



**EDUCATION
FOUNDATION**
OF SARASOTA COUNTY

Mentoring Newsletter

June 2022

Summertime Planning

As we approach the summer months, here is a list of planning activities for you and your mentee.

FOR ALL STUDENTS

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has a good tool that links college majors to careers. You can [learn more here](#).

FOR RISING SENIORS

- Make a list of potential colleges. The list should include reach schools, likely-to-get-into schools, and at least one safety school. Check the admissions requirements, available scholarships, available majors, and required coursework for a given major and for special programs. Be sure to explore the website. Most colleges have online tours of campus. Students can also access [Common Data Set](#), which provides specific information about who colleges are admitting and what they are looking for. Please feel free to reach out to Jeff if your mentee requires assistance with this task.
- Continue taking ACT and SAT tests. Sign up in the summer, as soon as fall test publication of dates becomes available. Many colleges will accept super scores. In addition, higher scores increase acceptance and may increase scholarship consideration. The public universities are competitive... so the sooner scores are available, the better. Practice! Use Khan Academy, the following link for SAT, and the Red Book for ACT. What students don't know, google it! Use the book and link answer guides to determine what answers the testers are looking for. These strategies are the most effective. [FREE](#)

[resources can be found here](#) (same as Blue Book).

- Reach out to teachers and school counselors for recommendation letters. Be sure to give them ample time to complete it. Obtain letters of recommendation ONLY if required for college applications. Florida public universities do not accept them. Check the college websites.
- Consider letters of recommendation for scholarships. They are usually required for larger scholarships. The student should be prepared with a scholarship essay as well. In this essay, you need to convey why they should grant a scholarship to you as opposed to other students applying.
- Encourage your mentee to visit colleges.
- Students should create a resume listing their activities. Templates are available on Naviance.
- If a student has the potential for Florida Bright Futures, log community service hours with a nonprofit organization.
- Draft a college essay. Prompts are available on the College Common Application.

FOR RISING COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Review with your mentee [Intro to Campus Life](#) from our curriculum.
- Review [Coping with Stress and Time Management](#) from our curriculum.
- Review [Financial Literacy](#) from our curriculum.

FOR CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Review the curriculum above for Rising College Students.
- Review [Career Skills: Networking](#) from our curriculum.
- Review [Internship Search](#) from our curriculum.

Join us for our **FREE** **SUMMMER** student workshops

Career Chat Expo

Want to learn more about careers in Sarasota County? You can meet local businesses in our community and ask questions.

Essay Writing

Get the tools, tips, and resources you need to write a quality essay for college admissions and scholarship applications.

Career Exploration

Want to learn about careers that connect to your skills, interests, and aptitudes? You will use a career assessment tool to help as you plan for life after high school.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

Worried about paying for your education after high school? Find out how to search and apply for financial aid and scholarships.

College Admission

Want to know more about the admissions process at universities, colleges, and technical schools? This workshop will help you prepare for the application process.

Naviance College & Career Tool

Learn more about the Naviance online platform so that you can identify your interests and possible career pathways as well as manage your college applications.

College Knowledge

Learn important information about colleges, universities, and technical schools. Get prepared so that you can make the best decisions for life after high school.

Resume Building

Find out how to create your own high-quality resume as you prepare for college, career, or both.

Workshops hosted at LaunchPad4U
1413 Blvd of the Arts, Sarasota, FL 34236

To learn more about these workshops and to register, visit:
EdFoundationSRQ.org/Events



Scan to learn more & register

Sarah Harding

Vaulting out of the Bubble—into Mentoring and Advising



Sarah Harding was the first pole vaulter at Pine View High School and describes the sport as the closest thing to flying. As she races down the runway and plants the pole, and then flings herself into the air, she feels like a superhero.

In 2019, Sarah graduated from Pine View, an experience she describes as emerging from a bubble. She walked across the stage with her high school diploma and continued right on to the campus of the University of South Florida, where she planned to pole vault

collegiately while pursuing a major in communications and a minor in professional writing. But in the spring of 2020, after the pandemic hit, Sarah, like so many other college students across the country, returned home and resumed her studies online.

In the fall, she made the difficult decision to stay home and take her courses online. Instead of pole vaulting in college, she began to coach the sport at Venice High School. And although she'd lost the traditional

college experience, a new opportunity began to open around her—one that would ultimately vault her into a new career pathway.

Sarah's mom works as a school counselor at Riverview High, and Sarah was interested in the work she did. Her mom connected Sarah to the Education Foundation, and soon she was observing the College Career Advisor at the Student Success Center at Riverview, seeing the impact an expert advisor could have on a student's life.

Soon after, Sarah began to visit LaunchPad4U, the Education Foundation's community resource center in downtown Sarasota, where she learned about mentoring and where she would meet someone who has become an invaluable mentor in her own life: Jeff Blanchette, who serves as the mentoring manager.

Sarah loved her time at the Education Foundation, encountering inspiring, caring individuals committed to supporting young people. In January of 2021, she was officially brought on board, as a mentoring intern, and by March she moved into a part-time position. While completing her USF courses online, she created a mentoring handbook and helped connect mentors and mentees.

This fall, a new opportunity presented itself, and Sarah returned to the very place where she'd first connected with the Education Foundation: the Student Success Center at

Riverview. With more and more students taking advantage of the center, Sarah began to help with advising. She learned so much—and she loved it. It was difficult to be sure, draining at times as she listened to the immense challenges many of her advisees faced, challenges that made her acutely aware of the bubble she'd been in during her ten years at Pine View. Sarah better understood the importance of giving back. She valued the opportunity to help students formulate a plan, and she was floored when students told her she'd changed their lives—had given them hope.

In February 2022, Sarah was promoted to College Career Coordinator at the Student Success Center. She has continued to support mentoring while directly advising students at Riverview, just one floor below her mom's office. Sarah's experiences with mentoring and advising have focused her goals. She knows that she will pursue education, with an emphasis on college advising, mentoring, and implementing policy change to make these resources more readily accessible.

Mentoring takes many forms. It can be a long-term, formal relationship where a mentor meets regularly with a younger person to provide advice and support. It can be one meeting, one moment between a trusting, compassionate person lending advice and inspiration to another. Singular moments of kindness can make lasting impressions.

Sarah is grateful for all the mentors she has met along her unexpected journey through her pandemic-altered undergraduate years. And she is energized by the opportunities to apply all the lessons learned as she gives back and helps others. From coaching high school students in the sport that she loves to assisting an at-risk senior in writing a college essay, Sarah finds the act of helping others exhilarating. To Sarah, it feels almost like flying.