

# Mentor Guide:

## Letters of Recommendation

Strong letters of recommendation are necessary if your mentee hopes to stand out in the post-secondary application process. If you agree to write your mentee a letter of recommendation, your mentee will provide your name and email address on their post-secondary applications. You will typically receive a link via email to submit your letter of recommendation. Your letter should be completed by the end of September of your mentee's senior year.

Your mentee might feel nervous about asking you for a letter of recommendation. You can ease their nerves by offering to write one for them. Use the tips below to help frame your letter of recommendation! If you have any questions, please reach out directly to your program manager.

- The letter of recommendation should be no longer than one page.
- It is important to answer the questions listed below, in detail, within the letter:
  - How do you know the student? In what manner have you engaged with them?
  - What qualities/traits does the student possess that sets them apart from others?
  - How have you seen these qualities/traits be shown through their actions?
  - Why do you think the student would do well in their desired post-secondary pathway?
- Provide specific examples of ways in which the student has demonstrated various skills and qualities. Try to think of examples from your pair events and platform communications.
- Remain positive. State that you think this student is a strong candidate for the school. You might say something like you "recommend this individual without reservation." Emphasize this, especially at the end of the letter.
- Common clichés on student recommendation letters, including vague phrases like "hard worker" and "diligent student," are to be avoided. Make sure to back up any statements you make with specific evidence.
- Share your contact information. Provide a way for the school to contact you if they have further questions. Include your email address, telephone number, or both at the end of the letter.

## Sample Letter of Recommendation

Dear College Admissions Committee,

I first met Jane Doe when she was a bright-eyed, but shy junior embarking on her post-secondary research. We were paired together through iMentor, which is a program aimed at empowering students to graduate from high school and succeed in college. At the time, I was a bit apprehensive about making a two-year commitment to a single volunteer opportunity, however, Jane has been such a joy to work with and I'm ultimately so glad I made the leap.

From the outset, Jane was mature enough to understand the importance of investing in her education. While certain subjects haven't always come easily to Jane, she is a student who has demonstrated a willingness to dedicate the time and effort to improve. I have been impressed by her initiative to attend tutoring at seven in the morning, multiple times per week, in an effort to succeed in her pre-calculus class. This persistence and dedication has carried over into multiple aspects of her life. For one, her extra-curricular involvement has consisted of activities she truly has enjoyed, such as youth group. She has also engaged in "stretch" opportunities that aren't necessarily in her comfort zone, such as law club. In different ways, each of these activities has provided beneficial opportunities for growth and development and allowed her to expand her horizons. I have also experienced her dedication multiple times first-hand. For example, one time we spent several hours on the phone preparing her for a job interview and, even though we were both exhausted, she wasn't going to hang up until she had everything down. I think this dedication to her academics as well as her personal development will serve her well in a college setting and in her future career aspirations.

On a personal level, Jane has grown incredibly resilient as she has had to learn to manage her sickle cell anemia diagnosis. While her treatment has caused her to miss iMentor events at times, she has always made sure to follow up with me and complete our pair tasks. She has never complained to me, but I know these have not been relatable experiences for many of her high school peers and I'm sure at times she has felt a bit isolated. Nevertheless, she is tough and optimistic and has continued to blossom into a wonderful young woman even through these challenges. Therefore, for all the reasons above, I think Jane will made a wonderful addition to any college and I recommend her without reservation. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. I can be reached at [mentor@gmail.com](mailto:mentor@gmail.com).

Best Regards,  
Mentor