorship programs as the Director of Corporate and Community Engagement for Big Brothers Big Sisters Metro Atlanta.



**Kalani Franklin:** Kalani, a Georgia Southern University graduate, is currently pursuing a master's degree in health administration at the University of Georgia with a passion for transforming healthcare through diversity, equity, and inclusion. Actively involved in her community, she contributes her time to various organizations and plays a significant role as a content developer and co-founder at Cocoa Diaries, a platform supporting Black women in their college aspirations, fostering a vibrant community of over 8,000 members.



**Maryellen Gomes:** Maryellen has over 15 years of Technical Assistance/Community Coaching experience in the mentoring field as well as the community. The principal role is to provide one-on-one coaching, capacity-building expertise, and tools that engage in best practices in mentoring as well as being a link in the community for resources and information to diverse groups and communities.



**Ron Green:** Ron is the Youth Program Developer at Four Corners Group. Inc and he is also the owner of The Video Plug, a local video production company. He has made it his mission to help underserved and marginalized youth find their gifts buried deep within. Ron enjoys meeting people from all walks of life and having a positive impact anywhere he can.



**Leslie Hale:** As the executive director of MENTOR Georgia, Leslie is leading the J.W. Fanning Institute's efforts to grow capacity, ensure training and support, and promote the work of youth mentoring programs around the state of Georgia. Leslie joined Fanning in 2021 as the first full-time director of MENTOR Georgia, an affiliate of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership. The mission and work of MENTOR allow Leslie to braid together her passions for education, youth development, public policy, and community service. In her spare time, Leslie enjoys reading, cooking, hiking, and running with her husband and two daughters.



**Leroy Tré Hutchins:** As an active advocate for families, Tré works tirelessly to ensure that every child receives the necessary resources for quality education. Through his advocacy with Georgia PTA, or as a State Advisory Panel Member with the Georgia Department of Education/Special Education or Communities in Schools of Georgia (Marietta/ Cobb Co), Tré desires to see all children succeed. Tré believes it takes a village and will continue to engage the village to support our future generation.



**Jabez and Christopher Jenkins:** Jabez and Christopher are brothers, ages 17 and 16, and the owners and designers of Kings and Gents Accessories. Their goal is to have their bow ties carried in Macy's and Target. They host monthly workshops to help kids start businesses and have been given their own holiday, Kidpreneur Day, that is celebrated every year on April 29th. Their story has been featured on Fox 5, Channel 2, People 2 People, The Morning Rush ATL, and Wake Up with Chesley morning show.



**Amara Lynch:** Amara is a coach, facilitator, education consultant, and doctoral student in UGA's Adult Learning and Organization Development program. She loves MENTOR GA because she has been profoundly impacted by being a mentor and being mentored and because she is passionate about the topics of youth and adult development.



**Christopher Margadonna M.Ed:** Christopher is the Senior Director of Training and Partnerships at MENTOR Rhode Island and has been with the organization for seven years. He has always had a love of learning and got his Master's in Education from Rhode Island College in 2015. He has had many successes throughout his career including presenting at the National Mentoring Summit six years in a row. He is also a master trainer for multiple MENTOR National trainings including the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and Connect Focus Grow. When he is not at work, Christopher is the Board President for The Community Players, a local community theater located in Pawtucket, RI.



**Samuel McQuillin:** Samuel is an Associate Professor of Psychology and the Director of the School Psychology Ph.D. Program at the University of South Carolina. He studies how schools and communities can work together to promote emotional, behavioral, and academic wellness in children who are environmentally or developmentally at-risk. His work focuses on translating theories of child development to pragmatic prevention and intervention strategies.



**David Meyers:** David Meyers came to UGA in January 2010. As a senior public service associate at the Fanning Institute, David works in youth leadership development with a focus on supporting young people who have experienced foster care or homelessness and the families and institutions that serve them. He has developed a range of projects, including Embark Georgia, a statewide network to connect Georgia campuses in support of foster and homeless youth; the Embark Precollegiate Summer Program, a summer leadership and college readiness program for youth in foster care; and established the partnership to deliver the Education and Training Voucher program. David is an adjunct faculty in the School of Social Work.





**Remoshay Nelson:** Major Remoshay R. Nelson is an Air Force legislative fellow for the Department of State, Washington, D.C. In this role, she serves as an Air Force advisor and representative for the State Department's Legislative Affairs office. She provides guidance, counsel, and support for legislative matters with Congress, the White House, and the public. She also receives instruction and hands-on experience through education and development activities at Capitol Hill and Georgetown University.



**James Rayford:** James Rayford earned his Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics Education from Rust College in Holly Springs, MS, and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Georgia State University. He spent part of the 2022-2023 school year as a high school administrator in Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) and has returned to serve as Director of Academic Support and leads the district's Community-Based Mentoring Program. Prior to this position, he served five years as principal of both Lilburn Middle School and Nesbit Elementary School. He is married and has four adult children.



**Desiree' Robertson:** Desiree Robertson is the Director of Training and Product Design for MENTOR National. In this role, she is responsible for driving and executing MENTOR's vision for quality training development and product design including ensuring that all products, tools, and training are developed with best practices in adult learning theory, and instructional and information design. She works with a team to research, develop, and implement quality products, tools, and training that includes work with the National Mentoring Resource Center and the Mentoring Connector.



**Toya Russell-Phillips:** Toya Russell-Phillips has had a 25-year career in the nonprofit sector. Specifically working with grassroots organizations that leveraged resources and developed strategic relationships to support mission-driven goals and objectives. Toya continues her work through her own organization Girls of Excellence, Inc., an innovative girl-serving organization focusing on group mentoring, life skills, personal development, and community service.



**JeJuan Stewart:** JeJuan Stewart, is the CEO and Lead Consultant of EAGLE 7 Consulting which has been serving families in Metro Atlanta for over 11 years. As a retired PA Anesthetist, now small business owner, JeJuan has designed EAGLE 7 Consulting to address the needs of underrepresented communities through innovative solutions. Her organization's solutions are committed to **empowering all to give, lead & excel (EAGLE)**. JeJuan is a STEAM Advocate and Parent Coach, and she is determined to disrupt the why parents are engaged.



**Xernona Thomas:** Xernona is a recently retired superintendent of Clarke County School District. She currently serves as Executive Director of a local nonprofit, College Factory, and Head of Schools for Downtown Academy.



**Sandy Welfare:** Sandy serves as the Chief Development Officer for Women Who Code. In this role she works to promote equity and create advancements across technology spaces to support women in various industries. Sandy has worked on many efforts supporting global business advancement having worked in Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, and London. More recently Sandy supports many local efforts including the Kiwanis Club of Atlanta, Cool Girls Inc. among others. She supports mentoring through her investment as a Spelman LEADS Mentor and Women Mentor Atlanta.



**Tim Wills:** Tim Wills is a relentless advocate for young people who leads the mentoring field's impact on training, research, systems innovation, and Affiliate relations. He has a 17-year career in youth development, including serving as the CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama. Tim was inspired to this work based on his experiences as a young person in Ferguson, Missouri, where opportunity for him and his peers lagged behind their potential. He credits his journalism background as the catalyst for his passion for mentoring and youth development, saying, "For those with limited voices, it is our obligation to uplift their stories up into action".

