

# Your United Way support gave Jerrold a new direction in life

Jerrold was a special education student who struggled with his academic performance.

His school's administration office had notified his mother that unless his grades and performance improved, he would not receive a high school diploma after he finished 12th grade - instead, he would be handed a blank certificate at the ceremony.

His future mentor, Richard, came to one of United Way's partner agencies through a community-based program. Richard's background in using athletics to teach teens about sportsmanship and the value of education made him a perfect match for Jerrold's struggle with academics. Richard was matched with Jerrold and became his mentor, and things got off to a great start right away.



"Being able to make a difference in Jerrold's life was truly inspiring," Richard said. "I've learned a lot through my mentoring experiences. When I first met Jerrold and was told about his struggles in school, I didn't even know it was possible a student could go to school for 12 years, attend graduation and not receive a high school diploma."

Richard immediately enrolled Jerrold in his sports program and began spending time with him both on the golf course and in a study environment. Richard also met with Jerrold's school principal and counselor to find out what he could do to further help. "I knew if I could encourage Jerrold to apply himself and do his very best in whatever he was asked to do, he'd be better prepared to go on to college. If I could help him do that, I would have made a difference in his life and my job would be partially done," Richard said.

Thanks to your support of our United Way network's mentoring programs, Jerrold is indeed succeeding in school. Colleges have expressed an interest in him both for his academic performance and for his skills on the golf course. Richard has given Jerrold a more optimistic view about the future, and the two continue to spend time together playing golf and studying.

*True events. Names and photos are changed to protect confidentiality.*

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