



## **Saratoga Sponsor a Scholar Mentor Manual 2016-2017**

*Our mission is to assist economically disadvantaged young men and women to complete high school and graduate from college.*

Thanks for stepping up to serve as a SSAS mentor!

Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar mentors are supportive adults who serve as role models, friends and guides to our college-bound high school students. Mentors can make a dramatic difference in the achievements of our students by helping them apply to college, giving them advice on career choices and offering the support a young person may lack.

This brief manual provides basic information about the program, a list of ideas for you and your mentee, and contact information so you can connect with the other mentors. For more detailed information visit the [SSAS website](#).

### **Overview**

Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar (“SSAS”) is a nine-year-old 501(c) (3) organization that was established to help financially-disadvantaged young men and women in the Saratoga Springs School District successfully complete high school and college. Skidmore College, the Saratoga Mentoring Program and the Saratoga Springs City School District all provide support for SSAS.

Each year, ten high school sophomores are chosen to enter the program. To be eligible they must also be eligible for the federally assisted/free school lunch program. At the beginning of their participation in the program, each young scholar is immediately assigned a mentor through the Saratoga Mentoring Program. This mentor stays with them throughout their four-year participation in the program.

We provide them with needed school supplies, weekly structured study sessions, tutoring in subjects where they fall behind (or express a need for assistance), PSAT and SAT training courses, study skills classes, exam fees for Advanced Placement courses and numerous college visits.

We also provide counselors to assist them with college preparation, including developing time management skills and teaching them how to fill out a college application and apply for financial assistance. Skidmore College allots them frequent visits to their campus and meetings with college students. We also help them find part-time or summer employment.

**Participation in SSAS isn't a gift, it's an opportunity.**

Our scholars are accountable. Their academic performance is monitored weekly, their participation in community activities is mandatory.

**The scholars chosen must be willing to follow certain conditions mandated by SSAS, which include:**

- Meet at least monthly with their Mentor.
- Keep all grades above 80 or attend intensive tutoring.
- Have a productive summer (employment or summer college enrichment).
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of SSAS.
- Attend mandatory weekly study skills programs.
- Attend all college trips and skill sessions

**SSAS in turn dedicates \$10,000 to each scholar's enrichment. This is broken into two phases:**

- The SSAS budget supports scholars with \$4,000 during their last three years of high school for school supplies, study skill seminars, tutoring, PSAT and SAT training and entrance fees, seminars on the college application and scholarship processes, college visits and attendance at cultural events.
- A new laptop for each graduating high school senior who is attending college is provided by one of our benefactors.
- SSAS rewards each scholar with \$750 for each semester they successfully complete in college. This is a total of \$6,000 over a four-year college program.

## SSAS Volunteer Mentor Policies

The success of the mentoring part of the SSAS program is based on the availability, support, and commitment of dedicated volunteers who serve as role models to our students. A mentor's role is to be a guide, a good listener, a coach and a responsive friend who cares. A mentor is NOT a savior, a therapist, a peer or a parent. The following policies are designed to help insure that the role of a mentor is clear and that the mentoring relationship is successful. If you have questions, please contact Janice White, Mentor Coordinator @518.538.3532 or [jwhite5048@gmail.com](mailto:jwhite5048@gmail.com).

1. Commitment: Volunteers are asked to make a four-year commitment to a student, meet with the student at least once a month, and keep in touch more often by phone or e-mail. Mentors and mentees attend cultural events, school or community activities or do community service work together. A mentor can also help a student do homework or investigate career choices.

2. Confidentiality: Confidentiality and privacy issues are critical to the success of the mentoring part of the SSAS program. A student may share personal, confidential information about themselves or their family with a mentor. Mentors must treat such information as completely confidential. That means not discussing your student's personal issues with friends, teachers, therapists or other community members.

3. Safety: Mentors are expected to offer a safe and well-supervised experience on match outings. Mentors are asked to check with SSAS before engaging in any activity that is outside the norm and could be classified as dangerous. Such activities include the use of firearms, including BB guns, paragliding or using an ATV. This is not a complete list and we ask volunteers to be especially cautious. SSAS students are "other people's children".

4. Child Abuse and Neglect: Mentors are encouraged to discuss any concern they have about the safety of a mentee. In a situation where there is suspicion of child abuse or neglect or other concerns about a child's safety, a mentor should make immediate contact one of the SSAS Academic Co-coordinators and the problem will be referred to the proper professionals.

5. Media: Any inquiries made by the media must be redirected to SSAS.

6. Boundaries: A good mentoring relationship is based on the existence of good boundaries. The match will be most successful if a mentor is careful to be consistent and clear about the boundaries of the relationship, including:

- Time – Mentors are committed to spending at least a couple of hours once a month with students for three years of high school and continuing to keep in touch through the first year of college.
- Values – A mentor should not take the role of a parent and should be respectful of the student’s family. This includes choices families make in the way they spend their time and income as well personal choices of friendship, movies, political and religious choices, activities, etc. While a mentor may wish to help a child in a particular area, such as improving school grades, it is up to the student and family to determine priorities. Mentoring works best if the mentor does not have a prescribed agenda for the student (i.e. “The student will earn three As on the next report card” or “The student will lose 5 lbs. in three weeks.) Plan relaxed visits with the goal of providing a supportive friendship.
- Money: Mentors are discouraged from lending money or buying expensive gifts for mentees or their families. Mentors should plan activities that are free or reasonably priced. Small gifts such as a book or jewelry or a gift certificate are appropriate. If a mentor wishes to give a larger gift for an occasion such as a student’s high school graduation, it is up to the mentor’s discretion.
- Permission Slips - Mentors must have written permission from parents to take a student out of town on an overnight college visit. Written permission is also required for activities that may involve some risk, such as kayaking, boating or rock climbing.
- Transportation: Mentors may transport youth in their cars. Each mentor’s car insurance should include coverage for persons traveling in the car. Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar does not carry liability insurance for mentors.

## **Goals for Mentors**

As a mentor, you play an important role in a teen's life. There are many ways you can positively impact your scholar's life. Below will give you some ideas of how. However, don't be overwhelmed. You have experience in many of these areas. Based on your strengths and the student's needs Saratoga SAS staff can help you focus on one or two areas.

### **Establish a positive, personal relationship with your scholar.**

- Have fun.
- Be a friend.
- Be a positive role model.
- Be open-minded and nonjudgmental.
- Provide positive attention and encouragement.

### **Help your scholar to achieve academic success.**

- Help your scholar with homework and school projects.
- Help your scholar identify short and long term goals.
- Quiz them before their test.
- Do brainteasers.

### **Encourage emotional intelligence in your mentee.**

- Help build his self-esteem.
- Help develop her ability to express herself in healthy and constructive ways.
- Foster her compassion and empathy.

### **Foster social growth in your mentee.**

- Emphasize the importance of social etiquette ("please" and "thank you")
- Increase her ability to interact with people in various contexts (employers, wait staff, teachers, police officers, etc.)
- Model appropriate dress, behavior and speech.
- Discuss ways for him to effectively communicate with parents and teachers.

### **Explore existing passions and discover new interests.**

- Encourage him to try a dance class at school.
- Try out a new recipe together.
- Volunteer or do community service.

### **Provide opportunities for empowerment.**

- Encourage independence.
- Ask questions that develop self-reflection.

- Learn together how to access local resources (library, free local family events, tutoring services, school clubs, career fairs, etc.).

### **Mentoring Relationship Stages**

Mentorships are just like all other relationships. They go through stages of development. Each mentorship is unique – just like its members, so there’s no set timeframe to follow for the relationship phases. In general, your relationship will eventually hit all of these stages. The stages may occur out of order, or you may move back to a previous stage. Remember that you don’t have to do any of this alone. Staff will be able to guide you through each stage, so keep them informed on how the relationship is going.

### **Developing Rapport and Building Trust**

During this phase the mentee is more interested in getting to know how “real” you are and how much s/he can trust you. Building trust takes weeks, sometimes months. Engage your mentee in different activities such as listening to music, doing homework, playing basketball, reading a magazine or talking about current events. Get to know each other, and remember it is okay to have some silence too.

#### ***What to expect:***

- Curiosity and nervousness on everyone’s part. You may not immediately “click” with your mentee(s) – enjoy spending time together and getting to know each other.
- The relationship may be fairly one-sided for some time. Your mentee(s) might not know what interests them or something new they would like to try. Come with ideas, but let your mentee(s) guide your activities.
- It may take time for your mentee(s) to get into the “groove” of mentoring. They are trying to figure it out – just like you.

#### ***Things to remember:***

- Adolescents are by nature unpredictable. They can’t help it—their brains are still developing, especially the parts that will eventually help them control their impulses. Right now they are hard-wired to be reactive and emotional—so don’t take it personally when they are.
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Be honest.
- Have a conversation about confidentiality with your mentee(s). Let them know what is said between the two of you remains there. This will help to build trust.
- Be positive. *“Hey! I’m glad you came today. I’ve been looking forward to this all week!”*

## **Testing**

Teens may be slow to give their trust, expecting inconsistency and lack of commitment, due to past experiences with adults. Try not to take it personally, but your trustworthiness and commitment may be tested, particularly when teens are from unstable backgrounds where adults haven't always followed through on commitments. In addition, many teens are trying to figure out where the boundaries are in the relationship and what they can "get away" with.

### ***What to expect:***

- Missed meetings or unreturned phone calls.
- Unreasonable requests.
- Angry, reserved or sullen behavior.
- Setbacks – even if you're doing everything you're supposed to.

### ***Things to remember:***

- Refrain from taking it personally.
- Trust is built from predictability. Consistently show up to meetings on time.
- Reinforce boundaries, if necessary.
- Your mentee may just be a teen that needs lots of reminders!
- Be positive. *"I'm glad you came today."* *"Thanks for hanging out with me."*
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Your mentee's truancy may have nothing to do with testing, but rather a way of responding to other things happening in their lives.

## **Strengthening the Relationship**

This stage is what most people think of when they think of "mentoring"; your mentee and you will have a stronger relationship and can focus on goal-setting or skill building. Since each mentorship is unique it may take more time to get to this stage for some matches, but you will get to this stage, just stick with it!

### ***What to expect:***

- A solid friendship is forming.
- As a match you are more self-reliant.
- Teen(s) and mentors are more comfortable with each other.
- You have a more established relationship with the family.
- Setbacks. At times old behaviors may appear, especially if the teen is under stress.

***Things to remember:***

- Now is a good time to talk about and begin goal setting. Be sure the goals are student-led (based on their preferences and interests), developmentally appropriate and realistic.
- Keep exploring and trying new things. Utilize SARATOGA SAS staff, and community resources.
- Continue to support your mentee while encouraging their independence.
- Refer to your “Goals for Mentors” on page 5 of this Guide.

**Moving Forward****Unplanned or Early Closure**

Research findings suggest that matches that end prematurely can result in negative outcomes for mentees, such as increases in problem behaviors, which is why it’s extremely important to talk to a staff member as soon as you have concerns. Sometimes, despite everyone’s best efforts or due to circumstances beyond our control, a mentoring match has to end.

***Things to remember:***

- Some youth drop out of the program or move away, which necessitates a relationship closure.
- Unrealistic expectations on either side can impede the development of a strong relationship.
- Lack of solid friendship can make moving forward in the relationship almost impossible.
- Regardless of the reason for the closure, try to close the relationship on a positive note everyone.
- Celebrate your relationship (including showing up for meetings regularly, participating fully, and making the most out of this opportunity).



## **Important Milestones for Your Scholar**

### **Sophomore Timeline**

- **CASDA College Fair, Fall and Spring**
- **Sophomore College Night**
- **Naviance - Resume, Career Interest Inventory**
- **PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test)**
- **SAT Subject Tests**
- **AP (Advanced Placement) exams in May if applicable**
- **SSAS Graduation and Induction Picnic--June**
- **Individual Meeting with Counselor -academic and career planning**

### **Junior Timeline**

#### **March/April / May / June**

- **Begin Campus Visits**
- **Register for May and/or June SAT and ACT**
- **Junior Night**
- **Junior/Parent Conferences**

#### **June - August**

- **Continue Campus Visits**
- **Finalize your list of prospective options**
- **SSAS graduation/induction picnic**
- **NCAA Clearinghouse Form - for potential Division I and Division II athletes (August). [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)**
- **Request catalogs and admissions information**
- **Obtain dates and registration materials for the Fall SAT and/or ACT**

### **Senior Timeline**

#### **September**

- **Schedule a senior conference (students applying early action or early decision should make early appointments)**
- **Register for the Oct. SAT I, SAT II(s) and ACT**
- **Attend Resume Workshop**
- **Request letter of recommendations**
- **Write "Thank you" notes to those who wrote letters of recommendations**
- **Meet with College Representatives in the Counseling Center**
- **Attend the Senior College Jump Start Workshop**

## **October**

- **Attend local college fair, evening session is recommended**
- **Attend College Essay Workshop**
- **Work on admissions application essays**
- **Early Decision/Early Action, service academy applications due in the Counseling Center, two weeks prior to deadline**
- **Take the ASVAB (Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery) exam**
- **CSS Profile can be submitted**
- **Check registration deadlines for SAT/ACT (if necessary)**
- **Scholarships**
- **FAFSA available online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)**
- **Keep copies of the forms you submit**
- **Parents: It's helpful to get your income tax returns prepared early-schools may request them to prove eligibility for financial aid**
- **Attend Financial Aid Evening**

## **November/December**

- **Prepare your college applications and make a list of application due dates and requirements**
- **Check registration deadlines for SAT/ACT (if necessary)**
- **Begin reviewing and completing financial aid forms online.**
- **Apply for outside funding and scholarships**

## **February**

- **Senior mid-term grades mailed to colleges from the counseling center at the request of the student**
- **Submit the FAFSA if you have not already done so**
- **Rank your finalized list of colleges**
- **Do campus overnights**

## **March**

- **Submit tax forms to the financial aid office if requested.**
- **Contact each office to make certain that your application is complete.**
- **Determine what else you need to do to establish and maintain your eligibility for financial aid**

## **April**

- **Watch the mail for college acceptance and financial aid letters. Colleges must inform you by 4/15**

- **Compare the financial aid awards you receive.**
- **A copy of all acceptance/denial letters must be submitted to the Counseling Department**
- **Make your final decision and send in a deposit by the deadline (typically by May 1st)**
- **Check with the college you have chosen to attend and obtain information regarding the details of signing and returning financial aid award letters**
- **Notify the other schools that you will not be attending**
- **Watch for important deadlines at your chosen college**

**May**

- **Advanced Placement (AP) examinations are given in high schools nationwide**
- **Complete senior survey**

**June**

- **SSAS Graduation and Induction Picnic**

**75 Fun Activities to do with your mentee:**

1. Sit by the fire and talk
2. Listen, listen, listen
3. Play board games
4. Knit
5. Play frisbee
6. Plan, shop and cook a meal together
7. Fly a kite
8. See the ocean
9. Watch a movie and discuss over a meal afterwards
10. Hang out and talk
11. Listen to and discuss an audio book
12. Use the internet together to plan an outing. Let your student teach you.
13. Work in the garden
14. Ride a bike
15. Snowshoe
16. Take a walk/go on a hike
17. Sample a nice restaurant
18. Play pickleball
19. Learn how to do a load of laundry
20. Attend a sporting event
21. Go to a concert or performance
22. Write a story together
23. Get a library card and check out a book
24. Open a savings account and discuss managing finances
25. Offer a ride home from school, and talk together the whole way
26. Take photographs
27. Take your mentee to work if they express an interest in your professional life
28. Introduce your mentee to family and friends
29. Sell or buy something on eBay together
30. Gather up items to donate to a charity
31. Buy a small amount of stock together and follow it
32. Do carpentry
33. Figure out a basic home repair together
34. Wash a car together
35. Play miniature golf
36. Watch a guilty pleasure tv show and discuss reality vs. fantasy
37. Find YouTube videos of your favorite music artists/sports heroes to share with each other

38. Celebrate their birthday
39. Go kayaking
40. Make holiday cookies for your mentee's favorite teachers as gifts
41. Go to the Dance, Automobile, Racing or Tang museums
42. Make cookies together
43. Attend something your mentee is involved in, a play, concert, sport, etc.
44. Get a manicure/pedicure
45. Get a haircut (with parent's permission)
46. Go to Creative Sparks together
47. Do homework together if your mentee asks for help
48. Exchange stories of your most embarrassing moments
49. Share the first time your heart was broken
50. Tell your favorite story of your grandparents
51. Volunteer for a community service project
52. Go fishing
53. Get an ice cream cone
54. Make connections to people doing work that your mentee fantasizes about
55. Sew a button on together, and darn a hole
56. Create a resume
57. Fill out job applications together
58. Help with college application process
59. Take a tour of a college together
60. Take a train ride
61. Go to NYC
62. Figure out a smart phone calendar and talk about time organization
63. Develop study skills together
64. Go for a swim
65. Get dressed up and go somewhere special together
66. Go to the Farmer's market
67. Go to Uncommon Grounds for a mug of hot cocoa
68. Take a walk at the Spa State Park and taste water from a spring
69. Go to the racetrack for a backstretch tour
70. Go to a guest lecture at Skidmore College
71. Go to a production by Home Made Theater
72. Go to Soave Faire and buy some simple art supplies for an artistic mentee
73. See an exhibit at the Saratoga Arts Center
74. Go to Arts Fest together
75. Volunteer together for a charity

**Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar Board Members**

James C. LaVigne, Executive Director- jclavigne@aol.com, 518-587-2472

Lewis H. Titterton, Board Chair

Gary DiCresce

John Snow

Pat Titterton

Hon. Scott Johnson

Julie Bonacio

Kristie Roohan

Janice White

Mike Piccirillo

Walter Reidy

Tom Valentine

Jim Carminucci

Robin Dalton

Mary Grace Manz

**Derby Party Chair:** Robin Dalton: daltonrobin@gmail.com

917-476-9977

**SSAS web site administrator:** Interactive Media Consulting, LLC created and hosts the SSAS website. Beth Moeller (beth@imediaconsult.com) owns the company and is our contact person.

**Mentor Committee Members:**

**Janice White:** jwhite5048@gmail.com

Cell: 518-538-3532 H: 518-583-6648

Responsibilities:

Mentor Team coordination

Student interviews for new students

Matching mentors with students

Interface with High School Guidance Counselors Brandy and Matt

**Jerrilyn Matthews:** amethystjerry@aol.com

Cell: 518-316-0084 H: 518-306-6472

Responsibilities:

Meeting with new mentors after applications approved

Matching mentors with students

**Joanna Zangrando:** jzangran@skidmore.edu

Cell: 518-260-8015 H: 518-587-8059

Responsibilities:

Meeting with new mentors after applications approved

Matching mentors with students

**Judy Soukup:** Soukupquintet@gmail.com

Cell: 518-694-2300

Responsibilities:

Initial contact and application processing of new mentors

**Terry DeBrule,** terryjill13@gmail.com

Cell: 201-232-5840

Responsibilities:

Mentor orientation

Ongoing mentor support and mentor manual administrator (please alert her if your contact information changes)

**Saratoga Sponsor a Scholar**

P.O. Box 107

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

**Saratoga Springs High School**

1 Blue Streak Blvd.

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Principal: Dr. Brett Miller

(518) 587-6690

**School Counseling Department SSAS Counselors:**

Brandy Crary (518) 587-6690 (x33351) b\_crary@saratogaschools.org

Matthew Nelson (518) 587-6690 (x33310) m\_nelson@saratogaschools.org

**For emergency matters with your mentee, contact:** Matthew Nelson or Brandy Crary, listed above

**For other concerns, or if you are unable to contact Matt or Brandy, call:** Janice White, 518-538-3532 or email jwhite5048@gmail.com

### **Mentor Contact Information 2016-17**

Name	Email	Phone
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Anthony, Lorri	lorrieanthony46@gmail.com	518-368-7902
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Welch, Tim	tim@lazerpix.com	518-587-6003
White, Jaymes	jaymes_white@saratogaschools.org	518-587-6690 Ext.33329
Williams, Renata	renata_williams17@yahoo.com	518-588-7790

## **Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar Overnight Field Trip Permission Form**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child is planning an overnight field trip with his/her Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar mentor. Please read the information, sign and return the form to Janice White at [jwhite5048@gmail.com](mailto:jwhite5048@gmail.com) or to Brandy Crary or Matt Nelson at the high school at least several days before the date of the trip.

**Field Trip Information:**

Mentor's name/email address/ contact phone number:

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Date(s) of trip:

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Location:

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Purpose:

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Means of Transportation:

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Leave home/school: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrive back at home/school \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions:

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**Parent Permission:**

**I understand that the Sponsor a Scholar organization and the Saratoga Springs City School District are not supervising or coordinating this trip. It is a personal experience and the liability rests with the parent and the mentor.**

My son/daughter : \_\_\_\_\_ has  
permission to go on a field trip to: \_\_\_\_\_ on  
\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Date(s) Time

I give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to receive  
emergency medical treatment. In an emergency, please contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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