



Mentor Tutor Connection
Helping students achieve their potential and thrive

30
YEARS

Supporting students
in Mountain View
and Los Altos

Community Report 2025



Dear Friends,

Four months into my tenure as MTC's new executive director, I am thrilled to present our Community Report, describing our programmatic impact in the 2024-2025 school year.

I am truly fortunate to build on the tireless efforts of my predecessor, Jean Ikeda. Jean brought the organization to new heights, laying the groundwork for future success as we prepare to celebrate 30 years of service to students in Mountain View and Los Altos.



Save the date for our 30th Anniversary gala on April 10, 2026!

Volunteer mentors and tutors, donors and our immensely dedicated staff and Board drive all our efforts, in partnership with educators and administrators. **Many thanks to all of you!** Your passionate commitment to building a community of care for students and families drew me to this role. I look forward to contributing more than two decades of leadership experience in the nonprofit community in support of vulnerable children and families.

In these times, it can feel even more challenging to grow up – and parent. Uncertainties and anxieties abound. As does hope for the future; which powers the consistent, caring relationships that are the heart of MTC's work. It's particularly notable that nearly **100% of teachers** find our tutoring program to be effective in strengthening student's perseverance and resilience, and **100% of mentored students** feel that their mentor really cares about them.

This report brings our nurturing, hopeful work to life, reminding us that coming together across the broad spectrum of age, background and language, changes lives for the better. We are all enriched as these encounters unfold in unanticipated ways, with learning and growth occurring in so many dimensions.

If you have been seeking inspiration and wondering how you might do more to make a difference, look no further.

You could ...

- Become a mentor or a tutor for the first time
- Return to that role
- Introduce your friends and colleagues to MTC
- **Become a community ambassador**
- **Increase your donation** to help us retain talented staff
- Include us in your estate plan as a testament to your values

I'd love to speak with you. Don't hesitate to reach out with questions or ideas.

With shared vision and unfolding impact,

Lisa Peckler
Executive Director

lisap@mentortutorconnection.org
(314) 307-9684



The 2024-2025 school year was a vibrant one for MTC, as our volunteers and students explored and cultivated their unfolding potential. (Photo by Lisa Peckler)

30
YEARS

Supporting students in
Mountain View and
Los Altos

483
Students



172
Volunteers



Impact At A Glance

2024-2025 School Year

7,140
Volunteer Hours



15
Schools





“I could be myself” Jazmine’s Journey

Meet Jazmine Cruz—a first-year college student and graduate of Mountain View High School. Jazmine was mentored for two years of her high school experience by Lea Bottmer. Jazmine provides some insight into what made her want to be a mentee and what she learned from the program.

How did you hear about Mentor Tutor Connection?

I wanted to get involved because my friend told me that it was a fun program. She thought I would enjoy it.

What made you want to join the program?

I just wanted someone to talk to. I also wanted to do something that got me outside the house and [was] more than just school work.

What is your overall opinion of the program?

It was really nice having an adult other than a family member to talk to and get advice from or explore the Bay Area with.

What is your dynamic like with your mentor?

It is good that we are not completely similar. We have a balance. I feel comfortable telling her stories about my life and things I am going through. She is a good mentor.

Could you tell us about your mentor and how having a mentor has impacted your life?

Lea [a PhD student in Economics at Stanford University] is super nice and outgoing. Honestly, she had explored the Bay Area more than I had! She is not even from here—she is from Germany. She helped me break out of my shell.

My family doesn’t really have time to go out that much. We don’t have time to coordinate our schedules. If I wanted to go on a hike or explore SF, I would go with her. It was nice to do something different for a change. She helped me branch out and do different things.

What do you wish more people knew about being mentored?

I wish people knew that it can be more fun [and not] strictly academic. I feel like I could be myself.

Looking back, what do you consider your biggest accomplishment during or after your time with MTC?

My mentor Lea helped me to think more positively. She is a “glass-half-full” type of person. She has inspired me to be that way, too. That has helped me to think better of myself and be more confident about myself. She helped me be able to talk to people who are not my age. When you are talking to people, you don’t have to change who you are.

“My mentor Lea helped me to think more positively. She is a ‘glass-half-full’ type of person. She has inspired me to be that way, too. That has helped me to think better of myself and be more confident about myself.”

Jazmine Cruz
Graduate of Mountain View High School

“I have had a lot of people I look up to”—Lea Bottmer’s Mentoring Journey



Meet Lea Bottmer—a PhD student in Economics at Stanford University. Originally from Germany, she is in her last year in the PhD program. We were able to talk with Lea about how similarities and differences drive the richness of the mentor-mentee experience.

On finding out about MTC:

I wanted to teach and have an impact on people’s lives. I came across MTC and the website. I thought this would be super interesting for me to focus on one person and be able to have this relationship.

On not having infinite wisdom:

It’s not that I have infinite wisdom to give but I felt like I could be another person for my mentee to come to and explore the area with.

On being a successful mentor:

I enjoyed saying, “Hey, this is how I approach these situations.” When Jazmine started applying for jobs, she was nervous for her first interview. She already felt comfortable texting me. I gave her a few tips. I was there to be calm, to be her cheerleader: “You’ve got this.”

You just need somebody supporting you in your decisions. Someone who is there to cheer you on.

On personal discoveries:

It was nice to get out and explore and get into a community here. I really felt like Jazmine and I became friends over the time period. It went above and beyond what I thought it was going to be. We had really deep discussions about life and things that come up, which I didn’t anticipate. We went on a lot of adventures together which gave us all these bonding moments. It was meaningful to step into the role of mentor. I have had a lot of people that I look up to. It challenged me to grow into that role.

On people who have made a difference in her life:

I’m a first-generation college student. I had never thought about doing a PhD. I had never known anyone who had done a PhD before. My parents were skeptical. It only takes one person to be like, ‘Hey, why don’t you do this? It seems like it might be good for you.’ I have had people in my life who have pointed out opportunities or who

have asked me questions and gotten me to think more deeply because they have different experiences and different knowledge.

On the richness of similarities and differences in the relationship:

Mentoring is asking what you think is a simple question because you have different experiences and different expertise that you are bringing to this relationship. You don’t even realize that you have had an impact on this person.

Similarities help you build the relationship—experiences from when you were younger help you relate. But a lot of the value comes from having different experiences. You can create a lot of value based on experiences that make you different from your mentee and sharing some of these experiences.

“You just need somebody supporting you in your decisions. Someone who is there for you to cheer you on.”

Lea Bottmer
MTC Mentor



Surprises Along the Way: Susan Kresek's Mentoring Journey

Susan Kresek has been on the board of Mentor Tutor Connection for three years. Even so, this is a year of firsts for her. "I became the Board Chair at the end of the 2024-2025 school year and this is the first year that I have become a mentor rather than a tutor."

The evolution in her roles at MTC reflects both a strong desire to support MTC's growth and gain a greater perspective on the quality and breadth of programming it offers. "I knew there were several girls waiting for mentors," she said. "I thought, where can I play the most helpful role? And from my own perspective, this helps deepen my understanding of our programs." In terms of creating mentoring relationships, "There is a really great vetting process for matching mentors and mentees," Susan explains. "The MTC staff do an incredible job of getting to know the individual volunteers and students before making that match."

Despite being up-to-date on the program, there were still some surprises in store for Susan in her relationship with her mentee. "We have developed a strong friendship that goes far beyond my expectations," she explains. "We both love theatre. We are reading the same book, *Little Women*, so we can be ready to see the play."

Being open to surprises and learning new things is fundamental to the role of being a mentor. Susan learned that mentors have to remind themselves to listen and not be judgmental. They

must let the mentee express what he or she wants to express and to bring up options. "As a mentor, you are not in the role of a parent or a counselor. You help [your mentee] think through the options but don't pass judgment on their decisions." That said, there is a certain stability that goes with the fluidity. When her mentee was not able to meet in person on a given week, Susan planned a FaceTime call with her to stay in contact. "It all

here. The bigger picture is to make sure that we don't lose sight of that."

She is also gratified to be working with such a dedicated team of professionals on staff at MTC.

"We're really fortunate in that we have a staff of people who are so extraordinarily dedicated to what we do, that they don't just treat it as a job. It is a passion," Susan says. "Everyone is really tied to the mission

"Everyone is really tied to the mission of the organization and wants to do something that is meaningful. The board as well. They really believe in what we are doing."

Susan Kresek
MTC Board Chair and Mentor

comes down to the consistency of the relationship. Making sure it is a priority that you make time for."

Consistency is essential, because students really value their mentor's support. "We live in a little bubble here. We have a lot of underserved kids in the community. I have talked to people about what we do and they seem a little surprised that [mentoring] is something we need

of the organization and wants to do something that is meaningful. The board as well. They really believe in what we are doing."

Mentor Program

The Mentor program serves students in grades 9-12, providing another caring adult in their lives.



Tutor Program

The Tutor Program helps students in grades K-8 gain skills and grow in confidence.

101

Students

81

Mentors

3

High schools



382

Students

91

Tutors

12

Elementary schools



100%

of the 33 seniors in the mentor program graduated from high school

100%

of mentees reported that their mentor has given them new ideas to think about for their future plans



of mentees reported that having a mentor has given them confidence in new situations



of seniors plan to stay in touch with their mentor



of mentees reported a more positive attitude about school

100%

of teachers are satisfied with the effectiveness of tutoring provided by MTC

98%

of teachers felt that MTC-tutored students demonstrated greater resilience and perseverance



of teachers observed academic progress in students tutored by MTC



of teachers noted improvement in test scores for students tutored by MTC



of teachers noticed increased engagement and classroom participation

Dorothy Lau: An Educator's Perspective

A longtime Mountain View educator reflects on how MTC tutors have an impact on her young students.

I started in the Mountain View Whisman School District a little bit more than 10 years ago. I teach Kindergarten. Over the years, I heard MTC's name coming up consistently as a resource that we could use.

At the beginning of the year, the staff or the principal will announce that MTC is accepting requests for tutors. You fill out the Google form. It is nicely detailed. I really like how methodical it is.

How Tutors Help

I request tutors because I am concerned about the the students' academics, particularly long-term. I have had tutors in the classroom for math and English Language Development. A lot of times teachers will ask for tutors because eventually, we may be asking for more formal support from the school for the

student. We think a tutor will keep the child engaged in the learning and support them as best we can until we see what happens.

In Kindergarten, [young children] are also learning how to manage their big emotions. You will run into students who are in particular need of self-regulation. While tutors are primarily there to help with reading skills in small-group instruction, I found that they were not only helping academically, they were also helping socially and emotionally.

I have seen so many benefits.

I met an MTC volunteer tutor. When she would come into the room, the girl she was tutoring would light up. It was almost like she was waiting her whole life to have a big sister. She felt so special, you could tell from her face.

Having that grown-up come shows them that they really matter. This grown-up is here to give them their full attention. This grown-up cares for them and is going to help them with their work. The work doesn't have to be so daunting. It doesn't have to make students unhappy. It is something that they can get through with their grown-up buddy.

I appreciate how kind and flexible the tutors are. They are just amazing people. Having MTC to recruit people, train them and get them connected with us teachers, it's awesome!



“I appreciate how kind and flexible the tutors are. They are just amazing people. Having MTC to recruit people, train them and get them connected with us teachers, it's awesome!”

Dorothy Lau
Kindergarten teacher at Landels Elementary School, MVWSD

Leadership and Financials

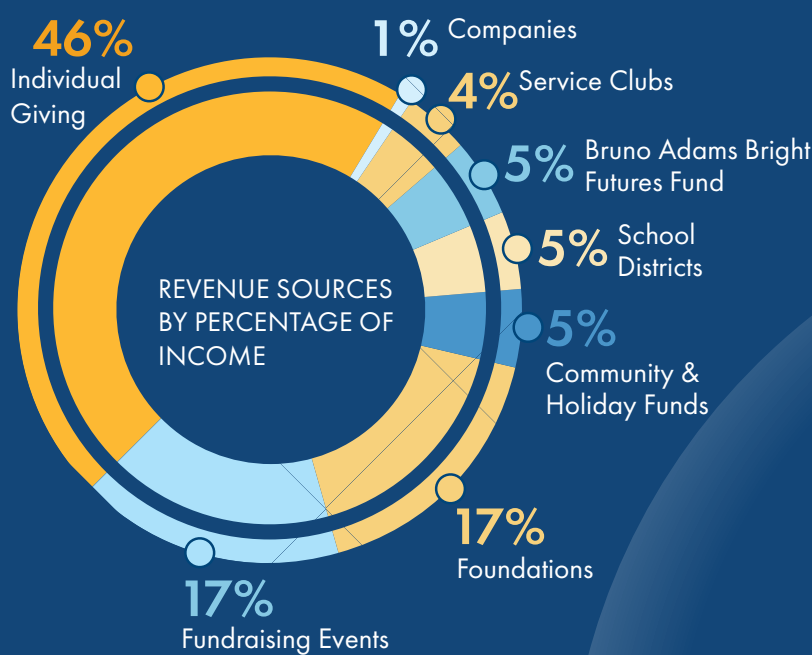
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Vanessa Hannan, Tutor Program Manager – Los Altos
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Who Powers MTC?



REVENUE TOTAL:	\$622,010
Individual Giving	\$283,263
Fundraising Events	\$108,567
Foundations	\$107,500
Community& Holiday Funds	\$33,334
School Districts	\$31,000
Bruno Adams Bright Futures Fund	\$28,248
Service Clubs	\$23,000
Companies	\$7,098

Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

Foundations and Corporations

\$100,000 Bequest*

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\$20,000 and Above

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Mentor Tutor Connection
P.O. Box 391268
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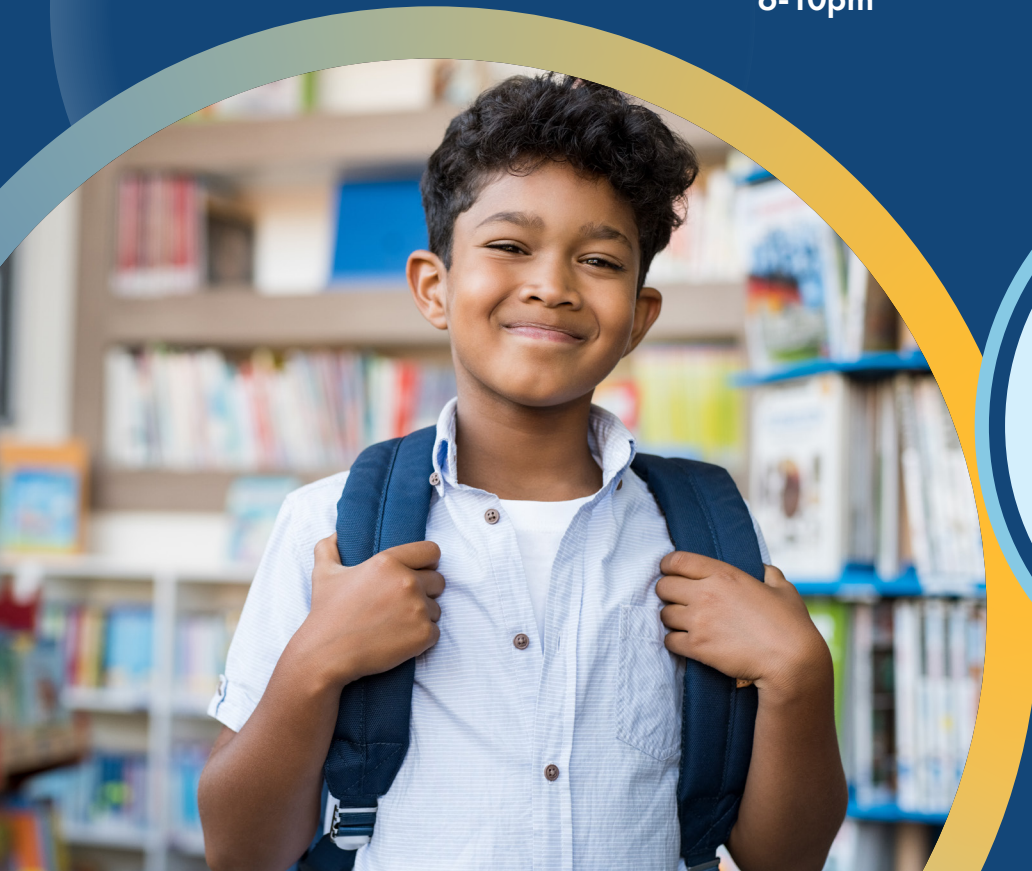
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30th Anniversary

Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club

Friday, April 10, 2026

6-10pm



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what keeps us going**



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