

Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program

Curriculum Guide



“Fostering Success & Leadership”

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program provides an opportunity for Ohio youth who have aged out of the foster care system to pursue an undergraduate degree at Cleveland State University (CSU). The scholarship offers the benefits of a world-class education at CSU with a system of support customized and structured to meet the academic, social, and financial needs of this population of students.

The program is designed to support aged out youth in their motivation to pursue learning opportunities that address and meet their educational needs, while challenging them to develop beyond the classroom with topics that include socio-emotional learning styles, financial counseling, advising, tutoring, and supplemental instruction to ensure participants are prepared to succeed in college-level classes and beyond.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program was created in 2015 with the generous gift of \$2.3 Million provided by Frank & Barbara Sullivan and Jenniffer & Daryl Deckard. The core curriculum provides an opportunity for highly motivated youth who are aging out of foster care to pursue an undergraduate degree at Cleveland State University.

Program Components:

- Financial aid for tuition, books, fees, and instructional resources.
- Year-round housing with an approved meal plan.
- Academic coaching and institutional support services.
- On-campus employment with career advising and mentoring.
- Campus and community engagement with volunteers that provide student support.
- Peer assistance, mentoring and support.
- A structured Transition Plan for university life and academic success.
- Academic Performance (Scholars are required to enroll in 12-15 credit hours each semester with an obligation to log 10+ study table hours per week).



PROGRAM THEME

“Navigation to Graduation” focuses on social-emotional development and learning for students along with degree attainment. Navigation to Graduation” is a comprehensive, institutional approach to support academic success, along with retention and degree completion for multicultural students through the Office of Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement.

“Navigation to Graduation” offers a continuum of services incorporating an intentional blend of high impact strategies such as peer mentoring, academic coaching, and social campus involvement to shape engagement. Scholars are then positioned with opportunities for intellectual growth, social integration, student success, and degree attainment. We believe that this strategy will serve to increase student success, as well as retention and graduation rates, especially among multicultural students who have aged out of the Ohio Foster Care System.

MISSION & CORE VALUES

Mission- To provide post-secondary access and support to youth aging out of the Ohio Foster Care System that leads to earning a bachelor’s degree at Cleveland State University.

- According to national statistics, many individuals in foster care experience an abrupt end in services from the care system upon turning 18 years of age, as they are then considered fully independent adults. A systematic review of the research literature shows that children who leave foster care continue to struggle in all areas of social life (education, employment, income, housing, health, substance abuse and criminal involvement) compared to their peers not in foster care (Gypen, Vanderfaeillie, De Maeyer, Belenger, & Van Holen, 2017).
- The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program (SDSOP) circumvents these statistics by providing a needs-based, last-dollar-in scholarship that closes the gap on the essential financial and social barriers of attending college for aged out youth. The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program extends the traditional scholarship model and provides transitional support to many more aspects of learning and financial support to help encourage and engage participants in their path to success.

Values- Our programming is driven by the Appreciative Inquiry methodology which focuses on structured dialogue, collaborative exchange, and a proactive approach to thinking about possibilities for the future.

- We value the unique and often extraordinary circumstances of youth aging out of foster care, particularly those entering a community of scholarship to pursue a program of study together, characterized by shared experiences and interactions, collective efforts, and mutual commitment to an educational goal.
- We value structured transitional programming with a focus on access to a world-class education with greater economic stability, personal and professional development, and skills that contribute to academic success and degree completion.
- We value access to 1:1 student support with wrap-around resources that address the barriers of this underrepresented population.

PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program’s primary goal is to provide resources to CSU students that have aged out of the Ohio Foster Care System. The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program targets youth who are within one year of aging out of foster care, helping them to make a smooth transition to independent living and the successful completion of a bachelor’s degree.

- Navigate Scholars towards successful completion of a bachelor's degree, improving post-secondary outcomes for youth affected by foster care.
 - OBJECTIVE: First-year students are welcomed and immediately connected with “peer coaches.” Student Navigators help participants to quickly learn about CSU campus resources and ways to get involved. Through positive peer mentoring and coaching, students learn essential study skills, along with tips and strategies to make a smooth and successful transition to University life.
- Promote degree completion by initiating collaboration between participants and community leaders who share similar interests in assisting young adults aging out of the foster care system in earning a bachelor’s degree.
 - OBJECTIVE: Second-year participants receive support services adjusted and customized to meet their changing needs as continuing students which includes clarifying academic goals, establishing appropriate priorities, and planning for success.
- Reach a wider network of youth, as well as stakeholders within the university and the greater community.
 - OBJECTIVE: Third- and fourth-year participants receive support to promote persistence and degree completion, customized to support students facing challenging, advanced-level courses. Participating faculty from various disciplines who serve as advocates and guides encourage participants to complete degree requirements and explore post baccalaureate options, including graduate study and/or careers.
- Maintain a valuable and lasting relationship with participants during matriculation and beyond. Facilitate deep learning, intellectual growth, and cultural awareness through planned cross-cultural interactions and educationally purposeful activities.
 - OBJECTIVE: Upon graduation, each participant is eligible for transitional resources to overcome non-academic barriers post-graduation such as professional development, personal finances, transitional housing, job assistance and training, advanced degree coaching, physical and psychological well-being, and other life readiness skills necessary to successfully transition after college.



METHODS & OUTCOMES

Navigation to Graduation:

- Navigation to Graduation is part of a comprehensive institutional approach to support academic success and retention and degree completion for multicultural students. Navigation to Graduation offers a continuum of services, incorporating an intentional blend of high impact strategies – peer mentoring, academic coaching, and social campus involvement, to shape activities that are educationally purposeful and promotes intellectual growth, social integration, student success, and degree attainment. The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program uses the following core components to fully create a meaningful and rewarding academic journey for our Scholars.

Student Navigator Coaching Model:

- Professional & Student Navigators work closely with Sullivan-Deckard Scholars to provide peer coaching, peer tutoring, and peer mentoring. Additional duties may include assisting with Office of Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement events, maintaining the Pratt Center’s social media presence, presenting Lunch & Learn events, creating and distributing promotional materials, and upholding a presence on campus through weekly information tables in the Student Center.

Learning Experiences:

- Navigator training and workshops for Scholars
- Book readings and group learning sessions
- 24/7 summer support system for incoming Scholars
- Learning Excursions - the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Amish Country, Cedar Point, Cleveland Metroparks, the Westside Market, Kalahari Resorts, Greater Cleveland Foodbank, and Playhouse Square.

Instructional Resources:

- Learning Style Inventory: This workshop teaches personal learning styles and how to apply these to academic environments, relationships, and group settings.
- Myers-Briggs Personality Type: This evaluation highlights the four different elements of personality characteristics and how they influence interactions with others.
- Online Certifications: Student Navigators must complete several online trainings including Title IX and FERPA.
- Foster-Success Michigan Webinar: Student Navigators are required to read the articles and watch the video on the Foster-Success Michigan website.

Strength-Based Programming:

- **Student Navigator Signature Events**
 - Cross Cultural Conversations, Unity Celebration of Multicultural Success, Latino Heritage Awards Luncheon
- **Lunch & Learn Programs**
 - Diversity Dialogue Sessions, learning journals, professional development workshops
- **Management of the Pratt Center Space**
 - One-on-one tutoring sessions, personalized support, work study opportunities, community access and support
- **Summer and Winter Sessions**
 - Book readings and discussions, experiential learning activities, Literature Circles
- **Peer Coaching**
 - pedagogical strategies for success, peer modeling



LEARNING AGREEMENT

Expectations:

- Maintain an overall 2.5 Grade Point Average or higher in addition to maintaining satisfactory academic progress. Scholars must adhere to standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by Cleveland State University.
- Maintain a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, but not to exceed 15 credit hours while enrolled at CSU.
- Follow all Code of Conduct policies as per the Student Code of Conduct handbook and be a positive representative of Scholarship in the University and Community at large.

Guidelines:

- Live in CSU student residence halls throughout the period of enrollment at CSU.
- Accept work study through financial aid, on campus, for a minimum of 10-12 hours per week each semester.
- Refrain from obtaining employment off campus.
- NOT own a vehicle or have a vehicle on campus during their freshman year.
- NOT participate in pledging for a sorority or fraternity during their freshman year. Attend all classes according to the requirements of the instructors.

Commitments:

- Participate in all scheduled Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program activities, events, and programs which include regular meetings with the Program Coordinator, daily study-table sessions, program related seminars, workshop presentations, and leadership development activities as directed by the Program Director.
- Meet with an Academic Advisor monthly.
- **During each transitional academic break (Summer, Winter, Spring) participants are engaged in meaningful activities that provide opportunities to build competence in the areas of personal development and academic success.**

Failure to meet these guidelines will result in notification to the Program Director and administration. Follow up recommendations will occur on an as needed basis to ensure a high quality and success rate for the program.

PROGRAMMATIC FEATURES

Program Features/Year-round Supports:

Financial Support:

Gap closing tuition, books, fees, instructional resources, and a year-round housing & meal plan, averaging \$28,947.81 per Scholar, per year.

The Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program offers an umbrella of support to offset college costs to Scholars, allowing them the ability to focus on continuing education. Scholars meeting the requirements and fulfilling all responsibilities will be provided continued financial support. These funds combat the lack of academic readiness of marginalized populations which evidence shows is a major factor toward retention (DeAngelo, L, & Franke, R., 2016). Providing funding for these first-year students allows the program to break the inequalities of this population while supporting student success.

On-campus Employment: Work study through financial aid for a minimum of 10-12 hours per week each semester.

On campus employment is a highlighted feature of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program. Placement in a work-study program geared towards their intended major will help Scholars consider the nature of their career. Scholars will be placed in a position suitable to their major and maintain on campus employment throughout their academic career at Cleveland State University. This method ensures Scholars receive career self-appraisal and support (Gasser, C. E., 2013). Supporting the well-being of scholars in these positions provides an easier adjustment to career exploration and a potential career path (Lopez, 2014). Continued employment on campus results in personal funds available for the Scholars. Research shows that support networks and professional development tools built into the program increases retention and future opportunities for students (Munoz, Miller, & Poole, 2016).

Student Navigators: Use “Navigation to Graduation” strategy to support Scholars. This entails Enrichment Programming Activities, special events and programs, regular meetings with the Program Coordinator, daily study-table sessions, program-related seminars, workshop presentations, and leadership development activities.

Student Navigators are peer aged college students that assist Sullivan-Deckard Scholars in preparing for college courses, creating programming, and providing mentor roles to Scholars. These initiatives create experiential learning opportunities for scholars and increase participation and successful program completion (Munoz, Miller, & Poole, 2016). These programs and regular association with peers and mentors show positive results in student integration and academic performance (Bettiger, E., & Baker, R., 2011; Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020).

Transition Workshops: Freshman experience, a 10-week Transition Summer Workshop, Sophomore experience, and a 4-week Summer Workshop/Internship. Juniors & Seniors participate in e-learning modules directly linked to their majors to earn certificates of completion by the end of summer.

Learning Village: Scholars have access to over 40 volunteers from local, regional, & national support agencies and organizations who share similar interests in assisting young adults aging out of the foster care system earning a bachelor’s degree.

Providing Scholars the opportunity to discover their talents and build them into strengths has been shown to be a trait of successful students (Anderson, 2005). Utilization of navigators, staff, and outside supporters increases the scholar’s ability to be more productive and collaborative in future endeavors (Lopez, 2014; Munoz, L., Miller, R., & Poole, S. M., 2016). The support network is set in place to ensure Sullivan-Deckard Scholars are productive during their academic career, and well prepared for life after graduation with a continued network of professionals.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

The goal of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program is to enrich aged out foster youth with a unique educational journey towards degree attainment. The focus on academics, leadership, and skills-based learning ensures our Scholars will be prepared for life after graduation.

Degree attainment for Scholars is the definitive goal of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program. Traditional barriers that affect retention of students have been identified as lack of access to information, college preparedness, lack of time management and study skills, and most importantly, a lack of integration with the college community (Bettiger, E., & Baker, R., 2011). Furthermore, many of these barriers extend to not having the support systems necessary to achieve advanced educational opportunities (Zetlin & Weinberg, 2004; Blome, 1997). According to Blome's influential analysis, four key suggestions were to be created to help achieve student retention of aged out foster youth (Blome, 1997).

Of these four factors, it was highly suggested that scholarship programs with full wrap-around services be implemented within university settings with specific attention paid to retention strategies, certificate programs, as well as needs based funding for housing, education, and employment opportunities should also be available (Blome, 1997). These elements are embedded within the mission of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program using three pedagogical strategies embedded within each component of the curriculum. These strategies are service learning, reflective learning, and journaling.

The core value at Cleveland State University is "Engaged Learning." Participants in the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program will discover how to become active and engaged learners. According to St. Clair, theoretical concepts for participation and engaged learning include ensuring basic needs are met before a motivator is enacted to encourage participation and engaged learning (St. Clair, pg. 20, 2008). The design of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program considers these necessities and is structured to encourage the participation rate of our Scholars, thus, increasing student retention.

The inclusion of these wrap-around services provides our Scholars a path beyond the statistics of aged out foster care youth. Heavily implemented research-based methodology for the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program is instituted to encourage persistence and retention rates of aged out foster youth looking to become engaged learners while completing a collegiate program. Our highly trained staff, student navigators, and community partners are committed to focusing on the needs of our Scholars that provide the life skills, degree attainment, and leadership opportunities that will help aged out foster youth navigate and overcome barriers and challenges. The services provided within the framework of the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program allow a change of the outcomes associated with this population, and advances the opportunities to access and success for these youths.

CURRICULUM MATRIX

This curriculum matrix aligns the Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program curriculum with the Ohio Educational Standards and contemporary research. A focus on student strengths, along with socio-emotional wellbeing and learning, is bolstered to improve persistence and retention rates of aged out foster youth at Cleveland State University.

Program

Standards

Retention

Features

Alignment

Research

Navigation to
Graduation

A3. 1.d Utilize support from trusted adults, as well as resources and agencies that provide academic, social, emotional, or health-related support
A3. 3.d Access community resources and safety networks for self or others
B2. 2.d Utilize school, family, community, or varied resources that may assist in achieving a goal
C3. 2.d Participate in cross-cultural activities, identify unique contributions and perspectives of various groups, and discover how the experience may change personal perspective
D2. 1.d Establish and actively participate in a healthy network of personal, school and community relationships
E4. 3.d Anticipate and plan for transitions in post-secondary life

(DeAngelo, L., & Franke, R., 2016);
(Anderson, E., 2005);
(Lopez, 2014);
(Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020);
(Munoz, L., Miller, R., & Poole, S. M., 2016);
(Hammermeister, J., Mount, S. E., Jordan, C., Briggs, L., & Galm, R., 2020)

Navigator Coaching Model

A1. 3.d Utilize appropriate time, place, or support systems to reflect on personal emotions independently, with a trusted adult, or with peers
B2. 2.d Utilize school, family, community, or varied resources that may assist in achieving a goal
C1. 2.d Demonstrate ways to encourage mutual respect across all settings when viewpoints or perceptions differ
D2. 1.d Establish and actively participate in a healthy network of personal, school and community relationships
E2. 2.d Independently seek reliable adult mentors in various settings

(Anderson, E., 2005);
(Lopez, 2014);
(Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020);
(Soria, K. M., & Taylor, L. D., 2016);
(Gasser, 2013);
(Bettiger, E., & Baker, R., 2011)

Learning Experience

A1. 2.d Analyze ways emotions impact the social environment
B2 2.d Utilize school, family, community, or varied resources that may assist in achieving a goal
C3. 2.d Participate in cross-cultural activities, identify unique contributions and perspectives of various groups, and discover how the experience may change personal perspective

(Anderson, E., 2005);
(Lopez, 2014);
(Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020);
(Munoz, L., Miller, R., & Poole, S. M., 2016);
(Hammermeister, J., Mount, S. E., Jordan, C., Briggs, L., & Galm, R. (2020)

Instructional Resources

A4. 1.d Demonstrate internalization of personal responsibility and being accountable as one prepares for postsecondary life
B2. 1.d Develop a plan that demonstrates an understanding of how to set and reach goals that contribute to lifelong success
C2. 4.d Evaluate the impact of personal involvement in an activity to improve school, home, community, and the world
D2. 3.d Develop techniques to empower, encourage and affirm oneself and others, maintaining positive, healthy relationships
E1. 1.d Demonstrate critical thinking skills to select an appropriate decision-making process, recognizing there are multiple perspectives

(DeAngelo, L., & Franke, R., 2016);
(Anderson, E., 2005);
(Markle, G., & Stelzriede, D. D., 2020);
(Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020);
(Soria, K. M., & Taylor, L. D., 2016).

Strength-based programming

A1. 3.d Utilize appropriate time, place, or support systems to reflect on personal emotions independently, with a trusted adult, or with peers
A3. 1.d Utilize support from trusted adults, as well as resources and agencies that provide academic, social, emotional, or health-related support
B2. 2.d Utilize school, family, community, or varied resources that may assist in achieving a goal
B3. 1.d Demonstrate the ability to persevere through challenges for long-term rewards or success
D2. 3.d Develop techniques to empower, encourage and affirm oneself and others, maintaining positive, healthy relationships
E2. 1.d Implement strategies for reducing influence of stressors that limit ability to make the most-informed decisions when at school, at home, or in the community with peers
E4. 3.d Anticipate and plan for transitions in post-secondary life

(DeAngelo, L., & Franke, R., 2016);
(Anderson, E., 2005);
(Lopez, 2014);
(Markle, G., & Stelzriede, D. D., 2020);
(Sava, S. L., Virga, D., & Palos, R., 2020);
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