**SHANE: MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND**

Born and raised in the Mattapan neighborhood of Boston, Professional Mentor, Shane, understands the struggles our Achievers face daily. After graduating college in 2014, she joined Friends of the Children-Boston as one of the adolescent Friends. Recently, she shared with us what it means to be a Friend!

**How did you become a Friends of the Children-Boston professional mentor?**

Shane: I got into a lot of trouble when I was young. My family worried I would go down the wrong path. Fortunately I had mentors who made sure I stayed on the right track. I wanted to do the same, especially for those who have the hardest time. Friends of the Children-Boston is exactly where I belong.

**You’re a professional mentor (“Friend”) to 12 girls. What is their biggest obstacle?**

Shane: It’s very hard for me to see my girls not believing in themselves. They are all so amazing, and yet, they have been told they’re not good enough. So when I work with them, I design projects that help them build confidence.

**What’s most rewarding?**

Shane: The “aha” moments! One girl was scared to try new things. I took her out on a boat—totally out of her comfort zone. The smile on her face was priceless! I knew that her perception of herself changed that day!

**What’s your best advice to your Achievers?**

Shane: Love yourself. Others will never be able to take that away.

*Every day, professional mentors like Shane relentlessly help our Achievers overcome challenges and believe in themselves. Thank you!*

**“Shane talks to me and helps me manage my anger issues. I have changed because she taught me to not act on my emotions. I wouldn’t be as thoughtful if she wasn’t my Friend”*  

– Sasha*, one of Shane’s Achievers

**WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A FRIEND:**

We call our professional mentors “Friends” because it isn’t just a job. They form meaningful relationships with our youth that last for years.

**FRIENDS DO A LOT, THEY:**

- Help an Achiever’s math skills by counting successful free throws.
- Help an Achiever find constructive outlets for stress and frustration.
- Advocate for a special education service at an Achiever’s middle school.
- Are the consistent adult in an Achiever’s life as they move from placement to placement in the foster care system.

*Often, the Friend is the ONLY person the Achievers or their families call when a crisis occurs.*

**Last year:**

- 126 Achievers received one on one professional mentoring
- 24,000 hours of direct professional mentoring services were provided to Achievers

*name changed