



College Access Specialist JOB DESCRIPTION

Position: College Access Specialist

Reports to: Education Manager

Summary/Description: The College Access Specialist works across the Middle and High School programs to build and sustain a college-going culture and promotes awareness of the link between higher education and professional careers. There is a focus on supporting high school juniors and seniors who are participants in RHI's Youth Leader program. The College Access Specialist works with juniors and seniors to co-create a "right-fit" college roadmap in support of participants' post-secondary goals. This person provides comprehensive college-readiness support: informing and facilitating college-readiness programming and financial aid workshops; assisting with researching and applying for scholarships; engaging and coaching parents about the college application process; and cultivating and maintaining relationships with college admissions counselors. College Access Specialists will develop and lead an early college awareness program for 6th-8th graders.

This position is full time and has regularly scheduled hours from noon to 8pm, Monday through Friday. There is flexibility around this during the summer and non-program periods.

Responsibilities: The responsibilities of the College Access Specialist include but are not limited to:

- Develop and facilitate programming to expose and prepare participants for college, including early awareness programming for 6-8th graders.
- Coach an estimated caseload of 20-40 juniors and seniors on college preparedness.
- Lead the college application process for college-bound participants.
- Develop workshops, events and trips that will support, inspire, and inform participants about the skills needed to pursue higher education and other opportunities (trips, panels, and college tours/fairs).
- Mobilize resources to connect participants with relevant resources important for post-secondary success (SAT courses, college prep mentors, additional tutoring, school/placement visits, etc.).
- Coordinate financial aid, FAFSA workshops; assist students and parents with navigating the financial aid/FAFSA process.
- Coordinate with the Education Manager to provide differentiated college prep support to participants according to their individual plans, in small group and one-on-one settings.
- Analyze report cards to co-develop improvement plans with participants.
- Develop interactive lessons that will assist youth to develop academic techniques: study skills, organization skills, time management (with support from Education Manager).
- Closely working with students' guidance counselors or college advisors for additional assistance.
- Develop and lead parent workshop series on post-secondary options and processes.
- Connect with parents/guardians with the financial aspect of the college application process [i.e.- FAFSA/TAP, income documents, Parent PLUS loans].

- Track youth progress and provide consistent documentation/ progress notes about observed needs in the Salesforce Database and other tracking systems.
- Attend staff and planning meetings as needed.

Knowledge and Abilities:

- Excited about community-based youth development work.
- 2-3 years of college counseling and/or college admissions experience
2 years of experience in college access or success planning in an academic environment (i.e. special education, NYC Dept. of Education, college access work).
- Knowledge of New York City public education system, the college application process, and college retention methods.
- First-hand experience with youth programming and /or working with first-generation college students preferred.
- Strong knowledge of CUNY/SUNY systems; understanding of colleges nationwide and their academic offerings.
- Extensive knowledge of FAFSA/TAP NYS financial aid processes.
- Must have strong communication skills, both written and verbal.
- Proven ability to serve as a role model in an after-school setting.
- Ability to create and implement an educational plan.
- Ability to connect with youth, provide needed support and demonstrate patience and maintain a positive attitude.
- Demonstrated ability to work individually and as part of a team.

Education and Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree
- Case management experience (at least 1 year) preferred
- Knowledge of college application process and financial aid
- Experience teaching or facilitating groups
- Computer skills; experience working with Google Office Suite and Salesforce
- Resident of Red Hook preferred

To Apply: Please submit a cover letter and resume to apply@rhicenter.org with “College Access Specialist” in the subject line.