

2008 Outstanding Mentor of the Year Award Nominee

Miriam Witmer

Miriam has been actively involved in mentoring with the PFMI program since 2005. Since then, she has been matched with three mentees in the program. The first year was disappointing for Miriam because the student communicated very little and did not respond to her attempts to establish contact. Despite this discouraging experience, Miriam volunteered to mentor a new student in 2006 and another in 2007. Both of these mentoring experiences have been extremely positive for Miriam and the students. Miriam regularly includes the mentees in campus, professional, and personal activities in which she is already involved. In a short time, she is able to make the mentees feel as though they are a part of her family. Miriam has been extremely reliable and regularly attends MMAP monthly group M&M meetings, mentor network meetings, community service and other activities sponsored by the MMAP. Besides continued involvement in the PFMI mentoring program, Miriam leads and coordinates a mentoring program within the School of Education where MU students mentor middle school and high school students of color who are interested in pursuing a career in education. Miriam's personal belief in mentoring and passion about this program and the success of its participants is obvious.

"If I have any questions I cannot answer myself I call Miriam. What people do not know about Miriam is that she too comes from a poor family background. So when I talk to her about my personal life she connects with me through her own experiences to let me know that I am not the only person that had to face a challenge. Since I have met Miriam, I feel more self secure on accomplishing anything I want in life. When I tell her what I want to do in life she encourages me, but reassures me of how that will effect my life."-Submitted by Samantha Short

"A mentor tries to get his/her mentee involved and Miriam does a great job at this. She took the time to get to know me in an academic, professional and a personal level. With the knowledge she gains from getting to know me she was able to help me get involved and have a more productive college experience. She used this knowledge also to interact with me and give me advice. As a friend and a mentor she tried really hard to make me feel comfortable around her. She became my friend as I stated before and she let her daughter Marissa become my friend too. By taking all these actions and measurements she helped created a bond between us that went past the mentor/mentee relationship."-Submitted by Katherine Cruz-Rodriguez