



Eda & Cliff Viner
Community Scholars Foundation

Mentor Program Policy Manual

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

Our Vision: To successfully lead accomplished graduates into the world, who will contribute to their families and communities.

Section 1. Mentor Recruitment Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that there be ongoing recruitment activities for new mentors and retention initiatives for current mentors. As such, an Annual Recruitment and Retention Plan will be developed and will include goals, strategies to achieve those goals, an annual timeline, and budgetary implications. This plan will be kept current with any ongoing adjustments. Additionally, a detailed Annual Recruitment Activity Plan will outline specific tasks and activities.

The Executive Director assumes lead responsibility for the recruitment and retention of mentors. Other mentoring program volunteers, and Board members will support the Executive Director in these activities as required.

Section 2. Mentor Inquiry Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that all inquiries regarding participation in the mentoring program are responded to within one business day.

Superb public relations and customer service must be provided to all potential program participants at all times, from first contact throughout the screening process and beyond, regardless of the final screening outcome. All program staff handling calls from prospective mentors must be patient, courteous, and respectful in all interactions.

A system, including backup support and staff training, must be in place to ensure this policy is enforced.

Confidentiality for all potential participants will be upheld from this initial point of contact forward.

Section 3. Mentor Program 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 mentor 1-2 mentees for the duration of the students active status within the program
- Be willing to communicate with the mentee regularly as outlined in program.

Mentor Program Policy Manual

- 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.

Section 4. Mentor Screening Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that each mentor applicant completes a screening procedure. All staff members must be trained and required to carefully follow the screening procedures.

At minimum, the following screening procedures are required for applicants. Program staff must ensure that each applicant completes these established minimum screening procedures:

Mentor Screening Procedures

- Attend the two-hour mentor training
- Complete written application
- Check criminal history: county criminal history, child abuse registry, sexual offender registry. Same checks must be performed in all states resided in as an adult.
- Provide two personal references

The decision to accept an applicant into the program will be based upon a final assessment done by program staff at the completion of the mentor screening procedure. The Executive Director has final approval for an applicant's acceptance into the program. No reason will be provided to mentor applicants rejected from participation in the program.

All mentors are expected to meet the eligibility criteria. However, extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the Program Coordinator and acceptance may then be allowed with written approval of the Executive Director and representative of the Board of Directors when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Documentation of the screening process must be maintained for each applicant and placed in confidential files.

Section 5. Training Policy

Mentor Program Policy Manual

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that all mentors attend a minimum two-hour initial training session prior to being matched. The agendas must cover basic program guidelines, safety issues and communication/relationship building skills.

It is the responsibility of the Mentor Program Director to plan, develop, and deliver all training sessions with assistance from other agency staff, Board members, and volunteers.

Lastly, all incoming mentors are expected to attend the Annual Awards Ceremony where they will meet the incoming scholars and their personal mentee.

Section 6. Matching Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that the determination of mentor/mentee matches will be made by the Founders and Executive Director. They will follow the guidelines outlined in the match procedure prior to creating a mentor/mentee match. They should use the factors outlined in the matching procedure to determine the suitability of a mentor/mentee match.

The program coordinator will determine the suitability based on the following criteria:

- Preferences of the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian
- Similar gender/ethnicity
- Common interests
- Geographic proximity
- Similar personalities

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 Executive Director to further assess the success of the match from all party's perspectives. In the case of match difficulties, discord, or concerns, a discussion must be had involving the Program Director and Executive Director to find potential solutions. If no remedies are found the Board Presidents and Executive Director will rematch the mentor and mentee prior to the start of the next semester.

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

Section 7. Mentor Recognition Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that all

Mentor Program Policy Manual

participants—including mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians—be recognized as important to the success of the mentoring program. Particular emphasis will be placed upon recognizing the program’s volunteer mentors.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to, at minimum, plan and implement the following recognition activities:

- Host an annual recognition event including selection of a mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian of the year along with other outstanding service or performance acknowledgments
- Feature a mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, or general match success story in each quarterly newsletter
- Establish a mentor recognition award system for length of service
- Utilize outstanding mentors to help deliver orientation and training sessions for the recruitment and matching of new mentors.

Section 8. Record-Keeping Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation that each step of the mentoring application and match process be documented by creating a case file for each potential mentor. All forms for managing mentor case files are included within the procedures section of this manual.

All records are to be kept confidential and are to be covered by the conditions outlined in the confidentiality policy. Archival records or those records of past applicants and participants will be maintained and kept confidential for a period of seven years after the close of their participation in the program. After seven years, the records will be shredded and discarded with approval from the Executive Director and destroyed only by approved individuals.

The foundation staff must keep stringent records of all program activities, utilizing approved forms. All files should be regularly maintained and updated within an electronic database and/or hard copy filing system.

The creation of new forms or the revision of existing forms must be documented and kept within the policy and procedure manual.

Section 9. Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the Eda and Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation 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 Community Scholars professional staff and the Board of Directors. Further, all prospective mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians should be

Mentor Program Policy Manual

informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by program staff. Additionally, mentors are required to keep information about their mentee and his/her family confidential.

In order for Viner Community Scholars 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 agency, not the agency workers, and are not available for review by mentors, mentees, or parents/guardians.

Limits of Confidentiality

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

- Information may be gathered about program participants and shared with other participants, individuals, or organizations only upon receipt of signed "release" forms from mentors, mentees, or parents/guardians.
- Identifying information (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) of program participants may be used in agency publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.
- Members of the Board of Directors have access to participant files only upon authorization by a formal motion of the board. The motion shall identify the person(s) to be authorized to review such records, the specific purpose for such review, and the period of time during which access shall be granted. Such members of the board granted access shall be required to comply with the agency policies on confidentiality and may use the information only for purposes stated by the approved action of the Board of Directors. Known violations shall be reported to the Board chairman. A violation of the agency's confidentiality policy by a Board member shall constitute adequate cause for removal from the Board.
- Information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.

Mentor Program Policy Manual

- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information, and its confidentiality is protected by law.
- 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.
- If program staff members receive information at any point in the match process that a volunteer is using illegal substances, there is a criminal history of any kind, or is inappropriately using alcohol or other controlled substances, the information will be shared with the parent and they will have the option to reject the prospective mentor or close the existing match.
- At the time a mentor or mentee is considered as a match candidate, information is shared between the prospective match parties. However, the full identity of the prospective match mate shall not be revealed at this stage. Names and addresses are shared with match mates only after the involved parties have met and agree to be formally matched. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match based on the anonymous information provided to them. The information to be shared may include:
 - Mentors: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, employment, marriage or family status, sexual preference, living situation, reasons for applying to the program, and a summary of why the individual was chosen for the particular match. Results of driving records and criminal histories may also be shared.
 - Mentees: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, family situation, living situation, a summary of the client needs assessment, and expectations for match participation.

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 agency. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons shall be accompanied by a signed release from the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.

Violations of Confidentiality

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

Section 10. Mandatory Reporting Policy

It is the policy of the Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program that all staff, 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. Program staff must follow the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect procedure.

All employees, volunteers, and mentors of the New Insights Mentoring Program are required to undergo training as to what constitutes child abuse and neglect, what the state statutes are, and how to properly report such cases.

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 until such investigation is concluded.

Section 11. Use of Drugs, or Alcohol Policy

It is the policy of the Viner Scholars Mentoring Program to prohibit and discourage the use of drugs, alcohol, and firearms. Mentees and mentors are prohibited from using drugs or alcohol or possessing firearms while engaged in the mentoring relationship. Any suspected violations should be reported to foundation staff.

Alcoholic Beverages: No participant of the Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in mentoring, nor shall any participant endorse the use of alcohol. Mentors and mentees may go to a location where minors are allowed and alcohol is served provided that the mentor and youth do not consume any alcohol.

Drugs: No participant of the Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program will manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while engaged in mentoring or otherwise. Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the mentoring relationship. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest or legal action, and may be punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

Section 12. Unacceptable Behavior Policy

Mentor Program Policy Manual

It is the policy of the Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program that unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of mentors or mentees while participating in the program. This policy is in addition to behavioral requirements stipulated in other policies or procedures within this manual. This policy in no way is intended to replace or take precedence over other policies or procedures including, but not limited to, the following:

- Confidentiality Policy
- Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program goals, values, and program standards and therefore are considered unacceptable and prohibited while participants are engaged in mentoring activities:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual
- Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
- Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
- Denigration, public or private, of any mentee parent/guardian or family member
- Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions or their leaders
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Drinking while driving under the influence of alcohol
- Possession of illegal substances

Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in the mentoring program.

Section 13. Closure Policy

It is the policy of the Viner Community Scholars 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 and receive ongoing support and supervision.

Mentor Program Policy Manual

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 program coordinator. It is left to the discretion of the program coordinator 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 Viner Community Scholars Mentoring Program will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended. The coordinator will verbally and in writing inform all parties—the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended and that the foundation will not be liable for any incidents that occur after the match has closed.



Mentor Program Policy Manual

Katie Mixon

Executive Director

Eda & Cliff Viner Community Scholars Foundation

777 Yamato Rd., Suite 300

Boca Raton, FL 33431

foundation@vinerscholars.org

561.544.4436

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