

College Success Counselor

Summary

Reporting to the Executive Director, the primary responsibility of the College Success Counselor is to create and employ strategic structures to support high school alumni enrolled in college. The College Success Counselor is responsible for developing and implementing college success programs, including support for transition into college, and will serve as the primary counselor and coach for all college-going EPAA graduates. The priority focus of this position is to improve the college retention and graduation rates of first-generation and/or low-income students who graduate from EPAA, especially those who receive scholarship funding from EPAAF. The College Success Counselor will utilize a caseload approach to motivate and coach EPAA graduates as they navigate the transition into college, with special emphasis on the first two years of college, as well as support EPAA graduates who desire to transfer into 4-year colleges and universities.

Job Responsibilities

In order to assist economically, racially, and culturally diverse first-generation college students as they adjust to and succeed in college, the College Success Counselor will develop and implement a comprehensive program to enhance college completion for EPAA graduates. This will include partnering with EPAA Administration, EPAA College team and Senior Class Advisors, as well as creating a new program to provide consistent and personal support, guidance, counseling, and coaching for individual EPAA graduates who are attending or hope to attend college.

- **Manage College Success Program and partnership with EPAA**
 - Ensure overall quality and success of post-secondary support systems by pursuit of programmatic success and improvement
 - Manage school's alumni data tracking and creation of the annual Alumni Academic Report
 - Manage school's College Success program budget
 - Document and record students' needs for services, which can include: verification of household income, citizenship classification, first generation status, and qualification for disability programs and resources
 - Assist in identifying and/or selecting eligible students to apply for the EPAAF Scholarship program
 - Represent the EPAAF Scholarship Program and disseminate appropriate information about the program to prospective students and other interested parties
 - Maintain ongoing contact and good relations with EPAA College Team and staff; establish relationships with current seniors to build rapport
 - Maintain an updated database of support programs and contacts at 2-year, 4-year, and community colleges
 - Attend College Day and participate on college trips
- **Ensure successful transition to college for EPAA graduates**
 - Develop, facilitate and/or present workshops designed to increase student success in the high school to college transition
 - Assist participants with their orientation to general academic life, its requirements, and available supports at respective schools
 - Support graduates who express desire to enroll and register for a community college, but have not yet made the necessary steps to enroll
 - Be present on EPAA Campus at least two times per week and have face-to-face time with staff and students
 - Manage Senior college matriculation process
 - Track data and materials to ensure smooth and efficient matriculation process
- **Provide strategic support (academic, emotional/social, financial) for alumni**
 - Implement and execute data-driven approach to alumni support
 - Proactively build relationships with academic advisors, academic success programs, opportunity programs, financial aid officers, and deans at various colleges to loop students into support services at their schools
 - Track report cards/transcripts, current contact information, and course selection for all assigned students so as to promote college persistence
 - Manage the EPAAF Alumni Scholarship Program
 - Co-plan and execute social and network opportunities for alumni
- **Develop College/University Relationships**

- Develop and maintain relationships with campus “champions” to build positive relationships and understanding of EPAA’s alumni
- Become familiar with the academic and social environments at the various colleges alumni are considering in an effort to recommend suitable matches
- Build strategic partnerships with key university/college departments (Educational Opportunity Program, Latinos Unidos, etc.) on campus to connect to our alumni
- Support the college process during strategic times as determined by the EPAA College Team
- **Support students in college**
 - Establish a practice of regular, one-on-one interaction with EPAA graduates to monitor social/emotional health and academic progress with a combination of emails, texts, phone calls, and meetings
 - Provide academic guidance and counseling to EPAA graduates who are attending 2-year, 4-year, and community colleges
 - Identify potential problems and/or opportunities and implement interventions when necessary to ensure student success. This may include direct intervention with students and/or college professors, counselors, residential advisors, high school advisors or outside community resources, etc.
 - Refer students to college counselors and staff regarding career, personal, crisis and transitional counseling, and other appropriate student services
 - Guide students on seeking and securing additional sources of funding to pay for college, including financial aid applications (FAFSA, CADAA, and CSS Profile), and additional scholarship opportunities
- **Track and manage data**
 - Track and complete monthly reports on alumni results
 - Prepare reports and next steps for Alumni Academic Data Reports
 - Prepare and present Alumni results to full faculty, EPAAF Scholarship Committee and EPAAF Board
 - Manage and maintain Alumni tracking database

Additional Responsibilities

- Attend local and state college counselor conferences, as necessary and appropriate
- Prepare materials for an advising manual, orientation sessions, and other workshops
- Assist with other data collection as required, including but not limited to, tracking previous EPAAF Scholarship program recipients
- Attend EPAA College Team Meetings and Staff meetings

Skills and Characteristics

- Demonstrate exceptional interpersonal skills, including excellent oral and written communication skills, and have an ability to hold her- or him-self and others to high standards while also offering support and maintaining positive relationships
- Have comfort and confidence in working with first-generation college attendees
- Have experience in education or social work with a focus on counseling, coaching and/or mentoring children and young adults, and relating to students of various ages, ethnic background, and abilities
- Have a record of proactive and sustained engagement with a caseload of students/clients and demonstrate an ability to interact with students, parents, counselors, and others in a counseling situation
- Extensive knowledge of the college admissions and the financial aid process; including an understanding of requirements, forms, and college opportunity programs
- Extensive knowledge of the financial, academic, and social skills necessary to be successful in college
- Strong attention to detail
- Strong networking, presentation, communication, influencing, and negotiating skills
- Comfort discussing issues of race and class, as well as, an understanding of the obstacles and conditions of at-risk urban youth
- Proficiency in using the internet, Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel
- Focused on results – a flexible thinker who understands the chief metric is student achievement
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment; flexible, able to work autonomously, as well as, take direction as needed
- Belief in the EPAA and EPAAF mission and educational model
- Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-my-sleeves” attitude

- Willingness to serve as a “team player” and implement school wide discipline and culture systems
- Bilingual skills in English and Spanish are strongly preferred
- Teaching experience is a plus

Qualifications

- Undergraduate degree required (Education, Social Work, or related field) with at least two to five years of experience in a social service setting, preferably working with young adults
- Because the incumbent will work with first-generation college attendees, he or she must be capable of exceptional patience, understanding, have strong listening skills, and be able to respond appropriately to stressful situations
- The incumbent must have reliable and adequate transportation and be prepared to occasionally travel to attend face-to-face meetings with college students across the state of California and, when necessary, in colleges and universities across the country
- In some instances, the incumbent may be required to attend evening and weekend events
- Master’s degree in Education, Counseling or a related field is strongly preferred. A combination of education and workplace experience will be considered
- Knowledge of 2-year, 4-year and community college systems is strongly preferred

Compensation

- Salary is based upon experience
- Employees receive an excellent benefits package that includes medical, dental, vision, life, paid holidays and sick days, and the option to contribute to a 403(b)
- No phone calls please. Interested Candidates should forward a cover letter, resume, and no fewer than three references to Elisabeth Landa at elanda@epaaf.org. Please write “EPAAF College Success Counselor” in the subject line

About East Palo Alto Academy Foundation

East Palo Alto Academy Foundation (EPAAF) is a small nonprofit corporation dedicated to supporting the work of East Palo Alto Academy (EPAA), a public charter high school in the Bay Area. The mission of EPAAF is to advocate for, advance and raise funds to benefit the students and college-attending graduates of East Palo Alto Academy. The school serves over 300 students from East Palo Alto and nearby communities, and offers a unique blend of personalized learning, college preparation, early college access, and wellness programming. The organization is committed to raising annual support for the school, with a particular emphasis on its special programs. As such, the organization subsidizes key personnel within the high school, including a Director of Wellness and Student Support and an Early College Program Director. Finally, EPAAF works to link the work of the high school to the work and interests of faculty, staff and alumni within Stanford University, cultivating opportunities for research, coaching, and volunteerism in support of EPAA students. <https://epaaf.org/>