

CATCH THE SHINE:



AAGEA-AGEM

Developing State Leaders in Arkansas Gifted Education with the Admistrators for Gifted Education Mentoring (AAGEA-AGEM) Certificate Program

A Professional Development Initiative of the
Arkansas Association for Gifted Education Administrators (AAGEA)
and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA)



Article for AGGEAN newsletter



**Faceting Gems with Sparkling Gems:
Debating AAGEA-AGEM, an initiative for developing state leaders in gifted education**

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Q: What is the only material that can shape a diamond?

A: *Another diamond.*

Q: What is a common experience shared among shaping high performing leaders and organizations?

A: *A coordinated mentoring system of an expert leader working with a developing leader.*

The value of the mentoring process in professional performance is clear; few educational approaches achieve the fullest impact without a mentoring/coaching component. Mentoring relationships reinforce the application of targeted professional development and the application of professional development workshops, lectures, and demonstrations has been shown to increase to 90 percent when mentoring and coaching is integrated in the learning process (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Enlightened educators seeking to influence the future of a profession are systematic about developing processes to enhance talent in the field. The Arkansas Association for Gifted Education Administrators (AAGEA) and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators (AAEA) are pleased to debut the new professional development initiative for developing state leaders in Arkansas gifted education with the **Administrators for Gifted Education Mentoring (AAGEA-AGEM)** certificate program. AAGEA-AGEM provides the mechanism for connecting experienced leaders with new talent in the field fostering positive connections across the state, the sharing of knowledge, understandings, practices, and developing leaders to shape and influence the future of gifted education in Arkansas.

The purpose of the AAGEA-AGEM mentoring program is to provide a system for individualized growth opportunities among AAGEA members as a professional development service. Leaders in the AAGEA organization are paired as mentors with members of AAGEA seeking to increase expertise on a mutually interesting topic. Together they pursue a personalized program of advanced learning in gifted education.

The mentoring term will run from September to September and is available to all current members of AAGEA (administrators, teachers, gifted education coordinators and specialists, counselors, and parents). Participants must be willing to engage in a one-year commitment which involves approximately 25 hours of conference time (phone, email, AGATE/AAGEA conference encounters). It is anticipated that most communication will occur via email; however, individuals must be available to meet at two annual AAGEA fall workshops or an alternative professional venue. Each mentoring partnership will be expected to share their

projects at the annual Fall Workshop roundtable and submit an article discussing their project to the AAGEAN newsletter.

Mentoring is a nonjudgmental process built around planning conversations, observations, application, and reflecting conversations. Three major goals are components of mentoring and coaching: (1) establishing and maintaining *trust*, an assured reliance on the character, ability, or strength of someone; (2) facilitating *mutual learning*, the engagement and transformation of mental processes and perceptions; and (3) enhancing collective growth in two areas, as autonomous individuals and simultaneously acting interdependently within a group (Costa & Garmston, 2002).

The AAGEA-AGEM program is intended to supplement existing educational opportunities and the one-year program culminates in a professional portfolio that demonstrates expertise in four areas: knowledge, reflective understanding, problem solving, and dissemination/service related to gifted education. Projects may focus on identification, social emotional needs, curriculum differentiation and modification, parenting, creativity, program development, program evaluation, special populations, early childhood, visual and performing arts, professional development, middle school, secondary education, public policy, technology, student assessment, or other areas of gifted education. The mentoring relationships and culminating projects will be showcased to a wider audience and a certificate of recognition will be provided to participants upon successful completion of the project.

Using a relationship-based mentoring and coaching design modeled after the national mentoring program of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Professional Achievement Certificate, AAGEA-AGEM is an exciting new program aimed for developing leaders in gifted education across the Natural State. To apply, potential mentors and mentees may download the AAGEA-AGEM program details from the AGATE and AAGEA/AAEA websites (<http://www.theaaea.org>) and complete the application provided. Maximize this opportunity to find and shine the precious gems located across the Arkansas gifted landscape.

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Submitted by: Dr. Bronwyn MacFarlane, AAGEA Director of Professional Development

