



Emerging Scholars

2010-2011 End of Year Report

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Introduction

It is a great pleasure to submit this report recapitulating the 2010-2011 cycle of Emerging Scholars. Our collaborative efforts led to very high levels of satisfaction, and to several other indicators of our success.

This report will briefly describe the sources for the data that are presented herein, and provide demographic information describing the 2010-2011 participants. A general overview of our successes and shortcomings will follow, ending with thoughts about the upcoming 2011-2012 year. The sources of data are detailed in three appendices. The questions from the surveys the youth and interns completed appear in condensed versions in Appendices A and B respectively. Comprehensive data sets specifying the results of those surveys are available to program partners upon request. Appendix C provides a sample of the contact log, and the instructions to complete it.

Data sources

The data compiled for this report originated in contact logs, school records, anonymous feedback surveys, and discussion cards. Contact logs were maintained by the interns throughout the year. At the end of the year, youths were given paper surveys to complete on their own without their mentor present. To maximize the response rate, each youth was provided an addressed, stamped envelopes in which to submit the survey. Seventeen (17) youths returned their surveys (61% response rate). Their answers were manually entered into Survey Monkey® to facilitate analysis. All six mentors completed anonymous online surveys through Survey Monkey®. Finally, at an end of year event, a few youth provided comments on discussion cards.

2010-2011 Scholars

In 2010-2011, 34 high school aged foster youth attending the East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) were identified to participate in the Emerging Scholars Program. Two (2) never engaged in the program and did not meet their assigned mentors. The other 32 were matched with one of six Master's in Social Work student interns. This represents 33% of the foster youth population within the school district in 2010-2011 (98 total), and 9.6% of high school aged foster youth within Santa Clara County (334 total).

Of the 32 who started with Emerging Scholars in October, 28 completed the academic year in the program (82% retention rate). Of those 28, 13 were girls (46%) and 15 were boys (54%). There were two freshmen (7%), 10 sophomores (36%), eight juniors (28.5%), and eight seniors (28.5%). Eight students were receiving special education services (28.5%).

By the end of the 2010-2011 academic year, 12 scholars had passed both the English and the Math portions of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), two had passed only the English test, and two had passed neither. At the time of this writing, results

were pending for five students who attempted the exams in 2010-2011. Eight students have yet to attempt the exam or are exempt.

Of the eight seniors who completed the program, five (62.5%) graduated in May 2011. Two are enrolled in adult education programs and are expected to complete their GEDs in 2011, bringing the total rate of high school completion to 87.5%.

Highlights

- 77% of eligible scholars want to return to the program in 2011-2012.
- 100% of mentors would recommend this internship to other social work students.
- Mentors provided a total of over 405 hours of face-to-face contact with the youth.
- Informally, several county social workers expressed an appreciation for the work done by mentors.
- A manageable and user-friendly system to collect and manage data will be important in the long term evaluation of the program.

Successes

Youth Perspective: In 2010-2011, the Emerging Scholars Program met some goals with resounding success. Most important was the creation of a program in which youth will be eager to participate. Program satisfaction ran very high for scholars. Of those survey respondents who are eligible to return to the program in 2011-2012, 77% indicated they wish to do so. Additionally, 62% of the respondents stated they wished they had had Emerging Scholars sooner.

The increasing duration of meetings between youths and mentors is a powerful indicator of the importance youths eventually put on the program. The total minutes of face to face time in the first four weeks of the program was 1850, compared to 4985 in the last four weeks of the program, a 169.5% increase. Given that we experienced some attrition, the corresponding averages (58 minutes per student in the beginning four weeks of the program compared to 178 minutes per student at the last four weeks of the program, a 200% increase) are perhaps better indicators of the success of the mentors' efforts to form meaningful supportive relationships that the youth would come to value.

Eleven of the survey respondents (64%) indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they cared more about school since they had met their mentor. Similarly, 76% said talking with their mentors helped them with their graduation plan, and 76% said meeting with their mentor helped them think about college. Eighty-seven percent (87%) said their mentor also cared about their career interests. Seventy three percent (73%) said they themselves know more about what they want to do now that they have participated in the program, and 87% said they know how to reach their career goals.

Youth rated their relationships with their mentors very favorably. On this topic, the range of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses combined was 73% to 94%. Youth felt

they had some control in the process, with a full 100% agreeing they had had a say in setting the goals of their work with their mentors. Also, while gender and culture did not matter in matching students and mentors, 92% did like the fact that the mentors were college students. Finally, 71% said they learned something about themselves through the process.

Mentor Perspective: The Emerging Scholars program has as one of its goals to provide interns with a satisfying, rich learning experience. Similarly to the youths, mentors expressed high levels of satisfaction in their internship experience. Every one of the mentors (100%) would recommend this internship to other social work students.

Mentors rated 14 of the 20 trainings they were offered at a score of 25 or higher out of a possible 30, suggesting that overall they were satisfied with the information they were provided. Interns further asserted their satisfaction in their learning experience when fully 100% of them stated they felt stronger as professionals and more confident in their skills as a result of having participated in the internship. Six out of six interns also felt the internship related well to their classroom learning, and that their professional knowledge base had improved over the course of the year. All felt they gained in their knowledge of foster care, the educational system, and case management skills. Finally, all thought the internship helped them think about their long-term goals as social workers, and that they had learned something about themselves through the experience.

Mentors also reported high levels of satisfaction concerning their supervision and collegial relationships. They also felt they were given all the tools they needed to perform their assigned duties.

Shortcomings

Youth Perspective: One of the most important goals of Emerging Scholars is to ensure high school completion. While the rate of completion in this inaugural year was very high, overall only seven of the 20 scholars who were not in their senior year were on track to graduate. The breakdown by grade of those who are on track is as follow: no freshmen, four sophomores, and three juniors. The remaining thirteen students are behind in their credits, most by about one semester's worth, but one by as much as two years' worth.

Students who have an overall GPA under 2.0 cannot obtain work permits. Since an important part of Emerging Scholars is to assist youths in identifying career paths and begin gathering employment experience, it is primordial to support the participants so that they can achieve academically at a point where they can obtain their work permit. Unfortunately, only five of the minor students who are of age to work met the 2.0 criterion.

Mentor Perspective: While the MSW interns expressed a high level of satisfaction in their experience, half stated they did not understand their role nor felt confident in it when they first met their youth. Only a third understood the purpose of the program, and under 20% understood the importance of the program. Finally, despite their high ratings of their orientation and trainings, only 18% agreed that they felt well prepared to meet their youth.

Looking Ahead

Youth Perspective: It will be necessary in 2011-2012 to address student attendance and grades in a more proactive manner. Tracking the data will be essential, but more poignant is the dire lack of tutors to alleviate some of the educational deficits presented by these students. Working with collaborative partners may produce some richer avenues to offer this vital support to our youth.

Mentor Perspective: Mentors felt uncertain as to their role and its importance when they initially met their youth. Changes to the orientation and training will hopefully address these concerns satisfactorily. For example, we will include an occasion to meet the 2010-2011 interns who doubtlessly will provide valuable insights we could not impart a year ago. Additionally, the 2011-2012 interns will have a chance to get some of their training in concert with interns at the school district and the Department of Social Services, which may help provide some needed context for their work. Finally, we will develop a template for the first few meetings between the interns and their youth to confer much desired additional direction.

Unavailable Data: The data necessary to address some of the program goals were not collected in 2010-2011 in such a way as to be easily accessible and computed into meaningful information. For example, though we know that several scholars were frequently tardy and some were chronically truant, we do not have a record of who was identified for a Student Attendance Review Board hearing. Thus we are unable to assess our impact in terms of our stated goal to improve the attendance rate of high school aged foster youth.

Likewise, while we know that 26 students had at least one F on their transcript and that 56% of those who are eligible to return in 2011-2012 are not on track to graduate, we do not know who was referred to tutoring, who accessed those resources, and who denied such support.

We also cannot assess the import of Naviance. The program is meant to support the youth's career exploration, and to help design a plan of study that will lead to the identified interests. Unfortunately, Naviance was severely underutilized this year. While twenty of the youth completed a custom survey, only five completed the career inventory profiler, and none completed the related personality inventory. Efforts have to be made to increase the use and reach of Naviance to all our scholars and interns.

In an effort to increase our retention rates, it would be useful to survey the students who drop out of the program to address the issues that are causing them to leave. At this time, we have no data on the four youth who did not complete the program. Similarly, we have only very limited information as to why some of the scholars who are eligible to return do not wish to do so.

We will also need to assess more formally the perception of other service providers concerning the work the interns are doing, and the impact it is having on the youth. Of particular interest would be the opinions of department social workers, school counselors, and caretakers.

Clearly, it will be essential in 2011-2012 to develop data management methodologies that will enable the collection of relevant information to evaluate all the program goals.

Program Growth: The plan for 2011-2012 is to continue to grow the program by reaching out to more students in the East Side Union High School District. Though we will not yet actively recruit participants from other high school districts, we will follow any current participant who moves out of the ESUHSD area and is enrolled in another Santa Clara County district. There were two such instances in 2010-2011. One graduated but another is eligible to continue in the program, and is now attending in the San Jose Unified School District. Unfortunately, at this time, Emerging Scholars cannot continue to provide services to students who leave the county. Additionally, in its present format, program growth is severely dependent on the availability of interns, thereby potentially limiting our reach.

Long Term: Aggregate data will be of interest starting at the end of 2011-2012 and going forward. For example, it will be interesting to observe whether or not the graduation rate increases with increased interventions as the program grows and each consecutive class of seniors has been participating for longer portions of their high school experience. We could also expect a positive correlation between duration of participation in the program and school attendance, and the rate of passage of the CAHSEE. Additionally, as the program becomes better known and more referral sources identify potential participants, it will be crucial to develop the mentoring component so that each youth can be adequately served. The ultimate goal of having a county wide, referral based program will necessitate a revision of the selection and oversight of mentors.

Conclusion

Overall, the Emerging Scholars Program had a very successful launch year with high levels of satisfaction and meaningful engagement on the part of most scholars. Many of the limitations arose more out of logistical problems than programmatic concerns. The two freshmen of 2010-2011, our class of 2014, will be the first to have had the opportunity to benefit from the program for all their high school years. Until then, it will be important to develop some logistics by which to track the ongoing successes of

each successive class of students to see the long term effects of participation in Emerging Scholars. This will eventually allow us to positively state that we are indeed improving their long term life outcomes.

Appendix A

Questions from the Youth Survey

Note: Unless otherwise specified in italics, the questions in the survey called for a forced choice among five ratings, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Emerging Scholars Experience Survey

Next year I will be a: *(specify grade)*.

Gender: _____

Program

The top 5 things my education mentor did for me are: *(short answer)*

My education mentor talked to me about *(choices on possible conversation topics)*.

I would prefer to meet with my mentor *(choices on frequency of meetings)*.

I want to continue with Emerging Scholars next year. *(yes/no)*

Why or why not?

I wish I had Emerging Scholars sooner. *(yes/no)*

Most of the time my mentor and I met at: *(fill in the blank)*

My favorite place to meet was _____ because _____. *(fill in the blank)*

I felt the meeting places were good for me. *(yes/no)*

Most of the time, my mentor and I met during / after school hours. *(choose one)*

I felt the meeting times were good for me. *(yes/no)*

5 things I liked about the program are. *(short answer)*

I have these 5 ideas to improve the program. *(short answer)*

School

I felt my education mentor cared about my school success.

I care more about school since I met my education mentor.

I have a plan to graduate high school.

My education mentor helped me with my graduation plan.

Talking with my education mentor helped me think about college.

Career

I felt my education mentor cared about my career interests.

I liked working on Naviance with my education mentor.

I know more about what I want to do thanks to my education mentor.

I know what I have to do to reach my career goals.

I got to meet someone who does what I’m interested in thanks to my education mentor.

My education mentor helped me find a summer job.

Resources

I felt my education mentor had a lot of knowledge to share with me.

I felt my education mentor had a lot of resources for me.

I felt my education mentor was able to answer my questions.

I felt my education mentor knew where to find answers when we needed them.
I felt my education mentor knew whom to talk to at school when I needed help.

Relationship

I felt my education mentor was friendly.
I felt my education mentor cared about me.
I felt my education mentor cared about my whole life, not just school.
I felt comfortable talking with my education mentor.
I felt my education mentor understood me.
My education mentor was a good listener.
I trusted my education mentor.
My education mentor did the things s/he said s/he would do.
My education mentor respected my privacy.
My education mentor was nosy.

General

I feel I had a say in the goals I set with my education mentor.
My education mentor spoke a language that was comfortable for me.
I avoided meeting with my education mentor.
I liked meeting at places like Starbucks.
It didn't matter to me where I met my education mentor.
I learned something about myself thanks to my education mentor.
It matters to me whether my education mentor is from the same culture as I am. *(yes/no)*
It matters to me whether my education mentor is the same gender as I am. *(yes/no)*
I liked that my education mentor was a college student. *(yes/no)*
Please tell us anything else you think we should know to improve the program (you can use the back of this page if you don't have enough space here): *(short answer)*

Appendix B

Questions from the Intern Survey

INTERN FEEDBACK SURVEY

2010-2011

Note: Interns were asked to rate each training they received on a five point scale ranging from “very useful” to “I don’t remember this training”. They were also asked to place each training on a timeline to indicate when they believe it would have been most useful to receive the information. Then, interns were asked to indicate what they had learned on their own that should have been included in the formal training schedule. Finally, unless otherwise indicated in italics, they rated the following items on a five point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Section 1: Orientation and Training

When I first met my youth, I understood the purpose of our program.

When I first met my youth, I understood the importance of our program.

When I first met my youth, I understood my role as academic mentor.

When I first met my youth, I felt confident in my role.

When I first met my youth, I felt ready to develop relationships with my youth.

When I first met my youth, I felt well prepared.

I think we should have met the youth in the month of _____. *(fill in the blank)*

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

Please write how you describe the program to others. *(short answer)*

Please write how you describe your role to others. *(short answer)*

Section 2: Your internship experience

I felt the workload was manageable.

I could have taken on more cases. *(yes/no)*

If yes, how many? *(fill in the blank)*

Meeting weekly with each youth would be manageable.

I found this work too challenging.

I found this work was not challenging enough.

I feel anyone could do this work.

I feel stronger as a professional since this internship.

I am more confident about my skills in general since this internship.

My clinical skills improved through this internship.

My case management skills improved through this internship.

My documentation skills improved through this internship.

My knowledge of foster youth and foster care has improved.

My knowledge of adolescent development has improved.

My knowledge of family dynamics has improved.

My knowledge of education has improved.

This internship helped me think about my long term goals as a social worker.

This internship supported my understanding of what I was learning in class.

This internship allowed me to implement some of what I was learning in class.

This internship has contributed to my professional knowledge base.
The case conferences with Marie, Keith and Donna were useful.
Presenting a case in group supervision was valuable.
Deadlines were reasonable.
New procedures (e.g. contact log, end of internship procedures) were introduced at a manageable rate.
Procedures for record keeping were clear.
I felt respected by everyone involved in this internship.
This internship taught me something about myself.
This experience helped me feel prepared for next year's internship.
Now that I'm done, I understand the purpose of our program.
Now that I'm done, I understand the importance of our program.
Now that I'm done, I understand my role as academic mentor.
Now that I'm done, I feel confident in my role.
I feel I developed meaningful relationships with my youth.
Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. (*short answer*)
I would recommend this internship to other interns. (*yes/no*)
Please explain. (*short answer*)
If no, please say what changes should be implemented so you would recommend this placement. (*short answer*)

Section 3: Supervision and support

I felt Marie was available when I needed her.
I felt Marie was knowledgeable.
I felt Marie was able to answer my questions or to direct me to the right person.
I got the direction I needed from individual supervision.
I got the support I needed from individual supervision.
I found the group supervision meetings useful.
I felt Marie guided me through the different stages of work.
Marie provided me with timely feedback about my work.
Marie provided me with useful feedback about my work.
Marie provided me with useful feedback on my process recordings.
Marie provided me with useful feedback on my case presentation.
Marie gave constructive criticism in a way that was helpful.
I understand better the influence of my own experience on my work since completing this internship.
I felt supported by the other staff of the SVCF (Sherri, Lany, Malisa, Elise).
The other SVCF staff was approachable when I had questions.
I knew whom to go to when I had questions.
My questions were answered promptly and accurately.
I felt treated like a professional.
I felt free to express my opinion about my cases.

I felt there was room in discussions for differences of opinion.

I felt conflicts were resolved positively.

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

These are some areas for improvement in supervision and support. *(short answer)*

Section 4: Partners

Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS)

Overall, I felt the staff at DFCS was approachable.

Overall, I felt the staff at DFCS was dependable.

Overall, I felt the staff at DFCS was knowledgeable.

Overall, I felt the staff at DFCS was helpful.

I felt my youths' county social workers knew what my role was.

I felt I worked in collaboration with my youths' county social workers.

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD)

The staff at the schools where I worked seemed to know about our program.

Overall, I felt the staff at ESUHSD was approachable.

Overall, I felt the staff at ESUHSD was dependable.

Overall, I felt the staff at ESUHSD was knowledgeable.

Overall, I felt the staff at ESUHSD was helpful.

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE)

Overall, I felt the staff at SCCOE was approachable.

Overall, I felt the staff at SCCOE was dependable.

Overall, I felt the staff at SCCOE was knowledgeable.

Overall, I felt the staff at SCCOE was helpful.

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

Section 5: General

I had the appropriate equipment to do the work assigned to me (computer, telephone, office supplies, etc.).

The procedure for fingerprinting was easy and well organized.

The procedure for using county cars was clear.

The procedure for getting reimbursed for miles was clear.

The procedure for getting reimbursed by SVCF was clear.

Having access to the following would have made my work easier.

Please explain if you felt neutral or disagreed in any way with any of the above items, and include suggestions for improvement. *(short answer)*

Please include any additional comments. *(short answer)*

Appendix C

Sample Contact Log and Instructions

SAMPLE CONTACT LOG & INSTRUCTIONS

WEEK OF: January 3 to January 7

Student	School Visit	Home Visit	Field Visit	Telephone call	Field Trip	Collateral meeting with client	Missed Appointment (note)	No contact with client	Used Naviance with client	Collateral meeting without client	Collateral Telephone call	Collateral email	Other (note)
AB	35										15		
CD		45		10					1				
EF		15				15						10	
GH							1				10		
IJ								1					
KL			60						1				

Enter **all data that apply**. You **must** have at least one entry per week per student in at least one of the bold columns.

Do not record your time for travel, documentation, supervision or any meeting other than those specified here.

Enter the number of minutes for:

School visit, Home visit with your client present

Field visit (1:1 meeting with your client at an office, Starbucks, park, etc.)

Telephone call: telephone contact with client

Field trip: college campus visit, explore job opportunities, ride alongs, etc

Collateral meeting with client: such as IEP, teacher, ILP, My Time, court and other meetings that you attend *with* your client

Collateral meeting without client: such as IEP, teacher, ILP, My Time, court and other meetings that you attend *without* your client

Collateral telephone call: phone calls to any collateral person (county social worker, teachers, foster parents, CASA, LACY, etc.)

Collateral email: emails to any collateral person (county social worker, teachers, foster parents, CASA, LACY, etc.)

If you see more than one client at a given meeting, divide the total time among the number of clients and record that number for each client who was at the meeting. Do not include other professionals in that calculation.

Enter a "1" for:

Missed appointment

No contact with student

Used Naviance with student

Other

Write a case note in your chart to explain a **missed appointment**, or an **"other"** contact.