

ScholarMatch

Connecting Students with the Community to Make College Possible



Career Connections

College to Career Program



Student Manual

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College To Career Program Overview

ScholarMatch Mission

Our mission is to make college possible for underserved youth by matching students with donors, resources, colleges, and professional networks.

Why Professional Networking?

At ScholarMatch, we believe that our work does not stop until our students begin their own work. Saint Joseph's University Professor Maria Kefalas indicated "*Networking is one of the most important, but neglected elements of the college experience.*" She quotes John Bennett, Director of the Master of Science and executive coaching program at the McColl School of Business stating "*Research tells us that between 60 to 80 percent of jobs are found through personal relationships.*"¹ To combat our college students' lack of professional resources, ScholarMatch is bridging the gap between college life and the professional world by matching students with a Career Coach in their field of study who will support the student in gaining valuable professional and networking skills.

[Read full Kefalas Article](#)

Program Objectives

1. Student grows in professional communication skills, develops professional documents, and gains exposure to a professional in their prospective field.
2. Coaches are able to contribute to the professional development of a college student in a meaningful way.

Expectations

Participating students are expected to:

- Have a desire to partner with a mentor to grow professionally in a specific industry
- Participate in a training call and an introduction call to "meet" their Career Coach
- Review collaboration resources, submit online form after Career Coach collaborations, complete feedback survey at the end of program
- Partner with mentor for at least 3 coaching collaborations

¹ Kefalas, M. (2014) *Stop Worrying About Your Child Getting Into College. Worry About What Happens Next.* New York Times

Working with Career Coaches

- All meetings should be scheduled in advance and added to the Career Connections portal.
- In-person meetings should take place at the ScholarMatch office, at a coffee shop or restaurant, or at the Career Coach's office during business hours.
- Any issues that arise during a session or throughout the program should be brought to the attention of the ScholarMatch staff.

Student-Coach Collaboration Menu

Below are five relevant sessions to help students grow professionally. Students and coaches will mutually agree on which collaboration topics to pursue and the best method to connect. Further details are provided for each session in part II.

- I. **Resume & LinkedIn:** Create or review the student's Resume and LinkedIn profile account.
- II. **Interview:** Review interview best practices on how students can stand out as a candidate and rock the interview. Conduct a mock interview to refine interview skills.
- III. **Insider Scoop:** Also known as an Informational Interview, the Insider Scoop session allows for the student to ask relevant questions about a typical career path, development and preparation for a specific industry.
- IV. **Internship:** Create a polished Cover Letter draft, review internship and job search best practices, and speak about tips on how to be a successful intern.
- V. **Office Visit:** Student visits Career Coach in a professional setting: at the place of work or a company event. Ideally, the student will meet other professionals within the company.

Pilot Program Timeline

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March | Student registration |
| April | Career Coach registration |
| May | Student training and Career Coach orientation; Introduction calls |
| June | Career Coaches and students collaborate together to meet professional goals |
| August 31 | Program concludes; Complete feedback survey |



Description of Collaborations

Resume & LinkedIn Account

Create or review the student's Resume and LinkedIn profile account.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will email Career Coach a copy of resume for review. Student will create a LinkedIn Account and send link to Career Coach for review.
- **During:** Career Coach will provide constructive feedback for the student's resume (format, word choice, and overall appearance) and offer suggestions for student's LinkedIn account.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Student will receive suggestions and make appropriate adjustments to both the Resume and LinkedIn account. Follow up- Student will email updated copy of resume for final review and present any lasting questions to the Career Coach.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Students:

- Prepare your draft Resume before the session with your career coach. Make sure to email and bring a hard copy of your resume to edit together (you can make copies at the ScholarMatch office if needed). Visit www.Linkedin.com to create a free profile. LinkedIn is like a Professional Facebook, but your "profile page" lists your experience as if an online resume form. You can become friends or "connect" with other professionals that you know.
- Ask your Career Coach about how to personalize your Resume for each different opportunity that you are applying to.

[Relevant Resume Article](#)

[Relevant LinkedIn Article](#)

Interview

Review interview best practices on how students can make a positive impression as a candidate and stand out during the interview. Conduct a mock interview to refine interview skills.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will practice highly used interview questions and research appropriate interview attire.
- **During:** First, the Career Coach and student will review interview tips and answer any initial questions. Then, the Career Coach conducts a mock interview using industry specific questions and takes notes. Career Coach provides feedback for improvement.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Follow up- Student and Career Coach have the option to conduct a second mock interview on the phone or in person.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Students:

- Arrive to the interview 10-15 minutes early. Not any earlier or later. It is appropriate to show up on time, but arriving too early might hinder the interviewer (Career Coach's) schedule.
- Wear what you would wear to a real interview. Your Career Coach can provide honest feedback about your outfit selection and if it is appropriate for an interview setting. Hint: you do not need to buy a whole professional wardrobe before you land the job or interview. You can have one staple outfit (nice black slacks and a nice white button up shirt). Once you land an internship or job, you can the company about dress code.
- Prepare 3 questions that you would ask an employer at the end of an interview because you will always be asked if you have any questions to ask the company at the end. See if your Career Coach has any suggestions about questions to ask that will help you stand out.
- Bring your Resume, Cover Letter and References to the interview. Also, bring a notepad to take notes of what the "employer" (Career Coach) tells you during the interview.

[Relevant Interview Article](#)

Insider Scoop

Also known as an Informational Interview, the Insider Scoop session allows for the student to ask relevant questions about a typical career path, development and preparation for a specific industry.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will compile a list of questions to ask the Career Coach about the industry.
- **During:** Student will ask questions to Career Coach and Career Coach can add useful insight relevant for an entry level candidate. Career Coach may also share information about his or her own professional and educational journey.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 30 minutes

Tips for Students:

- You lead this session. It is your chance to ask all of your questions about how your major can translate to the job field, what it was like for your Career Coach to jump into the workforce after college and how he or she has become a successful professional in the field.
- Generate a list of (at least) 10 questions to show that you are prepared and to keep the conversation flowing. You can find examples of questions online, but you are also encouraged to come up with some on your own. (The relevant article has great examples.)

[Relevant Informational Interview Article](#)

Internship

Create a polished Cover Letter draft, review internship and job search best practices, and speak about tips on how to be a successful intern or entry level candidate.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will create a Cover Letter draft or bring their Cover Letter questions to begin the process. Career Coach can compile a list of job search websites specific to industry.
- **During:** Student and Career Coach will review Cover Letter materials and edit the document. Speak about the best internship and job search techniques and go online to review how to search for postings. Student will pick at least one opportunity to apply to in the future. Career Coach will provide tips about the qualities and skills of successful interns.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Student will make appropriate adjustments to Cover Letter draft. Follow up- Student will “apply” to the opportunity by showing or emailing Career Coach all application materials (including a polished and personalized Cover Letter, Resume and References). After Career Coach reviews the draft application, student is encouraged to apply to the position.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Students:

- Come prepared to this session with any prospective job or internship opportunities, drafts of your Cover Letter, and all of your questions about the application process. This is your opportunity to work one-on-one with a professional and to hear tips from someone who was successful in landing a job in the field.
- Practice applying to as many opportunities as possible with your Career Coach before actually applying. Once you have established a good routine and process for applying, it will make the experience easier for you and you will receive better results.

[Relevant Internship Article](#)

[Relevant Job Search Article](#)

Office Visit

Student visits Career Coach in a professional setting; at the place of work or a company event.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Career Coach prepares student with information on what to expect during the Office Visit. This includes the various employees the student may meet during the visit, what the appropriate attire is, the company culture and environment, as well as the schedule.
- **During:** Career Coach will introduce student to a professional work environment and review the daily activities of the company. Student will take notes and speak with any employees if introduced. Ideally, the student can interact with other staff to see the various job types.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form.

Only Method: In person

Estimated time: 1 hour

Tips for Students:

- This session is important because you will be able to network with other professionals besides your Career Coach. You are also representing your Career Coach the moment you step into his or her workplace, so make sure that you are prepared and professional.
- Ask your Career Coach about what to expect for the day, who you might meet, and what to wear or bring to the meeting.
- Confirm with your Career Coach the location and time of the meeting at least 48 hours before the meeting. Use google maps to see how you will get to the location and how long it will take you to get here. If the map suggests that it will take 45 minutes, plan for 1 hour and 30 minutes in case the public transportation system is running late or you need to find parking.

[Relevant Job Shadow Article](#)