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# Mentor Handbook

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Summer 2023

Developed by



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This document is designed to provide basic program details and expectations for  
Summer Jobs Program Mentors.

**Thank you for volunteering to be a mentor with the  
Summer Jobs Program (SJP)!**

## **Contact Information for the Program**

The Summer Jobs Program (SJP) began in Helena in 2019 as an initiative of AJAY MT and its partners. SJP has expanded to multiple communities. Below are the partnering organizations and primary contact for each location in 2023.

**If questions or concerns arise during the program, please reach out to your local Summer Jobs Program contact.**

**Anaconda Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, Anaconda Community Intervention, Discover Anaconda, & Reach Higher Montana

Ruth Moen | ruth@discoveranaconda.com | 406-563-2400

**Bozeman Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, City of Bozeman, and Bozeman School District

Jesse DiTommaso | jditommaso@bozeman.net | 406-579-2494

**Helena Area Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, Helena College, Helena WINS of the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce, Reach Higher Montana, and STOKe of Townsend

Gabrielle Eklund Rowley | gerowley@americanjobs4youth.org | 406-490-4954

**Whitehall Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, Jefferson Local Development Corp (JLDC), Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC), and Reach Higher Montana

Lindsey Graham | lindsey.graham@jldcmt.com | 406-240-5818

**Workforce Flathead Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, Discover Kalispell Chamber, Flathead Valley Community College, Reach Higher Montana, and Workforce Flathead

Jenn Cronk | j.cronk@kalispellchamber.com | 406-758-2801 or 406-260-3015

**Yellowstone County Summer Jobs Program:** partnership of AJAY MT, Big Sky Economic Development, Billings Chamber of Commerce, Billings School District, BillingsWorks, and Reach Higher Montana

Cathy Grider | Cathy@billingschamber.com | 406-869-3724 or 406-671-8221

## **American Jobs for America's Youth Montana (AJAY MT)**

American Jobs for America's Youth Montana (AJAY MT) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that builds life and work skills in Montana's young adults through collaborative efforts, like the Summer Jobs Program. AJAY MT launched the SJP pilot in 2019 in Helena and works throughout Montana on community-driven initiatives.

## **Summer Jobs Program (SJP)**

SJP helps high school students and recent graduates develop life and work skills that are necessary for success in the workplace, expand their professional networks, explore careers, and build . SJP matches students with a paid position, connects them with a mentor, and provides paid work skills training. By connecting students to local employers, SJP also develops and grows the local workforce.

SJP job placements and mentorships run from early-June to mid-August, although some employers may choose to employ a student beyond the summer months.

### **SJP Host Employers**

SJP host employers are eager to support young people and build workforce talent. Students might work part-time or full-time, depending on employer need, for a minimum of 150 hours throughout the summer.

### **SJP Student Participants**

SJP participants are interested in building their skills, gaining new experiences, and exploring work options. Students submit an application and complete an SJP interview. SJP matches students with a host employer, based on employer needs and student experience and interest. Students then complete an interview with the potential host employer before the employer confirms employment.

Prior to beginning summer work, students complete a four-hour paid work skills training that discusses fundamental work practices that lead to success in the workplace.

## Mentor Job Description

**Purpose of Position:** Build positive relationship with SJP student mentee. Provide guidance and support as students build work skills, grow as employees, and explore future options.

**Qualifications:** Must be at least 21 years of age and pass a background check.

The mentor is not the student's supervisor, but is another supportive adult to expand the student's professional network. Mentors may be employees at the student's workplace or they may be community members.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Commit to connecting with the student at least five times throughout the summer (once every week or two)
- Help student reflect on work experience, set goals, and think about how they might pursue various career pathways
- Be a positive and professional role model
- Complete mentor orientation and complete all necessary paperwork
- Adhere to all policies, procedures, and expectations of SJP
- Adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws
- Maintain regular communication with SJP staff
- Complete two SJP evaluations regarding mentor experience (one mid-summer and one final evaluation)

**Supervision Relationships:** This position reports to the local SJP facilitator (specified on page 3). This position does not supervise anyone.

**Dates of Position:** Mentors are expected to meet with students from mid-June through mid-August, although the relationship may continue beyond the duration of SJP.

## **Benefits of Mentoring**

Your time and efforts as a mentor are valuable. Your service this summer can positively impact the Summer Jobs Program students. Evidence suggests that students with a mentor are more likely to:

- perform better in school and at work
- enroll in college
- hold positive attitudes toward education and work
- maintain positive social relationships
- explore career options and build personal goals

Mentoring can be a hugely rewarding experience for the mentor as well. As you build a relationship with a student, you will have the opportunity to:

- reflect on your own experiences, what you've achieved, and how you got there
- practice communication skills, active listening, and empathy
- connect with a young person in your community
- invest in the next generation

## **As a volunteer you have the right to:**

- ❖ Be engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and antidiscrimination legislation
- ❖ Accurate and truthful information about this organization
- ❖ A copy of the organization's volunteer policy and any other policy/procedures that affect your role
- ❖ Confidentiality of your personal information
- ❖ An appropriate position for your interests and skills, and the needs of SJP
- ❖ A role description and agreed upon hours of contribution
- ❖ Orientation and training to prepare you for your role
- ❖ Support to fulfill your role and in resolving issues with students
- ❖ Open and responsive communication
- ❖ The opportunity to contribute to the mission of SJP
- ❖ Be recognized for your contributions
- ❖ The opportunity to give feedback about your experience

## **As a volunteer you have the responsibility to:**

- ❖ Be reliable, engaged, and respectful
- ❖ Adhere to all policies, procedures, and expectations of SJP
- ❖ Notify SJP staff if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities as a mentor
- ❖ Carry out your role according to your position description
- ❖ Be accountable for your actions
- ❖ Be committed to the program and its mission
- ❖ Develop your skills by participating in orientation and training opportunities
- ❖ Ask for support when you need it
- ❖ Raise any issues you may have with the organization and not malign the organization
- ❖ Engage in evaluation and feedback processes

This rights and responsibilities section is credited in large part to *Creating a Volunteer Handbook*, n.d.

## **Code of Ethical Principles**

Summer Jobs Program mentors will adhere to the following principles:

1. Act with integrity
2. Protect the safety of your mentee
3. Behave in a way that benefits your mentee
4. Behave in a fair and objective way
5. Respect the rights and dignity of your mentee
6. Behave in a trustworthy and responsible way

*Big Brothers Big Sisters*

## **Expectations**

### **Orientation and Training**

All mentors will participate in an orientation process (in-person or virtual) to prepare them for their responsibilities and role.

### **Meeting Locations**

SJP mentors and mentees must meet in public locations and may not meet in private residences. It is recommended that mentors and mentees meet at the mentee's workplace or another convenient location for the mentee.

SJP mentors and mentees may choose to meet virtually via a video-chat platform like Zoom or Facetime in addition to in-person meetings.



## Privacy

SJP mentors will protect the privacy of SJP participants and their families. Mentors are required to keep personal information about mentees private. Mentors may share information with SJP program staff as is relevant or helpful.

## Transportation

SJP mentors may not transport mentees in their own private vehicles.

## Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms

**Alcoholic Beverages.** No participant or mentor of SJP will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in mentoring, nor shall any participant endorse the use of alcohol. Mentors and mentees may go to a location where minors are allowed and alcohol is served provided that the mentor and youth do not consume any alcohol.

**Drugs.** No participant of SJP will manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while engaged in mentoring or otherwise.

**Tobacco.** The intent of SJP is to create a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. To that end, those involved with the program must refrain from smoking and the use of all tobacco products while engaged in mentoring. The use of tobacco products includes but is not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or other matters or substances that contain tobacco.

### **Weapons, Firearms, and Other Dangerous Materials.**

The possession or use of firearms, firecrackers, explosives, toxic or dangerous chemicals, or other lethal weapons, equipment, or material while participating mentoring activities is strictly prohibited.

## Social Media and Photography

SJP recommends that mentors communicate with mentees via email or phone, rather than social media, in order to maintain professional boundaries.

SJP mentors may not take photographs of mentees.

## Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of SJP mentors or mentees while participating in the program.

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with SJP goals, values, and program standards and therefore are considered unacceptable and prohibited while SJP mentors and participants are engaged in mentoring activities:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or shows aversion toward any individual
- Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
- Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
- Denigration, public or private, of any mentee parent/guardian or family member
- Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions or their leaders
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Possession of illegal substances

Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in the SJP mentoring program.

## Closure

Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether participants intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration. The SJP mentor program's duration is early-June through mid-August. The SJP match may also end at any time at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or SJP program staff. The SJP program staff will determine whether an individual will be reassigned to another match.

While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the SJP program, matches may, and ideally would, continue.

Future contact will be at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor, the mentee, and the parent/guardian (if applicable). If future contact is agreed upon, SJP will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended.

## Emergency Procedure

In an emergency call 9-1-1. Then call SJP program staff to report the incident.

## Suicide Ideation

If a SJP mentor suspects that a mentee is at risk of suicide, they will follow these steps:

- Ask the person directly, "Are you suicidal?"
- Offer hope, don't leave them alone, and tell others
- Call 911 or the Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- Inform SJP staff

## Abuse Reporting

SJP mentors are not mandatory reporters, but they are expected to report abuse if it is suspected. To report a possible case of child abuse or neglect, contact Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) at **1-866-820-5437** or **1-866-820-KIDS**.

The report should be made as soon as possible and should be reported within 24 hours.

Communicate with SJP staff (specified on page 3) if you suspect neglect or abuse. If you are unsure whether or not suspected case constitutes a form of abuse, it is strongly recommended that you err on the side of caution and report your suspicion to DPHHS. Any of the following situations are reasons for a mentor or staff person to report suspected child abuse or neglect:

- You see a sign or symptom.
- You witness an incident.
- A child confides the abuse or neglect to you.

If a child confides the abuse or neglect, remain calm and be a good listener. Do not promise the child that you will not tell because you have a duty to report it to those who can help. You can choose not to ask any questions. If you do ask questions, only ask four questions, as any other questions may contaminate the case:

- What happened?
- When did this happen?
- Where were you when this happened?
- Who did this to you?

Do not share the information learned from the child with the alleged perpetrator.

When reporting abuse or neglect, provide as much of the following information as possible:

- The child's name, description, age and address.
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child.
- Any facts known about the suspected abuse or neglect (what happened, when and where did this happen, who did this)

*University of Minnesota Extension, 2016, pp. 1-2*

## Mentor Weekly Meetings - Suggested Questions / Activities

*We hope you find the following suggestions helpful. The questions are a great starting point for conversations, and are designed to help build relationships and promote reflection.*

*The best and first thing that you can do to show your mentee that you are caring and supportive is to smile. Smiling is proven to be an effective way to show other people that you are approachable and friendly. Be open with your mentee and show you want to help. Find some common ground. Tell a story about yourself. Finally, understand that this is a new thing for the mentee, and they may be nervous or shy.*

*The listed optional activities may be helpful for your mentee as they grow their professional network and personal awareness. We also recognize that some activities may be difficult if mentor meetings are virtual, or if the mentor or student has a limited amount of time. Do what makes sense for you and your mentee!*

**Week 1 Objectives:** Build rapport, help student identify goals for summer, help student understand breadth of positions that support a business (and how their position fits into that situation)

- Get-to-Know-You questions (*We recommend that you as a mentor share first; students are more willing to share if they see you are willing to be vulnerable and share*)
  - Why are you part of the Summer Jobs Program?
  - What is something you really enjoy, that you lose track of time when you do it?
  - If you could learn something new, what would it be?
  - What are some of the best things about you?
  - What are you good at doing?
  - What do you think is important in life?
  - Is there anything you wish you could change about yourself?
  - Who are the people that matter most to you?
- As a mentor, share your story – How did you start your career? What changes did you make along the way? Include high and low points and how these learning experiences helped you.
- What are one or two goals you have for yourself this summer?
- OPTIONAL ACTIVITY - Tour an organization (in person or in conversation) and talk about the many different jobs and employees that make the organization function. Help your mentee understand how they fit into the big picture of their organization.

Date:

MENTOR NOTES:

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**Week 2 Objectives:** Build rapport, help student reflect on job and self

Reflect on work questions

Tell me about work this week.

What surprised you this week?

What have you learned this week (about yourself, your workplace, an aspect of the job)?

- What is one thing about you that is important for people to know about you?
- Create a bucket list. What are 10 things that you'd like to accomplish by the time you are 30 years old? Or over your lifetime?

(This activity helps students think about the "future them". Activities that encourage students to think about their future help build the neurons that contribute to goal setting.)

Date:

MENTOR NOTES:

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**Week 3 Objective:** Nurture rapport, help student reflect on job and self, help student expand their professional network

- Reflect on work questions
  - Tell me about work this week.
  - What is something new that you tried this week?
  - What is going well at your job?
  - What is challenging? Why?
  - What are your goals from the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting? How is that going? What is one thing you will do this week to work toward them?
- OPTIONAL ACTIVITY - Learn from the pros - Identify someone in your company or another business that the student could meet for an [informational interview](#), and then help your mentee schedule and prepare for this interview (could be casual or more formal). This is a great way to [learn about a job or career](#) from someone with experience. If you work for a large organization, you can help your mentee meet different co-workers throughout the summer.

Date:

MENTOR NOTES:

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**Week 4 Objective:** Nurture rapport, help student reflect on job and self

- Reflect on work questions
  - Tell me about work this week.
  - What new skills are you practicing?
  - What was the most interesting thing you completed or learned?
  - Follow up on challenges from last week.* How are you managing the challenges?
- Last week, the mentee mentioned they would \_\_\_\_\_. How is that going?
- Ask the student to tell you about the informational interview. What did they find interesting? Surprising? What information from this interview will they implement in their work?

Date:

MENTOR NOTES:

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**Week 5 Objective:** Nurture rapport, help student reflect on self and future options

- Reflect on work questions
  - Let's look back at the goals you identified on week 1. Do you think you achieved them? Why or why not?
  - What are you most proud of this summer?
  - What did you learn this summer that you could use in your next position?
  - What is one aspect about this job or internship that you enjoyed? What is one aspect that you did not enjoy? How can that relate to your next position or even a career?
- ACTIVITY - What new insights do you have about what you'd like to do after high school (or college if a student is already enrolled)? What training or school do you think might be involved? What do you see as your first step towards that? Who can help you?

There are resources on the [AJAY MT website](#) for students that discuss internships, apprenticeships, college prep, and financial aid. Additionally, encourage students to talk to school counselors, Reach Higher Montana staff, or do their own research online.

Date:

MENTOR NOTES:

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## Mentor Development

**One of the best ways to discover the mentor in you is to examine mentoring you have received.**

Your mentorship could have been a short-term intervention or a long-term relationship; it might have happened formally or informally. However, when you've been "touched" by a mentor, you know it.

To understand how *you* have benefited from mentoring, reflect on your own experiences. Your answers help define the kind of mentor you want to be and identify building blocks for developing productive mentoring relationships.

1. What kind of mentoring did you receive?
2. How did it compare to the mentoring received by people around you?
3. What did you find helpful and unhelpful?
4. How well did the mentoring you received apply to your professional and/or personal success?
5. How well did your mentor prepare you for your career?
6. As you look back, what other kinds of mentoring would have been helpful? Were there occasions where mentoring would have helped you handle a difficult situation more effectively, gain clarity about your career, or avoid "learning the hard way"?

You can also identify your key mentoring discoveries by reflecting on significant events and people in your life:

1. Have you had an "ah ha" moment in your life? Who helped you make the discovery? How did this person impact your life? In what way is that person a mentor?
2. Has someone quoted something or said something to you that was so profound you've carried the meaning with you ever since? Who was it? Do you consider this person a mentor? Why or why not? What mentoring qualities did you learn from this person?
3. Did someone help you uncover a latent talent, ability or desire? How did this person encourage you and help you with your discovery? How has this influenced your life and your mentoring vision?

<https://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/learning-development/mentoring-mentor-toolkit-%20final-508.pdf>

## **Mentor Activities & Resources**

Please visit [www.americanjobs4youth.org/hsjp/mentoring](http://www.americanjobs4youth.org/hsjp/mentoring) to find more ideas for questions or suggested activities, mentoring research, and post-secondary resources.

Reach Higher Montana has incredible resources regarding career and college planning.

Please visit [www.reachhighermontana.org](http://www.reachhighermontana.org) to find resources on apprenticeships, internships, college, scholarships, and more!

Mentor is an organization that offers training, resources, and opportunities to mentors across the country. Visit [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org) to learn more!

The Search Institute is a leader in youth development research. For more information, visit <https://www.search-institute.org/>

KnowHow2Go is a campaign from the American Council on Education, providing information to students about college and post-secondary options. <http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu/>

Please contact your local SJP program staff with any questions or concerns

(contact information found on page 3).

You can also contact:

Gabrielle Eklund Rowley [gerowley@americanjobs4youth.org](mailto:gerowley@americanjobs4youth.org) 406-490-4954

**Thank you for investing in our youth  
and our community's future!**

