



**HEROES**



**FALL 2022  
MENTEE  
EXPERIENCE  
REPORT**

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# 9TH GRADE STUDENT EXPERIENCES



## 9th grade student from Rochester

“This is my second year being in the HEROES program. I’ve grown a lot from when I first joined and really didn’t understand much about college. I didn’t even really see the need to go, other than it being an opportunity for more experiences. As time went by, I met amazing women who have helped me grow beyond reach, and I’ll always love it! This program has kept me on track in life and taught me many things about colleges as well as understanding my needs and wants.”



## 9th grade student from NYC

“My experience in this program was an opportunity I will never forget. Not only was I given tools to help propel me into this business class world, but I also got to meet a person who became part of my support system. My mentor constantly pushed me beyond my limits to torch new possibilities. I was able to learn about **financial aid solutions**, I was able to **find colleges** that I currently want to join, and the best part is that I did all of this in my first year in high school. Not my senior year. So, I will forever be grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank Mr. Romero for recommending me to this Wonderful program.”

# 10TH GRADE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

## 10th Grade Student From Rochester



“My experience is fun and I like learning new things each session. I've learned that I am capable of reaching for **new opportunities** around me. I learned a lot from my mentor, one of the most helpful things being how financial aid works and how to apply for **FAFSA**. I also learned what different things to look at when selecting colleges for my college list. It was very helpful in my personal and professional development.”

## 10th Grade Student From NYC



“My experience at HEROES was very welcoming. I love my mentor and how helpful she has been to me throughout the meetings. I learned that there are a few possibilities in the choice of careers I might want to pursue, and I'm excited to see what my future holds. From my mentor, I learned that it's ok to take a break and breathe if everything feels overwhelming, even if there is stuff that needs to be done. Sometimes you just need to take a mental pause. Personally, this program has been helpful in helping me formulate better **time management skills** and focus on my **short and long term goals**. Professionally, this program has allowed me to narrow down my choices in careers.”



I learned how financial aid works and how to apply for FAFSA.



### 10th Grade Student From NYC

“It was overall pretty good. I found myself asking a lot of questions and learning more than I expected. I was able to learn new tips and how to prioritize college. I learned a lot and my mentor was amazing. I think she did an amazing job at how detailed she was and how much information she gave us.”



### 10th Grade Student From NYC

“My experience at HEROES was amazing. I feel like I learned everything I needed in order to do better with the certain things I wanted to learn about. I'm grateful for my mentor and everything that she's done and all the time she put into helping me. I learned about many things like time management.”



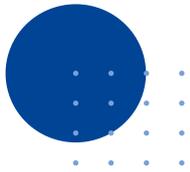
### 10th Grade Student From NYC

““My experience at HEROES was great! I learned a lot about my future (such as how to look for a college and **building a resume**). I learned that I learn faster at home than I do at school. I learned from my mentor first-hand about college life (because she already goes to college). This program was helpful in my personal and professional development because it helped me mature as a person and pay attention in class better.”



The program was helpful in my personal and professional development.

# 11TH GRADE STUDENT EXPERIENCES



"I also loved that I had a voice and say on what I wanted to learn about."



"My experience at HEROES was a very meaningful experience. I learned about how the **medical school program** at Geneseo works. I also got to know more information about other regional colleges in the area. This program was helpful in discovering the different opportunities for people interested in pursuing the medical field. It helped me learn more about the different branches of the medical field, and to reaffirm my interest in the field." - 11th grade student from Rochester

"My experience at HEROES was an amazing experience. I enjoyed meeting with my mentor one on one about topics that I needed to be educated on. I also loved that I had a voice and say on what I wanted to learn about. I appreciated being able to encounter a friendly and warm environment with my mentor as well. After my sessions, my mentor would email me the power points she created so I have them for future reference." - 11th grade student from NYC.

"My experience was good. The biggest thing I took away was the fact that my mentor was someone who had gone through the college application process. It was comforting because it made the process seem more do-able. This program was helpful." - 11th grade student from Rochester."

It was very pleasant. It helped me figure out smaller details of what I needed to do in order to continue with my education that I didn't know I needed to know. It helped it all seem less scary and gave me assurance that I know what I'm doing. I learned about college and **wellness tips** for when things get tough. I also learned what to look for and created a college list. This entire experience has been amazing and I will recommend it to my younger friends.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“My experience at HEROES was nothing short of phenomenal. I was able to pinpoint what kind of job I want to pursue, my **college list**, and how to pursue and achieve my goals. My mentor was always kind, helpful, and understanding. I would definitely say that this program was helpful in my personal and professional development.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“HEROES was a great experience that I was exposed to and learned from. It was helpful in helping my professional development and helped me to understand adult life. I learned more about my interests and from my mentor, I also learned many new things. I learned that it is super important to take care of my mental health, and I was also reassured that it was okay if some things aren't accomplished. The most important thing is that I learned that it was okay to take breaks no matter what I am doing.” - 11th grade student from NYC.



“My experience with HEROES was overall pleasant and informative. I learned that I don't know much about what I'm passionate about pursuing. My mentor assured me that many don't, and it's completely normal to not know what career to have. My mentor also taught me about entering college with an undecided major/minor. This program was helpful to my personal concerns as well as helping/informing me about the college process.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

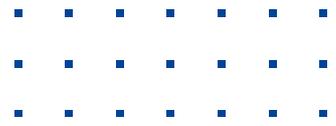
"My experience at HEROES was great because I learned a lot about colleges and how I should navigate them through **budgeting**, job skills, and time management because these are necessary skills everyone deserves to know. I learned that I was very well prepared for college because I understood everything well. I had some previous knowledge going into this program, but I also learned that there was still so much I didn't know. I learned that my mentor really wanted to help me get the best out of this program and they helped me to their best ability. This program was very helpful to my personal and professional development. Thank you." - 11th grade student from NYC.



"I learned a lot about colleges and how I should navigate them through budgeting, job skills, and time management "

My experience with the HEROES program was something that I found very beneficial since it had ended up teaching me many things that I did not know about college and that was something I needed. I learned more about my own preferences and what I am very much looking for in the colleges that I want to apply to. I learned from my mentor how this newfound knowledge would end up helping me in the long run for college. This program was definitely helpful due to the fact that it had opened my options and helped me prepare for college." - 11th grade student from NYC.

# 12TH GRADE STUDENT EXPERIENCES



## "INFORMATIVE"



My experience at HEROES was very engaging, informative, and overall good. I learned about my dislikes and likes when it comes to college and what my interests are when it pertains to studying. I learned that my mentor was very big on **mental health** and they were really engaged when it came to getting to know their mentee. This program was very helpful in guiding me to the right path through the college process.”

## "HELPFUL"



HEROES has been extremely helpful for me. When I first received the link to register for additional college help, I was so thankful for this opportunity. **College applications** and the process leading up to applying for college was extremely worrisome and stressful. However, my mentor was able to help me a lot in keeping me informed. She also did a lot of research on what I wanted to know and catered to my needs. I learned that large milestones are not something that someone can do on their own. If help is needed then I should reach out at every opportunity. This program was really helpful in my personal development.”

## "SELF CARE"



“HEROES has helped me a lot during the college process. I knew that I wanted to apply to college, but I wasn't very confident with college before joining. I learned that I like to complete work early and procrastination makes me nervous. I also learned that I need to improve my self care routine. It is helpful in my personal development because I am able to learn more about my interests with the help of my mentor. She also helped me professionally because we worked on **LinkedIn**.”

# ABOUT OUR MENTEES



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“I live in Washington Heights and there is this constant struggle of being a minority in a predominantly white school. My teachers always have higher expectations for me. They expect more from me, and I have to constantly compete with more privileged people with better access to necessities and opportunities. I constantly need to put 10 times the effort in order to be somewhat competitive with the majority of my school. All of this is to the point that I have sacrificed many things to try and better myself like spending my valuable time on many extracurricular activities. I know that this will all eventually lead me and benefit me in the future but then again, I do also want a desirable present. The biggest encouragement I have for joining this is the fact that I am able to have a head start on the ability to choose what colleges to be in in the future.” - 9th grade student from NYC



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“I live in Brighton, NY. Some challenges I have faced with my education is balancing education while struggling with mental health. I would describe my community as very friendly and inclusive, especially my school community. My mom is my main source of inspiration. The college and careers counselor at my school sent out an email about the program and I had had a positive experience with a program she previously recommended, so I wanted to try this out.” - 10th grade student from Rochester.

“I live in Queens. I know many minority communities don’t have as many privileges and it can be frustrating especially since my school doesn’t receive a lot of funding and so I have to look to outside sources like HEROES.” - 10th grade student from NYC.

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“I've lived in Staten Island since I was born. My community can be scary to live in at times, but I always stay safe and happy. Some challenges I’ve seen in my education are related to stress and anxiety when I feel I can’t accomplish everything in one day, or can’t seem to understand a lesson. I was encouraged to join the program because I wanted someone to help guide me towards a clear path and clear the air about college. I am inspired by my family, friends and figure skating.” - 10th grade student from NYC.

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“I live in the Bronx. Some challenges I saw in my education were that there aren't any study periods for teens in my school who are freshmen or sophomores. This leaves only lunch periods and times spent at home for studying. My community is quiet and close together, though I feel like I don't or can't fit in. What inspires me is the world around me, from a bird on a tree branch to really tall buildings. What encouraged me to join the program was my guidance counselor telling me about the program and forwarding an email about it to me. Finding out that the program included learning about college enticed me because I was worried about my future, and also, my parents always push for me to get the help I need.” - 10th grade student from NYC.

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“I live in the Bronx and I went to school in Astoria. Some challenges I have seen are getting there on time or keeping up in class. I wanted to join this program because there were some things I just wanted to learn that I was struggling with and now that I know them I feel like I can do better.” - 10th grade from NYC.

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“I live in Rochester, New York and I'm currently graduating high school a year early! I mostly needed this program for mental stability, knowing it's hard to find the right path in life and also figuring out if college is really a key factor is an emotional and hard decision to make.” - 10th grade student from Rochester.



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“I am from Rochester. It can be hard to go through school when you're black in predominantly white schools. It makes you feel like it's not even worth trying because people will constantly overlook you. I would describe the community as very big, but it has been way more accepting than most. I try to inspire myself. I want to succeed and prove to myself that I can do it. I wanted to feel more secure about my future. I felt like everything was confusing and overwhelming so I could use this for support.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.



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“I live in Brooklyn. Some challenges I have had to deal with in my education were short schedules in my earlier years, as I had to travel with my mother into the city because of familial issues, meaning I had to work and study on the go or in waiting rooms. My mother inspires me, in dire times she pursued higher education and a job in special education as an immigrant from Poland and was able to support me and my sister on one sole income. My mother was the one who encouraged me to join this program. I am not a fan of meeting new people or showing my face on camera, but she insisted and it was worth it.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“I live in Brooklyn, New York, and the challenge I face is the difficulty I have in regards to my education. It's stressful to keep up with the coursework and also to maintain extracurriculars as well. What keeps me going is my family. They would do anything for me and care for me, so I feel like it's right to return the favor by working hard. I joined this program because I wanted to learn more about college to familiarize myself with it so I am not stressed the whole school year.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

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“I live in an apartment building in Brooklyn NY. I am surrounded by a loving family and exposed to diverse groups of people in school. Some challenges in my education would definitely be finding the motivation to study and work hard, especially when I go through mistakes and failures. Nonetheless, I am inspired to work hard in order to support my mom and dad in the future. I was encouraged to join this program because I wanted to take a step and make an effort in my success in the future.” - 11th grade student from NYC

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“I live in Rochester, NY. This is a very supportive community with people helping each other out at school all the time, working with one another to succeed. I have always been inspired by puzzles, and I was inspired to join the medical field by seeing how all the doctors keep trying to figure out the disease and treatment, just like a puzzle. I joined this program to learn more about college planning and how to pursue the medical field.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

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“I live in Staten Island, New York and the community that I am in is one that is genuinely very helpful and kind, I have good resources in school that help me with things that I'm finding challenges in and they were the ones who happened to inspire me to join this program since they noticed how stressed I was starting to become thinking about my future.” - 11th grade student from NYC

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“I live on Staten Island, NY. A challenge I've faced in my education would be procrastination. I live in a safe and, for the most part, calm community. Something that inspires me is imagining my productive future and how it will all be worth it in the end. The fact that I was new to applying to colleges and indecisive about my future encouraged me to join this program.” - 11th grade student from NYC.



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“I live in Brooklyn, New York with my family. I guess some challenges I've seen would be my ability to think I'm good enough for a particular challenge or opportunity. I've seen myself not take opportunities I could have because I didn't think I was good enough, or strong enough to handle it. My community is nothing special. I wouldn't say there is a strong bond in my neighborhood. The fact that I wasn't very knowledgeable with colleges encouraged me to join and the new opportunity I wanted to take was what encouraged me particularly.” - 11th grade student from NYC



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“I live in Queens, NY. Some challenges would be the lack of programs and clubs and personal interest when it comes to my education. My community is hectic and dangerous at times. My future inspires me, and I strive for happiness and success. Wanting to figure things out encouraged me to join this program.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“I live in bayside New York. It’s pretty quiet and reserved, not all that much going on. My mom inspires me. She is hardworking despite all of her personal struggles. I joined this program because it is my gateway program I take part in at school.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

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“I live in Brooklyn and some challenges in my education are that there are only 2 college counselors at my school, so help cannot be distributed to all of the students fairly, which can make the whole college application process uneasy. I would describe my community as diverse. My family and friends inspire me. I was encouraged to join this program because I didn't want to be behind in any college process.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

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“I live in Brooklyn, NY. I fortunately haven't seen many challenges in my education aside from this year's AP classes. It has been difficult for me to study because sometimes I am not as motivated. AP Government and Calculus are difficult classes for me, but I try my best. My community is a bit quiet and there are many people in it. It isn't like a small town where everyone knows each other. Unfortunately, it is a bit dangerous, but hopefully that gets better overtime. The fact that I am able to learn a lesson or gain knowledge inspires me. I also want to make my parents proud and always grow. My friend recommended that I join a college prep program and my school advertised it so I joined.” - 12th grade student from NYC.



# OUR MENTEES' FAVORITE SESSIONS



## College Related Sessions

“My favorite session was discussing majors where I was able to give me a one on one discussion with someone who is a business major.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“Making a college list.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“My favorite session was the one where I got to learn more college tips and learned about the experiences of my mentor. I learned it was okay to do several things and it was also very interesting.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“Comparing college choices” - 12th grade student from NYC

“My favorite session was the one for the college essay because it helped me a lot” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“College tours” - 10th grade student from NYC.

I believe my favorite was making the college list since it opened my options and was fun to find new information about the colleges.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“Exploring colleges” - 11th grade student from NYC.

Most likely the financial aid session as well.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

# OUR MENTEES' FAVORITE SESSIONS



## Other Sessions

“My favorite session would be one where we were able to have an activity at the end of the session, was fun.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“My favorite session was the session that I first got to know my mentor.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“Self-awareness.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“Self-care wellness because I liked talking about my week and the mentor’s week.” - 11th grade student from NYC.



## All of the sessions

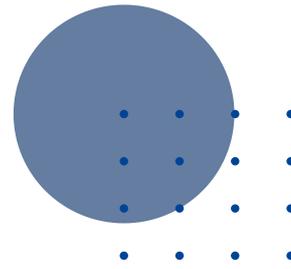
“All of them. I had an amazing mentor.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“I enjoyed all of the sessions and was taught something new after every meeting.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“All of them” - 10th grade student from Rochester.

“All of them” - 10th grade student from NYC.

# MOST HELPFUL SESSIONS



“Financial aid” - 10th grade student from Rochester.

“College essay” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“The slide presentations were extremely informative.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“Cover letter” - 10th grade student from NYC.

“College list because it really helped me figure out what I wanted as well as figure out what kind of college I want to go to because I hadn't thought about the smaller details before.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.



“The most helpful session was one about making a college list because I gained the most new information out of the session. The other sessions had some topics that I had a little knowledge about.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“Each session with my mentor was helpful, but one session that helped me tremendously is when he was able to guide me on the path of choosing business as my major and building my common app, college list and understanding FAFSA. “ - 12th grade student from NYC.

# THINGS OUR MENTORS DO WELL



“My mentor made me feel comfortable talking to her and listening to her teach me the things I need to know was interesting. She always asked how I was feeling and if I understood what she was telling me. She responded to my requests and was always understanding. She also made our meetings super fun and tried her best to make it best fit my interests.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“He was able to guide me through the college process and always made an effort to answer my questions thoroughly.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“She was very easy to communicate with. She matched my energy and helped me feel more comfortable and made plans for the next meeting to know what to expect. Also, she was very willing to reschedule when I couldn't make a meeting. She has been very kind and helpful.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“[My mentor] was extremely good at catering to my needs and helping me look into other things, such as colleges or different academic high school programs.” - 10th grade student from Rochester.

“My mentor was extremely empathetic, made the meetings interesting, and was professional.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“Explained things clearly, provided interesting slides, kept me engaged, and made me want to learn more.” - 12th grade student from NYC

“My mentor was able to reschedule my meetings especially when my schedule was extremely packed. She was also able to give me a large amount of feedback on my college essay, which helped me tremendously.” - 12th grade student from NYC.

“Communication” - 10th grade student from NYC.

“My mentor did well in making sessions feel comfortable and safe for sharing ideas and learning.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“My mentor always prepared PowerPoint presentations before the mentorship sessions, and always answered my questions expertly.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“[My mentor] is a great communicator, she always made sure that the environment was warm. Her presentations were clear and coherent. She made sure to always have a smile on her face and she made sure to answer all my questions.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

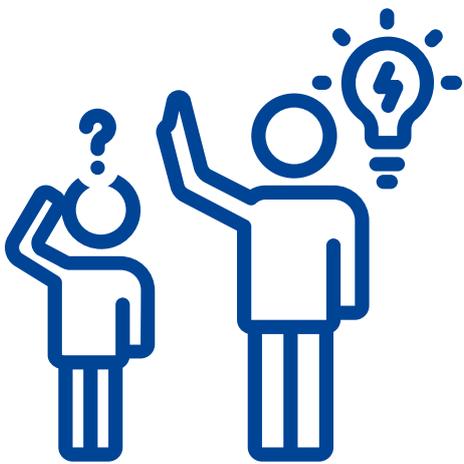
“Everything. She's a great listener, very engaging, entertaining, and funny. She responds quickly to texts and she provides many resources. She answers all of my questions.”- 12th grade student from NYC.

“My mentor did "how was your week, any ups or downs" every week we met and I felt very connected and it made the relationship more close. All of her information was very helpful and I will use it in the future. Also I loved fact check games and the category game because it helped me relax for a few moments and worked my brain.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“She took some time at the beginning to get to know me.” - 11th grade student from Rochester.

“She had been very kind to educate me with things that I needed or didn't understand that were going to get me ready for college.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“My mentor did well in her research regarding financial aid as well as the different types of colleges around my area because I wanted to go somewhere close to home.” - 11th grade student from NYC.



“I feel like he was very kind, empathetic, understanding, and professional with the mentorship. His mentorship was good in the sense that he provided slides with every meeting and gave me useful information throughout, also consistently asking if I ever had any questions.” - 11th grade student from NYC.

“My mentor made me laugh and feel excited to be at these meetings. She helped me understand more about looking for colleges based on her personal experience that I can relate to. Her lesson plans have structured topics to focus on, keeping me in check with what I need to learn.” - 10th grade student from NYC.

“He definitely put a lot of effort into finding fun activities to do so that it won't just be a bland presentation.” - 9th grade student from NYC

“When we were able to talk about different colleges in the maritime industry and colleges in and near the city.” - 9th grade student from NYC

“Understand that everyday isn't the best and has worked with me through many hard challenges.” - 10th grade student from Rochester.

“Helped with things I didn't understand.” - 10th grade student from NYC.

“The most helpful session I had was when I was taught how to create a resume.” - 10th grade student from NYC.