

High School Support Initiative (HSSI) Tutor-Mentor

The [High School Support Initiative](#) (HSSI) connects Stanford students with high school students from local marginalized communities as tutors, mentors and academic supports. The program aims to empower local youth to develop academically, to take advantage of programs offered in their schools and to become advocates for themselves and their families. At the same time, it offers Stanford students the chance to engage in a meaningful educational service experience.

School Partners and Placements

HSSI partners with two local high schools: **East Palo Alto Academy** and **Menlo-Atherton High School**.

- EPAA is small charter school (~320 students) in East Palo Alto. HSSI partners with the afterschool tutoring center housed in the library/ College-Career center. Students drop in looking for help with homework, projects, college and scholarship applications, and other academic needs.
- M-A is a large public school (~2100 students) in Menlo Park and is the main sending school for students who live in East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton, and Redwood City. HSSI partners with the Computer Academy and the 49ers High School Program.
 - Computer Academy – HSSI provides homework support and tutoring for sophomores and college support for juniors and seniors, most notably providing an SAT prep class in the winter and spring quarters.
 - 49ers High School Program – HSSI provides homework support and tutoring for students along with quarterly enrichment workshops on topics such as mental health and social media use.
- Students from both schools fit a similar demographic profile – almost all low-income students of color, mostly Latinx, Black, and Pacific Islander. Many are the first in their families considering and applying to college.

Typical Placement Session

1. Meet up with other HSSI tutor-mentors at a designated location (most likely either the Haas Center or a Zipcar parking spot). Drive to your site together.
2. Arrive at your site 5-10 minutes before the session start time to park, settle in, and check in with the site supervisor.
3. Seek out students to help, introducing yourself and asking “What are you working on?” Be proactive and take the initiative!
4. Make yourself available to students by walking around, not being on your phone or computer, getting to know students’ names and what they’re working on.
5. In collaboration with site lead, complete daily log of students you worked with and notes for other tutor-mentors at the same site.

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The HSSI tutor-mentor engages with youth at one of the school partner placements as both a tutor and a mentor.

- Tutor – providing academic support to homework, projects, and other academic tasks
- Mentor – getting to know the students, building relationships, and being another support in their lives.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following are the main roles and responsibilities for the **HSSI Tutor-Mentor**, divided into three main program areas:

Service

- Commit to your site placement, going out weekly throughout the quarter.
- Bring your full authentic self to your weekly service.

- Tutor and mentor with compassion, empathy, and humility.
- Uphold the [Principles of Ethical and Effective Service](#).

Reflection

- Attend weekly learning sessions with other HSSI tutor-mentors.
- Complete the mid-quarter written reflection (prompt is given on Google Classroom site).
- Meet with an HSSI program staff member at least once during the quarter to verbally reflect.

Community building

- Engage with your fellow tutor-mentors who go out to site together.
- Participate in community building activities hosted by HSSI.
- Lean on HSSI Program Fellows and staff as needed.

Required Commitments

- Complete all necessary background check tasks, both for Stanford and for the school partner (TB test, Livescan, volunteer applications).
- Attend all required activities
 - Weekly service commitment at school placement.
 - Pre-service training/ refresher check-in (for returning tutor-mentors) at the beginning of the quarter.
 - Weekly learning session throughout the quarter.
 - Each quarter, you get a freebie absence for service and learning session that will not require a makeup session.
- Complete tasks, such as attendance tracking, on Google Classroom site.
- Operate from a growth and learning mindset, taking each experience both successful and challenging, as learning opportunities.
- Be open to receiving and giving feedback both among peers as well as with the program director.
- Keep lines of communication open with program staff. Communicate when absent, sick, unable to attend any required HSSI activities (service, learning session, etc.)

Key Concepts and Principles

- Cultural humility
- Asset based/ youth-centered approach
- Awareness of identities
- Intersectional approach
- Importance of understanding community context
- Youth empowerment and challenging dominant narratives
- Understanding the Four I's of Oppression

Benefits

- Unpaid position. Opportunity to use [Community Service Work Study](#) funds.
- Supervision and support from the program director of the High School Support Initiative
- Leadership development
- Experience working with high school youth

For questions, please contact Sophia Kim (sophiak2@stanford.edu), High School Program Director. Apply [here](#).