

College Success Counselor

Start Date: October 1, 2021
Team: College
Location: New Haven, CT

About Achievement First:

Achievement First serves 15,000 students in 37 schools in five communities across Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island. All of our students come to us through blind lottery. The majority are Black, Latinx, and children from low-income families who will be the first in their families to graduate from college. The mission of Achievement First is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all of America's children. We know that every child—regardless of race, zip code, or economic status—deserves access to great schools. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary

The primary responsibility of the College Success Counselor is to create and employ strategic structures to support alumni enrolled in college and currently stopped out. For college-going alumni, the CSC will begin to work with scholars and their families in the spring of their senior year as they prepare for the transition to college and provide support through the college experience to college graduation. CSC will engage stopped out students in reflection, exploration, and planning process to determine best path forward.

The College Success Counselor will stay in touch with college students, track their progress, and offer academic support. This includes visiting students at college campuses and arranging meetings to fit the needs of alumni and their families. The ideal candidate will possess an extensive knowledge of workforce development and the college admissions and financial aid processes as well as the skills necessary to help students be successful in college. Chief among these skills are entrepreneurial, detail oriented, systems-driven, organized, relentlessness, creative problem solver, and consistent with follow-through. The ideal candidate will also possess research, networking, and communication skills to connect students to on-campus champions and resources. In order to meet the ambitious goals, an ideal candidate must also plan carefully in order to ensure strategic use of time and resources. The College Success Counselor will report directly to the Network Director of College Success.

The key responsibilities of the CSC include, but are not limited to:

Caseload Management (Advising & Support):

- manage college matriculation process for caseload and track data and materials to ensure smooth and efficient matriculation process
- utilize and execute data-driven approach to assess the level of support needed for alumni and/or college campuses and implement tiered systems of support (in-person, remote, individualized, group etc) that focuses on college persistence, maintaining financial aid and academic progress, connecting to campus resources, academic and social integration, career readiness, development of life skills, and college completion
- serve as primary contact for all AF alumni enrolled at assigned colleges/universities from enrollment decision to graduation
- maintain communication with alumni caseload via phone, text, or in person meetings to establish positive rapport and relationships

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- communicate regularly with caseload to reinforce key messages and share regular reminders
- Utilize campus and alumni data to prioritize and schedule campus visits

College/University/Region (Relationship) Manager:

- develop and maintain strong institutional knowledge of college campuses on caseload
- build strategic partnerships and engage student support systems at each assigned college/university to cultivate relationships that will support student persistence and increase alumni support, investment, and engagement with the campus
- assist in minimizing potential obstacles which may impede degree progress by sharing student data (quantitative and qualitative) with campus partners and discussing resources necessary for improving retention, persistence, and success
- become familiar with the academic and social environments at assigned colleges and share information with college counseling teams to recommend suitable matches

Career and Workforce Development:

- identify and establish relationships with partners for alumni internships, workforce development and career technical education opportunities
- collaborate with Director of Alumni Success and other CMO partners to develop and implement Achievement First's strategy to support stopped out alumni
- provide support to stopped out alumni who are interested in enrolling in college and/or pursuing other opportunities
- serve as primary contact for all AF stopped out and alumni enrolled at assigned colleges/universities from enrollment decision to graduation

Programming/Event Planning:

- plan and execute school-based and regional events to support senior scholars matriculating to their colleges/universities and alumni and their families who attend their cohort of colleges/universities
- establish campus-based initiatives to promote college persistence via workshops, scholarships, life skills, career, and networking opportunities and other resources to support alumni in persisting and connecting to existing campus resources

Team College, College Success Liaison

- Serve as a resource and point of contact to the scholars and staff in the high schools in their region prior to matriculation decisions
- Help facilitate graduating seniors connection to assigned College Success Counselor

Data Management and Reporting:

- collect and analyze data to strategize, prioritize, and discover trends across alumni and colleges/university caseloads
- track and maintain student data using Salesforce (contact information, CSC contacts/outreach, meetings, campus champions, book scholarship). Check-ins and outreach must be entered within 48 hours
- track and complete monthly college and academic report results to share outcomes and results with AF leadership and school-based teams

- manage data collection through book scholarship and creation of yearly alumni academic reports in collaboration with Team Systems and Data and share claims with AF

Skills and Characteristics

- Extensive knowledge of the college admissions and 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
- Teaching experience is a plus
- Proficiency in using the internet, Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel
- Proficiency or background in Spanish is preferred but not required
- 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 Achievement First 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

Educational Background and Work Experience

- Bachelor’s Degree
- Minimum of 3+ years of relevant work experience with a documented track-record of success
- Management or leadership experience with diverse populations
- The ideal candidate will have experience working with adolescents and/or families, particularly in traditionally under-served communities.
- Teaching and/or admissions experience will be considered a bonus

Compensation

This is a one-year hire. Salary for this position is very competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Achievement First offers a comprehensive benefits package. Teachers receive funds for supplies and materials as well as a laptop computer.

To Apply

Send resume and cover letter to:

Felecia Edwards-Smith

feleciaedwardsmith@achievementfirst.org

Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer. People of color and individuals from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Learn more about diversity and inclusion at Achievement First at <http://www.achievementfirst.org/about-us/diversity/>.