



On any given day in San Diego County, there are thousands of children who are unable to live at home due to abuse or neglect. Many of these children enter the foster care system and reside with a foster family or in a group home until the age of 18, when foster youth are presumed to be adults and are discharged from foster care.

Because of their difficult and traumatic life history, many former foster youth have special needs and require support and services to fill the gap of missing parental guidance. Life challenges may be insurmountable in the absence of adult mentoring, educational opportunities, financial support and caring role models. Only 3% of former foster youth will graduate from college, in a day and age when a college degree is often a key factor in achieving long-term success.

Academic achievement will aid former foster youth by increasing their career opportunities and economic stability, which are key components of stable housing and stress management. Promises2Kids believes all foster youth deserve access to higher education, and our Life Coaches play an important role in the success of our Guardian Scholars Program. **The Guardian Scholars Program** is a nationally-recognized program that provides financial assistance to former foster youth to help support their efforts to obtain a university, community college or vocational school education.

Guardian Scholars Life Coaches provide guidance and support to students as they adjust to college life, which can be enormously stressful, particularly for former foster youth. Guardian Scholars will experience many new challenges, including managing a course load, holding down steady employment, maintaining stable housing, financial aid, new relationships and new environments. While Promises2Kids and on-campus staff provide services and information on practical matters, Life Coaches play a key role in acting as a sounding board, a mentor, a friend and an adult guide. They provide the support, care, and compassion that would normally be provided by a parent to help their youth stay on track and stay in school. Life coaches support former foster youth by helping them develop goals and by giving them the guidance and direction they need to reach those goals.

Promises2Kids provides orientation and training for all Life Coaches. Everyone is not a coach and everyone is not appropriately suited to be a mentor, so Promises2Kids carefully screens each potential Life Coach to ensure that they have the appropriate skills to work with former foster youth in this important capacity.

Educational outcomes for foster youth have historically been very poor – former foster youth are less likely than their peers to enroll in college preparatory courses (15 percent v. 32 percent) even when they have similar test scores and grades; they are more likely to drop out of high school (37 percent v. 16 percent); of 300,000 former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 25 nationally; and **only three percent of foster youth who attend college will complete their degree.**

Why? Former foster youth face an array of challenges that go beyond simply where, or in how many places, they lived as minors. Not having had role models or positive guidance, they cope with a lack of adult life skills, poor mental health, low academic and social achievement levels, and cultural and informational barriers that prevent them from accessing resources or making informed financial choices. (Casey Family Programs, Institute for Higher Education Policy).

The presence of a committed, caring adult makes an enormous difference in their ability to conquer these challenges and excel not just in college, but in life.

There is a youth who could benefit from your experience, insight and wisdom.

LIFE COACH APPLICATION



In order to be considered as a possible Guardian Scholars Life Coach, please read and sign below to affirm you are willing to commit to the following:

- **Training** – attend an evening orientation (1hour) and weekend training (3 hours) to learn more about the program and the youth you will work with, after which you will be matched with a Guardian Scholar. Ongoing training opportunities will be offered twice a year.
- **Meet the Youth** – Promies2Kids will facilitate a meeting with the youth we have matched each Life Coach with, based on the information you provide and staff interactions with you during training.
- **Weekly Check-in** – Initiated by the Life Coach either by phone, text message, email, or in person, to determine the student’s status, state of mind, etc. The check-in is to be in person at least once a month.
- **Progress Reports** – To better serve the Guardian Scholars, Life Coaches will track multiple indicators in a monthly log. This information will be kept confidential but should also not be personal in nature so as to avoid violating the trust between Life Coach and student. It should allow us to make improvements to Guardian Scholars that will help our students succeed.
- **Quarterly Activity** – Four times a year all students and Life Coaches will be asked to participate in a group activity, which is intended as a social gathering but also will give both students and Life Coaches an opportunity to connect with peers and share experiences.

Please return this form to Promises2Kids, 9440 Ruffin Court, Suite 2, San Diego CA 92123. You may also fax to 858-278-4480 or email to stephanie@promises2kids.org, or call 858-427-1109 for more information.

Contact Information

Name			Date of Birth
First	Middle	Last	
Email	Daytime Phone	Evening Telephone	
Address			
Street		Apartment/Unit	
City	State	Zip	
Employer	Position		

Getting to Know You

What is one thing that you would like the Foundation to know about you?

Please describe why you are interested in volunteering for Promises2kids?

Please list any community groups or organizations that you belong to:

Background Information

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony? Yes No If Yes, Please explain and provide the date and type of offense:

Signed: _____ Date: _____