

## **SSOAR Program**

~Students Sharing Opportunities and Responsibilities~

Saratoga Hospital Volunteer Services Department

Started nearly twenty years ago, SSOAR is a unique summer youth program offered at Saratoga Hospital. Open to rising high school juniors and seniors, SSOAR provides the opportunity for students to achieve community service hours while volunteering in a healthcare setting.

Annual announcement and application instructions are on the Saratoga Hospital website, published in area newspapers, and emailed to surrounding high schools in early February. Interested students of at least 16 years of age may submit completed applications and will be contacted by email to set up an interview. Following a successful interview, potential SSOAR participants will complete a health assessment and attend a mandatory SSOAR Orientation held end of June. The Orientation includes the teaching of proper wheelchair usage, a Hospital tour, and an overview of Hospital policies and procedures. Students will receive their SSOAR assignments along with service guidelines, supervisor contact, badge, and vest.

Students will serve at least 48 hours, generally volunteering 2 four hour shifts for six weeks. SSOAR concludes at the end of August with evaluation forms sent to those who finish the program. Upon receipt of evaluation, student and their guidance counselor receive a Letter of Commendation. This letter verifies total hours, area served, and cites specific accomplishments.

SSOAR students may stay on to become regular volunteers or, if rising juniors, may be interested in serving the next summer. This program has proven to be valuable for area students, the Hospital, patients and staff, and for our greater Saratoga community.



ALBANY MED Health System

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