



Eda and Cliff Viner
Community Scholars Foundation, Inc.

Mentoring Program
Policies and Procedures

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Description: The Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation offers a scholarship program that provides South Palm Beach County High School students with four year scholarships to colleges and universities in the State of Florida public educational system, based on eligibility and financial need.

Mission Statement: Educating and inspiring compassionate young leaders to develop strong character with a vision for success.

Vision Statement: We are successful in leading accomplished graduates out into the world, who contribute to their families and communities.

Some of the materials included in the this document were copied or adapted from resources available on the internet and in other materials developed by other people; some of the materials were found in multiple sources and identifying the original source was therefore difficult. Although when possible references are attributed to their sources, there is no claim of originality in this work and the materials publically shared by other programs is appreciated!



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The Viner Community Scholarship is a program that provides South Palm Beach County High School students with four year scholarships to colleges and universities in the State of Florida public educational system.

Each spring, at each of the participating High Schools, the program accepts applications from students achieving at least a 3.50 unweighted GPA, based upon their financial needs.

The Scholars Partnership Board, consisting of six prominent members representing the diversity of our community, will review all applications and choose up to 25 new students to enter the scholarship program each year.

This scholarship is a “last dollar” scholarship that ensures the student is accessing other potential sources of financial aid, and to ensure that it is not simply replacing other sources of financial aid. The scholarship will contribute to tuition that is not already covered by financial aid and will provide room and board assistance as well as daily living expense assistance.

A mentor network has been created for the four-year scholarship students in order to provide them with the guidance and support necessary to keep them on track as potential issues arise during their tenure at college and to ensure the highest possible college graduation rates. Mentors are selected from the local high school staffs, local volunteers, and selected people at the universities or university cities.

Students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA or better average to continue qualifying for the program during their college career. In addition, each student is expected to perform and document 50 hours of community service per year. Students are also required to participate fully in the mentoring process.



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Why Youth Need Mentors

The young people of today must cope with far more personal and social pressures than any other previous generation of youth. Early intervention through a structured mentor relationship may be able to give young people the tools and support they need to deal effectively with these pressures.

Understanding the many social, psychological, and physical demands that the youth face is extremely important for any individual about to undertake the task of being a mentor. Following is a list of some of these issues:

1. Peer Pressure: One of the greatest forces on adolescents is the power and influence of their peers, especially when they are separated from their home and community.
2. Substance Abuse: The curiosity to experiment with alcohol, tobacco, and drugs is a constant threat to college students.
3. Sexuality: Many young people turn to sexual relationships for a variety of reasons.
4. Abuse and Violence: Physical and psychological abuse, within the family or in any environment, will have both an immediate effect on the youth and create long-lasting, negative attitudes and behaviors.
5. Depression and Suicide: Serious depression is common when young people are overwhelmed with issues and situations they cannot resolve.
6. Nutrition and Health Care: Many young people feel they are immortal and are either ignorant of or tend to ignore good health practices.
7. Faith and Religion: This issue is usually within the domain of the family. However, this may be an area of great concern for some young people.
8. Social and Time Management: How to manage leisure time, schoolwork, extracurricular activities, family chores, and other social demands is often very difficult for young people.
9. Career Exploration and Part-Time Work: Many young people struggle with the subjects of work and career. They often don't know what they want to do or be, how they can contribute to society, what their strengths are, or what steps to take in exploring workplace opportunities. Making money is important to most kids, but knowing how to go about securing satisfying employment is something they usually learn through trial and error.



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What a Mentor does for a Student

The overall objective is to improve the quality of life for the student. This assistance should guide the mentee to academic and social integration, increased self-esteem, higher grades, and greater self-perceived intellectual growth. Research indicates mentored college students have better academic performance and higher retention rates (rates of staying in school) than college students without mentors.

Goals of Viner Scholarship Foundation Mentoring Program

1. To ease students' transitional experience from high school to college.
2. To help students make connections academically, socially, and in extracurricular activities.
3. To provide students direct support and encouragement from a non-judgmental adult.
4. To help the student take responsibility for his/her skills and behavior
5. To increase student academic success, retention and graduation rates
6. To assist students in achieving career goals (goal setting, exploring career options, interviewing practice, etc.)
7. To assist in guiding students in dealing with difficult issues should issues arise in mentee's academic, social or family life.

It should be noted however that the student mentee should take the lead in setting goals; the mentors main focus should be on building the relationship.

General Expectations of The Mentoring Relationship

At a minimum, mentors must communicate with their mentee(s) once a week during the Freshman's first fall semester. This contact should be face-to-face (in person or via video chat) or by telephone. You and your mentee will determine your individual communication objectives and scheduling. The mentee is responsible for initiating the contacts. The mentee will submit a brief report detailing their contacts and the mode of communication once a month. The purpose of monthly reports is to assist the Scholarship Foundation in identifying special needs/concerns of students.



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Telephone and Skype contacts, in which both parties are 100% engaged in the interaction, are always preferable to email, text, etc. and are encouraged to build a relationship. Research indicates that frequency is an important factor in building a mentoring relationship. However, after the first semester, with the approval of the mentoring coordinator, frequency may be decreased if indicated by the desires and needs of the particular match to a minimum of once per month.

General Guidelines of Confidentiality

The mentee may be unsure whether the feelings and information they disclose to their mentors will be passed on to faculty, parents, etc. Early in the relationship, mentors must provide reassurance:

1. Nothing that the mentee tells the mentor will be discussed with anyone else except program staff for the purpose of supervision if necessary.
2. If the mentor feels it is important to involve another adult, it will be discussed first with the mentee.
3. If there is threat of physical harm to the mentee or to others, the mentor will discuss with the mentee the need to break confidentiality to seek protection for the endangered person (including the threat of suicide).

General Responsibilities of Mentors

1. Schedule at least one contact with mentee per week for the fall semester.
2. Provide guidance and support to the student by creating an atmosphere of openness, caring and concern where meaningful communication and trust can exist.
3. Encourage mentees to take advantage of other support services within the university. Mentees are provided resource materials during College Orientation on most campuses.



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4. Be on time for the scheduled contacts with your mentee, and call to cancel meetings if emergencies arise. A commitment for a contact with your mentee should be a mentor's first priority, barring emergencies. This consistent accountability has several benefits:
 - Sets a good example for mentee to see and emulate
 - Cements trust between mentor and mentee.
 - Creates mutual expectations that can be met.
5. Follow through with appropriate action, if any, after meeting with your mentee.
6. Keep accurate records of each contact with mentee (date/type of contact). Submit the reports at the end of each month to the Viner Scholarship Foundation office.
7. Encourage mentees to meet with their professors early in the semester to identify any potential weaknesses in their academic performance.
8. Encourage mentee to keep you informed about his/her academic progress.
9. Assist the mentee in identifying academic goals and objectives.
10. Participate in periodic evaluations of the Mentoring program.

General Responsibilities of Mentees

1. Schedule the weekly contacts with your mentor, and call to cancel meetings if emergencies arise.
2. Keep accurate records of each contact with mentor (date/type of contact). Submit the reports at the end of each month to the Viner Scholarship Foundation office.
3. Work with your mentor to identify your goals and objectives for the mentoring relationship.
4. Address with your mentor and/or the Mentoring Coordinator any concerns about the mentoring relationship.
5. Participate in periodic evaluations of the Mentoring program.



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POLICIES, PROCEDURES & FORMS

MENTOR ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Each mentor must meet the defined eligibility criteria. Extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the Mentoring Program Coordinator and the Executive Director when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Mentor Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a graduate of an accredited 4 year university or college.
- Be willing to adhere to all Mentoring Program policies and procedures.
- Agree to a one-year commitment to the program.
- Be willing to communicate with the mentee regularly as outlined in program.
- Complete the screening procedure.
- Agree to attend mentor trainings as required.
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the Viner Scholars Foundation.
- Have a clean criminal history.
- Not be currently in treatment for substance abuse. If a substance abuse problem has occurred in the past the applicant must have completed a non-addictive period of at least five years.
- Not currently be under treatment for a mental disorder that would adversely impact capacity to mentor a college student.
- Not have falsified information during the course of the screening process.

MATCHING POLICY

It is the policy of the Mentoring Program that the Mentoring Program Director will follow the guidelines outlined in the match procedure prior to creating a mentor/mentee match. The Program Director should use the factors outlined in the matching procedure to determine the suitability of a mentor/mentee match.



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The Mentoring Program Director will determine the suitability based on the following criteria:

- Preferences of the mentor and mentee.
- Common personal background, interests, and career goals.
- Similar personalities.
- Gender.

MATCH SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION POLICY

It is the policy of the Mentoring Program that mentees will be responsible for completing a log of their contacts and submitting the log to the office on a monthly basis. In addition, both mentors and mentees will be contacted by telephone or in person at the midpoint and completion of the academic year by the Mentoring Program Director to further assess the success of the match from all party's perspectives. In the case of match difficulties, discord, or concerns, appropriate discussion and intervention must be undertaken to improve or rectify problem areas.

Other efforts that support participants, such as regular group activities for matches, ongoing training events, a formal support structure for mentors, will be developed.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is the policy of the Mentoring Program to protect the confidentiality of its participants and their families. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff will only share information about mentors, mentees, and their families with other Viner Foundation staff and the Board of Directors. Further, all prospective mentors, and mentees, and legal guardians should be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality. Additionally, mentors are required to keep information about their mentee and his/her family confidential.



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In order for the Eda & Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation to provide a responsible and professional service to participants, it is necessary to ask mentors, mentees, parents/guardians, and other outside sources to divulge extensive personal information about the prospective participants and their families, including:

- Information gained from mentors and mentees, written or otherwise, about themselves and/or their families, in application to and during program participation.
- Participants' names and images gained from participants themselves, program meetings, training sessions, and other events.
- Information gained about participants from outside sources including confidential references, school staff, employers.

Records are, therefore, considered the property of the foundation, not the foundation workers, and are not available for review by mentors, mentees, or parents/guardians for mentees under age 18.

Limits of Confidentiality

Information from mentor and mentee records may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

1. Identifying information (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) of program participants may be used in foundation publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the mentor, mentee, and/or legal guardian.
2. Information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
3. Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the foundation. Such information is considered privileged, and its confidentiality is protected by law.
4. Program staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and as such must disclose information indicating that a mentor or mentee may be dangerous to or intends to harm him/herself or others



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Safekeeping of Confidential Records

The executive director is considered the custodian of confidential records. It is his/her responsibility to supervise the management of confidential information in order to ensure safekeeping, accuracy, accountability, and compliance with Board policies.

Requesting Confidential Information From Other Agencies

A mentee's or volunteer's right to privacy shall be respected by the Foundation. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons shall be accompanied by a signed release from the mentor, mentee, and/or legal guardian.

Violations of Confidentiality

A known violation of the foundation's policy on confidentiality by a program participant may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.



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CLOSURE POLICY

It is the policy of the Mentoring Program that all mentors and mentees must participate in closure procedures when their match ends. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether they intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration. While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the formal end of a match, matches may continue in the program beyond the contract period (one year for matches) and receive ongoing support and supervision.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons including: the contracted match duration has ended, one or both participants do not want to continue the match, there are changes in life circumstances of either the mentor or mentee, or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. Hence, the match may end at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or Mentoring Program Director. It is left to the discretion of the Mentoring Program Director whether an individual will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

Future contact will be at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor, the mentee, and the parent/guardian. If future contact is agreed upon, the Mentoring Program will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended. The Mentoring Program Director will verbally and in writing inform all parties—the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended and that Viner Community Scholars Foundation will not be liable for any incidents that occur after the match has closed.



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EVALUATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Mentoring Program that evaluation will be a key component in measuring the success of its mentoring program and for making continuous improvements in the effectiveness and delivery of mentoring services. Evaluation data will be collected at the end of each semester for mentees in the program (see forms attached).

Monitoring the Matches

The Viner Scholarship Foundation will monitor the matches in order to help resolve issues, and provide training and resources as needed. The monitoring process is also part of monitoring compliance with the scholarship terms.

An evaluation will be distributed to all Mentors at the end of each semester and should be completed and sent to the Executive Director to record activity in the prior semester:

Eda & Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation
777 Yamato Rd., Suite 300
Boca Raton, FL 33431
Tel: (561) 544-4436
Fax: (561) 544-4644
info@vinerscholars.org

Mentors and mentees may also contact the Mentoring Program Director on an as-needed basis:

Donna Holland, MD
561-702-0486 (mobile)
dsholland@gmail.com