

Esperanza Mentor FAQ

How long is the commitment?

The mentor-mentee commitment is for the length of time the scholar will be studying in college, generally 2-4 years. However, many mentors keep in touch with graduated scholars well beyond Esperanza, continuing to be in touch as friends, for networking and as part of the Esperanza community.

Do I have to have the same career field as the scholar?

It is not obligatory that the mentor is from the same or closely related professional field: Esperanza scholars are often the first in their families to seek a higher education degree and having experience navigating college is very useful for scholars. While not mandatory, it can be advantageous for context and networking purposes.

What are my main responsibilities?

Each mentor-scholar relationship is unique, so the time commitment can vary. We encourage each pair to maintain monthly contact via phone, text, or email. In addition, we ask that each mentor visit his or her scholar on campus at least once a year. All our scholars attend a college in D.C., Maryland, or Virginia. However, the time involvement is typically between 3-7 hours a month.

Is there an in-person component to the program?

Due to COVID-19, we have paused all in-person experiences to ensure your health and safety and that of our Esperanza Scholars. We will inform the Esperanza network when we reinstate in-person activities.

Normally, Esperanza hosts three annual events that mentors are highly recommended to attend. These events include an orientation, meet & greet connecting mentors and volunteers, and a career development day. We also encourage mentors to visit his or her scholar on campus at least once a year.

What do I do if I can't reach/communicate with my scholar?

Esperanza will provide you with a personal email and phone number for your scholar. If you are reaching out and not hearing back from your scholar after several attempts, please contact Paula Mulhair at paula@esperanzafund.org.

What do I do if my scholar asks me a question I don't have an answer to?

Sometimes, scholars will have Esperanza, academic or other questions that you might not have the answer to. You can help scholars by providing an answer and suggesting how to find the answer, such as consulting their college or a professor or looking for on-campus resources.

If your scholar has a programmatic question about the Esperanza Education Fund, or sends you any academic paperwork (transcripts, grades, etc.), please direct the scholar to email Paula Mulhair at paula@esperanzafund.org.

How do I keep informed about Esperanza's activities?

You can visit our website, sign up for the Esperanza newsletter and follow our social media on Facebook and Twitter. You can also reach out to Paula Mulhair, Program Manager at paula@esperanzafund.org for more information at any time.

What if the relationship between myself and my mentee isn't working out?

Esperanza understands that chemistry between mentors and mentees is important and sometimes does not come naturally. Esperanza provides an orientation session that provides advice about common situations and offers support if issues arise. If a scholar is unresponsive or uncommunicative, we recommend you contact Paula Mulhair at paula@esperanzafund.org. Esperanza understands that there may be cases where the fit is not as good as originally intended, in which case it may be necessary to reassign mentors and mentees.