



**EvanstonScholars**



# Mentor Guide 2018-19



# Evanston Scholars Overview

## *Addressing a Need*

Navigating the college application process can be overwhelming for many high school students. For many, the key to successfully completing college is benefitting from a strong support system. Unfortunately, too many students lack these resources and guidance. Here are some at-a-glance facts about the state of college matriculation, retention, and graduation:

- A recent national study stated that 34% of low-income students attend college as compared to 83% of students from high-income families.
- Many studies cite that college preparatory guidance is a key factor to increase enrollment in college for low-income students
- Only 10% of low-income college students will leave higher education with a degree - 75% of students who drop out leave within their first two years of college
- Some studies suggest that many students drop out of college because they don't find a "good fit" college and are not fully informed about their choices.
- A graduate of a four-year college will make almost \$1 million more than a high school graduate over a lifetime

Many students, especially first-generation and/or minority students, need more guidance and support to help find a "good fit" college. They also need extra preparation and mentoring to help them navigate the challenges of higher education and to stay on track for college completion. That is why in 2011, we started Evanston Scholars.

## *What We Do*

Evanston Scholars is a non-profit organization that improves college access and success for a diverse group of ambitious Evanston students. They are usually first-generation college entrants, low-income, and students of color.

Starting with the college admissions process our comprehensive, six-year program offers workshops, mentors, ACT prep and college counseling. While we work in cooperation with Evanston Township High School, we are a separate entity.

## *How Far We Have Come*

We have over 200 scholars in the program. Our first class, ETHS Class of 2012, had 10 scholars.

- 31 Alumni (Graduated from college)
- 22 College Seniors
- 25 College Juniors
- 30 College Sophomores
- 36 College Freshmen
- 29 ETHS Seniors
- 38 ETHS Juniors

**93%** of our college scholars are progressing toward a college degree.

**100%** of all of our Scholars have been accepted to a 4-year college

**65%** of our most recent classes received full-tuition scholarships

**6** full-time staff; **4** part-time staff

Our current budget is nearly **\$828,000** (and our donor base is growing)

We now have over **200** mentors (both active and back up) on board

## *Who Are Our Scholars?*

- Students with a 2.7 GPA or higher and ambitions to complete college
- 85% of our Scholars did not have parents who graduated from college
- 85% of our Scholars are on free/reduced lunch

This year's class (Class of 2020) at a glance:

- We had 61 applications.
- 1st Interviews were conducted with 46 applicants
- 2nd Interviews for 5 Applicants (Scholars between yes/no)
- 38 Scholars were selected as Scholar Class of 2017
- 11 Male
- 27 Female
- Average GPA of 3.375

## *Our Admission Process*

Every Evanston Scholar is carefully selected. Students complete an application, which includes information regarding:

- Course work history and cumulative GPA
- ACT plan score
- Personal essays and educational ambitions
- Extracurricular or employment activities
- A parent/guardian statement
- A letter of recommendation
- Family income
- Family educational history

The application process focuses on how the students demonstrate qualities essential for college success (called PERRCs):

**Persistent:** They are willing to learn from their mistakes and know that they need to whatever it takes to Make It Happen.

**Engaged:** They are open to new opportunities and chances for growth in any community or situation.

**Resourceful:** They know when and how to find resources and how to create a support network.

**Responsible:** They communicate effectively and professionally; they take personal responsibility for successes and failures.

**Connected:** They take initiative and are active participants.

Students accepted as Evanston Scholars demonstrate each of these. While personally and academically impressive, they need a support

network, of which Evanston Scholars is a critical piece. Support from their mentor, peer group, and staff will help them find a “good fit” college. This network will also help them overcome the inevitable obstacles they will encounter in college - the kind that cause the majority of low-income and minority students to drop out before earning a degree. Evanston Scholars provides a strong support network so that our Scholars succeed in college and in life.

## *Services Provided*

Every Evanston Scholar receives:

A 6-year mentor to assist with college applications and college selection while the Scholar is in high school. In college, the mentor is a member of the Scholars' support network, keeping in touch and providing support and advice as needed.

A full curriculum of college-readiness programming, including:

- Parent/Scholar orientation
- 1:1 consultation on senior year course selection
- ACT Preparation Course
- Summer Opportunities Program
- 1:1 college counseling to find a “good fit” college
- College application and college essay seminars
- Campus visits
- Financial aid workshops (understanding FAFSA and financial aid packages)
- Resume and interviewing skills
- Budgeting and transitioning to college advice
- ES peer mentors

Ongoing communications with Evanston Scholars peers, mentors, college coaches, and staff through college graduation.

In addition, through the generosity of donors, our scholars receive an annual book stipend while they are in college.



# Evanston Scholars Are Currently Enrolled At:

- Amherst College
- Augustana College (3)
- Baldwin Wallace University
- Ball State University
- Barry University
- Boston College
- Bowling Green State University
- Bradley University (3)
- Carleton College
- Colgate University
- Colorado College
- Denison University
- DePaul University (2)
- Dominican University (4)
- Eastern Illinois University
- Elon University
- Grinnell College
- Hampton University
- Hope College
- Howard University
- Illinois State University
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Kent State University (3)
- Knox College (2)
- Lake Forest College (4)
- Lawrence University (2)
- Lewis University
- Marist College
- Milliken University
- Morgan State University
- Northern Illinois University (4)
- Northwestern University (3)
- Oakton Community College (4)
- Ohio Wesleyan University
- Purdue University Calumet
- Ripon College
- Sewanee - The University of the South
- St. Louis University
- St. Olaf College
- University of Dayton
- University of Illinois - Chicago (4)
- University of Illinois - Springfield (3)
- University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign (21)
- University of Iowa
- University of Minnesota
- University of Missouri (3)
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Southern California
- University of Wisconsin - Madison (2)
- Valparaiso University (2)
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington University in St. Louis (3)
- Wellesley College
- Western Illinois University (2)
- Western Michigan University
- Wheaton College



# Mentor Guidelines & Policies

## *Consistent Communication*

Regular communication with your Scholar is recommended to sustain a good relationship. During high school, we expect you to have some type of contact at least twice a month in the form of phone call, email, or outing/activity/meeting. Contact in this context is more than just a “How are you?” It is a meeting, a conversation, an extended text exchange (whether about school, life, or anything else).

Evanston Scholars also organizes activities for students and mentors to get together in an informal setting. These events give you the chance to connect with other mentors and students at fun, social events, such as concerts, festivals or picnics. Mentors are also welcome to join as chaperones on college visits or at special programming events.

## *Mentor Programming Attendance*

Some Evanston Scholars workshops and events are designed to support your scholar through the college-readiness and college application process. While most of these events are mandatory for Scholars, they are often optional for mentors. However, your voluntary presence at any event reinforces your commitment to your scholar and his/her pursuit of higher education. See your folder for a complete calendar of Scholar programming/events.

## *Drug and Alcohol Policy*

Mentors for Evanston Scholars are prohibited from unlawfully consuming, distributing, possessing, selling, or using controlled substances or alcohol while on duty/ engaged with Scholar. In addition, mentors may not be under the influence of any controlled substance or alcohol,

while in the company of Scholar or engaged in Evanston Scholars business. Prescription drugs or over-the counter medications, taken as prescribed, are an exception to this policy. Any mentor found to have violated this policy may be subject to dismissal from the program and legal recourse.

## *Appropriate Communication and Contact with Scholars*

Appropriate, positive interactions among Scholars, mentors and staff are essential in supporting positive Scholar development, making Scholars feel valued, and providing the caring connections that serve as protective factors for our Scholars. Conversely, inappropriate or harmful interactions put them at risk.

### *Verbal Communication*

Appropriate

- Praise, supportive discussion about social, family or academic issues
- Positive reinforcement for good work or behavior

Inappropriate/harmful

- Sexually provocative or degrading comments or put-downs
- Risqué jokes
- Judgmental, demeaning or otherwise emotionally abusive language

### *Physical Behavior*

Appropriate

- Pats on the back or shoulder,
- Fist bumps
- High fives

Inappropriate

- Patting on the buttocks
- Intimate/romantic sexual contact
- Corporal punishment
- Showing pornography or involving youth in pornographic activities

## *Personal Information:*

As your relationship develops, you will find that your Scholar may begin to share personal information regarding him/her and the Scholar's family and friends. In many ways, this may

be positive because it demonstrates a level of trust. However, there may be areas of discussion that should be handled with care and discretion. We expect you will use sound judgment if your student divulges information you find troubling. Carefully consider whether or not parents should become involved or if professional assistance/counseling is necessary.

### ***Mandated Reporting:***

It is the policy of the Evanston Scholars Mentoring Program that all mentors, and other representatives of the program must report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect of agency clients or program participants immediately. All such suspected reports must be made to appropriate state and/or local authorities and Evanston Scholars Staff. Any staff, volunteers, or mentors accused of child abuse or neglect will be investigated by the agency. Contact with program youth will be restricted or constrained and/or the person in question suspended from employment or program participation per the decision of the Executive Director and Board of Directors.

### ***Transportation Policy:***

It is the policy of the Evanston Scholars Mentoring Program to allow mentors to transport Scholars in their own private vehicles.

- Mentors must own a car or have access to reliable insured transportation; all safety equipment including blinkers, lights, brake and back-up lights, seat belts, tires, and brakes must be in good operating condition.
- All mentors must possess a valid driver's license and present proof of auto insurance; a record of insurance will be maintained in the mentor's file and will be updated on an annual basis.
- All mentors must undergo a driving record check and have a clean driving record for the last three years.
- Evanston Scholars requires that mentors obey all traffic laws, and use seat belts and headlights at all times.
- Mentors must also avoid taking medication or using any other substances that might impair

their ability to drive.

- If an accident occurs while the mentor is engaged in mentoring, it should be reported to the Evanston Scholars Mentor Coordinator promptly.
- The mentor must carry a copy of the Scholar's health insurance information in the transporting automobile at all times in case of emergency.

If any of the above policy is not followed, the mentor will not be allowed to transport the Scholar in a private automobile or may face other consequences.

### ***Confidentiality Policy:***

It is the policy of the Evanston Scholars Mentoring Program to protect the confidentiality of its participants and their families. Mentors are required to keep personal, academic and financial information about their Scholar and his/her family confidential. A known violation of the agency policy on confidentiality by a mentor may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.

### ***Financial Commitment/Expectations***

Mentors are not financially obligated to Scholars. You may pay for outings and gifts at your discretion and within your level of comfort. If your Scholar has an emergency financial need, please notify Evanston Scholars Staff. ES has emergency funds and other resources available for these situations.

Monetary contributions to the Evanston Scholars program are welcomed, but not required. Contributions can be made as an individual donation, as part of a corporate gift-matching program or as part of a team sponsorship. (Team sponsoring combines the resources of two or more adults working together to provide mentoring to one student in need.) Your financial investment is applied to an array of ongoing program activities. Please contact Kay Israelite if you would like to make a financial contribution.<sup>5</sup>



## Keys to Successful Mentoring

### *What does it take to be a Successful Mentor?*

Evanston Scholars come from a broad spectrum of ethnic groups, economic levels, professions, religions and social backgrounds. However, they share characteristics that make them effective. A successful Evanston Scholar mentor should:

Have a desire to **share** the lessons learned throughout life, which may impact the life of your student.

Have time to spend developing a healthy working relationship. Some Scholars will need more input to get through the college process and some will need less. Spending time with your Scholar on a regular basis will help you develop a **meaningful relationship** regardless of your Scholar's level of need. See Section 5 for more suggestions.

Show **compassion/openness** to discuss matters that directly pertain to the mentor/student relationship such as race, socioeconomic status, education, appearance or any other factor that might influence your relationship.

Be concerned by showing **empathy** when appropriate and setting limits when needed.

Be **observant** enough to pick up on spoken and unspoken signs indicating possible difficulties or issues your student might be experiencing. For example, does your student seem distracted when you get together? Does he/she avoid talking about school? Paying attention to subtle clues can provide ideas on how you can help your student or open the door to healthy communication.



Be **responsible**. Keep your commitments to your student, such as meetings, scheduled Evanston Scholars activities or personal outings that you plan. In becoming a mentor, you are a role model who providing examples of responsible behavior and commitment.

Know and **respect boundaries** by understanding appropriate topics of discussion and behavior. The Evanston Scholars staff is always available to assist you, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

Connect with Your Scholar's **Parents/Guardians**. One of the most important things that you can do to ensure a successful relationship with your student is to develop a relationship with his/her parent or guardian. Developing this connection provides consistency and uniformity between you and the parents regarding Evanston Scholars' expectations and demonstrates to the student that his/her parents trust you. Understand that parents may have apprehensions regarding their child's participation in Evanston Scholars. At the beginning of your relationship with your student, make it clear to the parents that you want to work in conjunction with them. You are a resource and a partner in the development of their child's academic success. Establishing this early in the relationship can alleviate future problems.

**Nurture** Scholar's organizational skills. Helping your student stay organized by introducing

tools and techniques and then providing reminders will be one of your greatest contributions to your Scholars. Scholars can be easily overwhelmed by application paperwork, college mail, and ES materials. Anything you can do to support growth in the area of organization will promote good habits that last a lifetime.

Know that it's OK to Say "No." In an enthusiastic effort to support a student in need, mentors can sometimes forget that frank discussions and **setting limits** are just as important as fun activities and praise. If your student is not meeting expectations regarding time commitments, academic performance or behavior, it is best to discuss these issues early, before they become larger problems later. Also, it is important to define the boundaries of your relationship. For instance, while you may choose to host your

Scholar for activities or meals, you should not feel you are a "Santa" figure who must provide lavish outings or expensive gifts. It is also not appropriate for your Scholar's family to make financial requests. If you feel any aspect of your mentoring relationship has become uncomfortable, please contact the Evanston Scholar staff to discuss.

### ***Recruit Future Mentors!***

We have found that the enthusiastic endorsement of Evanston Scholars by our current mentors is one of the most effective ways to spread the word about our mission and bring new supporters into the Evanston Scholars family. Please call Steve Newman if you would like to refer a potential mentor.



**The Class of 2019**



# Peer to Peer (P2P) Mentoring

## Introduction

Introducing Evanston Scholars' new program for mentors: Peer 2 Peer. P2P is designed to:

- Share learning and experience between new and seasoned mentors
- Foster a sense of community among mentors
- Provide an accessible resource for mentors needing guidance, advice and information for dealing with issues related to their Scholar
- Create a forum for ideas and suggestions for Evanston Scholars programming

P2P will organize mentors in to small groups, similar to our Scholars' "pods." Each P2P mentor pod (mPod) will be led by an experienced mentor. Groups will be kept small, with 3-6 members each. These groups will meet monthly, or more often if needed.

## Resources

### Regular Monthly Meeting:

Each Mentor "mPod" will meet once per month. Meetings will be organized by the mPod leader. Meetings may be at a member's home, a café, an office - anywhere convenient. Groups may decide to meet electronically if that works better for that mPod. Mentors will have a chance to discuss successes and challenges and solicit feedback and suggestions.

The agenda for each meeting will be two parts. First, a regular update from each Mentor - milestones reached, challenges faced, successes earned. This will often include a question or issue from ES staff we would like to hear from Mentors about. The second part will be the group's own agenda - anything Mentors feel would be valuable, informative or useful.

### Mentors' Resources Web Page:

Mirroring the page for our Scholars, a new page will be added to the Evanston Scholars website. This will act as a repository of links to resources, articles, etc. to help mentors. The resources might include tips on understanding this younger generation; stress reducing exercises to suggest your Scholar use during finals; academic sites related to fields of study; and career oriented resources for resume writing, job searches, etc.

### Mentors' Network:

Using Slack as a platform, Mentors will be invited to join an online network. This will allow mentors to learn from each other, leverage resources, ask questions etc. In this way we can



connect all the mPods to each other, making even better use of our Mentors' collective talents and experiences. The network will allow messaging, sharing of links, etc. Some possible things

you might find on the Network:

*Interested in seeing Carthage College? I am going there August 1 and have 5 spots open in my minivan. If your scholar would like to see the Campus, please have them get in touch.*

*Is your Scholar thinking about nursing? Just saw a great article in the newspaper about career prospects for that field (Link).*

*Does anyone here work in law enforcement? My scholar is thinking about becoming a police officer/ FBI agent. Would love to introduce you. My company has two internships open in the marketing department. Contact me for details on how to apply.*

*Is anyone here an alumnus of UC? My Scholar would be admitted and would like to talk to you about your experience.*

*Does your scholar check their phone even mid-conversation? Is this rude or am I just getting old?*

### Social Events:

Organized and hosted by ES, we will be organizing social events for mentors. These will be designed for mentors to get to know each other and network, all in a relaxed, sociable setting.

# 5

## Mentor/Scholar Activity Ideas

Spending time with your Scholar will help you build your relationship and open up avenues for communication. Here are some ideas for activities to consider:

- Tackle some homework
- Have a meal together
- Go to a movie or concert or sporting event (ETHS games are fun and inexpensive!)
- Shoot some hoops
- Visit a local college
- Work on a resume
- Help find a summer job
- Have a picnic
- Conduct a mock interview
- Set up an internship
- Visit a museum
- Read a book your mentor is reading...discuss
- Go holiday shopping
- Prepare a meal together
- Go to each other's house of worship
- Browse through college books

Conversation starters - begin with a question:

- What would you say is your number 1 concern about going to college?*
- Besides academics, what are you looking for in a college?*
- Do you have any particular career goals or thoughts on majors?*
- I understand you like art/music/sports - what kind? What groups? What teams?*
- What was the last great book/movie/album you really got into?*
- Have you thought about how far/near you want your college to be?*
- Do you want to travel? What places are on the top of your bucket list?*
- If you ever become famous, what would you like to be famous for? (Curing cancer? Winning the world cup? Winning a Nobel/Oscar/Pultizer?)*
- Tell me about your family (parents/siblings/pets)...*





## Important Evanston Scholars Contacts



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