

Janelle Kohlberg

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June 5, 2023

Ms. Christina Santos
Director of College Retention and Success
Philadelphia Futures
230 South Broad Street, 7th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Ms. Santos:

I am writing to apply for the Assistant Director of College Retention position listed on the Philadelphia Futures website. As a recent graduate of Swarthmore College, I am eager to translate my passion for education into a meaningful contribution to the improvement of college graduation rates.

Beginning in my junior year, I served as President of Swarthmore College's Club Volleyball team. Serving as a mentor to my peers strengthened my ability to motivate students by building relationships in which they saw themselves as partners in pursuit of their personal growth and development. My younger players sought me out as a mentor because I understand the pressures that a college environment can exert on students from different backgrounds and how to navigate them. I worked with students from a broad spectrum of races, religions, sexual identities, and socioeconomic backgrounds because I used my strong presentation skills to recruit actively from the entire community and cultivate a welcoming environment. A thorough appreciation for the particular challenges that our first generation students faced was crucial in order to support them effectively. I accomplished this through direct guidance and by facilitating their access to campus resources such as deans and administrators with whom I maintained relationships.

The organizational, interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills which I developed through my liberal arts studies at Swarthmore are my strongest areas. Through extensive work with the campus' writing center and disability services office, I gained firsthand experience with different writing strategies and learning styles. I recently used my writing ability and familiarity with the admissions process to help a transfer student successfully apply to Occidental College by editing application essays and guiding him through the financial aid process. Because I am familiar with different learning styles, I am adept at evaluating how a student's individual strengths and needs will function in a college environment.

Philadelphia Futures' Sponsor-A-Scholarship and College Connection Programs resonate deeply with my personal values and opinions about the state of higher education. Because my family has little direct experience with higher education, I benefited from the support of various administrators and staff who acted as mentors. I am determined to have the same constructive impact on future students from similar low income backgrounds. I want to serve students in need as an Assistant Director of College Retention and Success with Philadelphia Futures because I firmly believe that every student is capable of rising to the formidable challenge of graduating when they are given proper support. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janelle Kohlberg '23
Swarthmore College