

Future Leaders Academy – Mentorship Feature

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Mentor Elena Berman (left) and Future Leader Ella Fix during Future Leaders Academy gathering in October 2022.

Future Leaders Academy Update

Meet Ella Fix and Elena Berman

Using their values as a North Star for goal setting and decision making, Ella Fix and Elena Berman are inspiring one another as they navigate their paths forward.

Future Leader, Ella Fix is a senior at St. Croix Preparatory Academy who is earning college credit in high school through the Minnesota Department of Education's Postsecondary Enrollment Options program. "I'm really enjoying getting an advancement in my education because I have almost two years done so I can graduate early," says Ella. She also tutors part time for her professor at Century College. Ella's values are kindness, empathy, learning, responsibility, and respect.

Ella's mentor, Elena Berman, is pursuing her master's in computer science at Stanford, where she received her bachelor's in computer science last year. She recently began working at the tech start-

up, Floreo, that offers virtual reality based behavioral therapy, specifically for neurodivergent people such as those with autism spectrum disorder and ADHD. "I'm on pause [with my studies] right now because work is busy but I'm planning to continue in the winter," she says. Elena's values are fairness, health, helping others, integrity, and safety.

For Ella, defining her values during think2perform Research Institute's Future Leader Academy training provided clarity and direction. "The values and skills I learned during the workshops helped me motivate myself to achieve my goals and follow my values whenever I'm thinking about goals that I set," says Ella. "Taking the values you hold in life, and then applying it to your goals was really meaningful because it creates goals that have actual purpose."

Elena also benefited from the Values Card exercise at a recent inflection point in her life. "When Ella and I were working through values, I was in the job search process," says Elena. "As Ella was thinking about her future and making goals that are in line with her values, I was thinking about how to make sure where I'll be next lines up with my values."

Ella's Values	Elena's Values
Kindness	Fairness
Empathy	Health
Learning	Helping Others
Responsibility	Integrity
Respect	Safety

Working with Elena, Ella set and accomplished two goals based on her values: 1) having a plan to study for classes, and 2) reaching out to friends and old neighbors she hadn't talked with in a long time. "Elena provided a lot of support for my studying goal because she helped motivate me," says Ella. "She's also been really helpful with college applications and answering my questions, so it's been really nice."

Elena's past experiences equipped her to provide useful and empathetic support. "Studying for the

ACT and applying to colleges isn't that far behind me," says Elena. "I went through it five years ago and watched my sister go through it just a couple of years ago. Being a high school senior there are a lot of demands on your time and just a lot of uncertainties about the future, I very much remember how that felt. I have every confidence that Ella is going to nail the college application process."



Future Leader Ella Fix (left) introduces her mentorship goals during the Mentorship Kick-off Event in June.

Ella's new goal is exploring career options in business or medicine, either as a physician or a physician's assistant by gaining insight from professionals with help from Elena. "As a senior in high school, I wasn't really aware of informational interviews so I'm hoping to work with Ella by connecting her with people I know who are in business or in medicine," says Elena.

As a Future Leader, Ella combines her ambition with emotional intelligence. "Ella is very authentic and honest with herself about things that she's working on and in goal setting," says Elena. "She's a hard worker and she's very motivated. In addition, Ella is very thoughtful and very kind. Every time we talk and meet up, she brings a lot of energy and enthusiasm to the mentorship."

With thoughtfulness, motivation and values guiding the way, Ella and Elena are consciously charting their own bright futures.

Hear more from Future Leader Ella Fix and our current Future Leaders and Mentors **in our Future Leaders Academy [video!](#)**

Do you know of someone who would make a great Future Leader? Send them an application for the 2023-2024 Future Leaders Academy cohort, available [here](#).

Learn more about the Future Leaders Academy: [Flyer](#) and [Website](#)

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