Position: College Access Specialist
Reports to: Education Manager

Summary/Description: The College Access Specialist works across the Middle and High School programs to build and sustain a college-going culture and promotes awareness of the link between higher education and professional careers. There is a focus on supporting high school juniors and seniors who are participants in RHI’s Youth Leader program. The College Access Specialist work with juniors and seniors to co-create a “right-fit” college roadmap in support of participants’ post-secondary goals. This person provides comprehensive college-readiness supports: informing and facilitating college-readiness programming and financial aid workshops; assisting with researching and applying for scholarships; engaging and coaching parents about the college application process; and cultivating and maintaining relationships with college admissions counselors. College Access Specialist will develop and lead an early college awareness program for 6th-8th graders.

This position is full time and has regularly scheduled hours from noon to 8pm, Monday through Friday. There is flexibility around this during the summer and non-program periods.

Responsibilities: The responsibilities of the College Access Specialist include but are not limited to:

- Develop and facilitate programming to expose and prepare participants for college, including early awareness programming for 6-8th graders.
- Coach an estimated caseload of 20-30 juniors and seniors on college preparedness.
- Lead the college application process for college-bound participants.
- Develop workshops, events and trips that will support, inspire, and inform participants about the skills needed to pursue higher education and other opportunities (trips, panels, and college tours/fairs).
- Mobilize resources to connect participants with relevant resources important for post-secondary success (SAT courses, college prep mentors, additional tutoring, school/placement visits, etc.).
- Coordinate financial aid, FAFSA workshops; assist students and parents with navigating the financial aid/FAFSA process.
- Coordinate with the Education Manager to provide differentiated college prep support to participants according to their individual plans, in small group and one-on-one settings.
• Analyze report cards to co-develop improvement plans with participants.
• Develop interactive lessons that will assist youth to develop academic techniques: study skills, organization skills, time management (with support from Education Manager).
• Closely working with students’ guidance counselors or college advisors for additional assistance.
• Develop and lead parent workshop series on post-secondary options and process.
• Connect with parents/guardians with the financial aspect of the college application process [i.e.-FAFSA/TAP, income documents, Parent PLUS loans].
• Track youth progress and provide consistent documentation/progress notes about observed needs in the Salesforce Database and other tracking systems.
• Attend staff and planning meetings as needed.

Knowledge and Abilities:
• Excited about community-based youth development work.
• 2-3 years of college counseling and/or college admissions experience
• Strong knowledge of CUNY/SUNY systems; understanding of colleges nationwide and their academic offerings.
• Extensive knowledge of FAFSA/TAP NYS financial aid processes.
• Must have strong communication skills, both written and verbal.
• Proven ability to serve as a role model in an after-school setting.
• Ability to create and implement an educational plan.
• Ability to connect with youth, provide needed support and demonstrate patience and maintain positive attitude.
• Demonstrated ability to work individually and as part of a team.

Education and Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s Degree
• Case management experience (at least 1 yr) preferred
• Knowledge of college application process and financial aid
• Experience teaching or facilitating groups
• Computer skills; experience working with Google Office Suite and Salesforce
• Resident of Red Hook preferred