



## PAIR PROFILE

### REBECCA AND ANDIE

**Partner Site:** Civic Leadership Academy

**Name of Mentee:** Rebecca T.

**Name of Mentor:** Andrea (Andie) Houde

**Length of Match:** 1st year of a 3-year match

**Year Match Began:** 2010

**# of Emails Exchanged:** 30

**# of In-Person Meetings:** 6<sup>1</sup>, including a goal setting session, a college fair and an event addressing college preparation as a junior



**About Rebecca (mentee):** The daughter of Haitian and Cuban immigrants, Rebecca lives in Brooklyn and attends school at Civic Leadership Academy in Elmhurst, Queens. The youngest of three siblings, Rebecca is an intelligent and ambitious young woman. She is passionate about art and recently completed a program for young artists at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). For the program, Rebecca attended an afternoon class once a week at MoMA, exploring painting, sculpture and drawings centered on culinary themes. The class culminated with an exhibition at MoMA, which Rebecca's family and mentor Andie attended. Rebecca is a high-achieving student who loves writing and ballet. She dreams of one day going to college and finding a career that taps into both her academic ambition and her creative side.

**About Andie (mentor):** Originally from Cape Cod, Andie Houde attended a small regional high school, which she says “*was not very diverse.*” Upon graduating, Andie wanted to experience the excitement of living in New York City, and so she enrolled in Pace University, where she studied finance and economics. After graduating from college in 2009, Andie landed a job as a financial analyst at American Express. She enjoys taking advantage of all New York City has to offer, and loves exploring the city's diverse neighborhoods, visiting museums and attending plays and musicals. Andie loves staying busy and wanted to get involved with the community by volunteering. iMentor was appealing, because it provided a flexible outlet for connecting with high school students. “*iMentor's email format allowed us to get to know each other before meeting in person,*” says Andie, describing iMentor's program structure. “*The emails work well with my busy schedule and also provide constructive topics to talk about when we meet in person.*”

**About iMentor's College Transition Program:** At Civic Leadership Academy (CLA), where Rebecca goes to school, every student in the junior class is paired with a mentor. Mentors will provide support over the next three years as these students research potential colleges, complete their applications, decide where to attend and ultimately complete their freshman year. Mentors at CLA make the incredible commitment to support their mentees over three crucial years, providing guidance as these students face the difficult transition from high school into the college environment. The majority of students in the program are first-generation college students.

**Building a Bond:** When Rebecca found out that she would have a mentor, she did not know what to expect. “*I had never had a mentor before,*” she recalls. Regardless of how unfamiliar the mentoring experience seemed, Rebecca looked forward to meeting Andie and building a relationship. She says: “*I was excited to meet someone who had been in my shoes—who knows the stress of high school, overcame it, went to college and has a job she likes. It's a success story I can look up to.*” While Rebecca and Andie come from different backgrounds, they quickly realized that they have a lot in common. Both women have very ambitious goals for the future and are highly focused on achieving them. Andie was immediately impressed by Rebecca's maturity and poise. “*I feel lucky to be matched with Rebecca,*” says Andie. “*She's got a great head on her shoulders. She's striving to do the right thing in life and I admire her patience, perseverance and drive.*” Likewise, Rebecca admires Andie's accomplishments and views her mentor as a role model.

<sup>1</sup> Email and in-person event numbers reflect communication between October 1, 2010 and February 24, 2011. Over the next two and a half years, the pair will continue emailing and meeting in-person regularly.



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**Providing Support:** Since being matched in October 2010, Andie and Rebecca have been working together to help Rebecca define and pursue her goals for the future. In emails and at in-person meetings, Rebecca has discussed her interests and ambitions with Andie. Andie has responded by providing advice about the future. Rebecca has expressed an interest in becoming a dermatologist. While Andie is supportive of this goal, she has also encouraged Rebecca to also stay connected to her artistic side. *"Andie has helped me think of ways to incorporate art into my career,"* explains Rebecca. *"She encourages me to think about a career that I will enjoy, not just think about the money."*

Andie has also helped Rebecca learn about time management. Rebecca is an ambitious student who likes to be involved with a variety of activities. In addition to her art program, Rebecca takes college preparatory classes, studies dance, participates in school fundraisers and attends a college writing program. Balancing these multiple responsibilities has been a challenge. Andie is an overachiever herself and knows what it is like to juggle conflicting responsibilities. *"I relate to Rebecca's struggles,"* says Andie. *"I remember trying to do everything in high school. I have shared my experiences learning to manage time so that Rebecca doesn't get burned out."*

**Looking Towards the Future:** Andie and Rebecca look forward to building their relationship over the next two and a half years. Rebecca plans to rely on Andie for advice as she researches and applies to college. She wants to show Andie her applications and believes that her mentor will ultimately help her learn to adapt to the new college environment. In turn, Andie wants to help Rebecca define the kind of experience she wants to have in college and build a list of potential schools that will meet her needs. Andie also wants to visit schools with Rebecca and help with her applications. *"It's difficult to make the adjustment from living at home to being independent,"* says Andie. *"Rebecca wants to go out into the world, and I want her to know she can rely on me for advice."*

**iMentor's Role:** iMentor has played a crucial role in helping Rebecca and Andie build a strong relationship. The pair appreciates iMentor's flexible program format. *"I like the emails and events,"* says Rebecca. *"It's great to talk to my mentor both face-to-face and over the computer."* Andie believes that the event curricula have helped her become a stronger mentor. She points to the college fair, an event that took place in January 2011, as an example. At this event, mentors at CLA represented their colleges, simulating a college fair setting. Many mentors even brought literature from their colleges to share. Mentees had the opportunity to ask several mentors about their experiences, which provided valuable exposure to schools of a variety of sizes in urban and rural settings across the country. *"That event gave Rebecca an opportunity to ask questions she wouldn't have otherwise thought about,"* recalls Andie, explaining why the event was so valuable. *"It also broadened my perspective. I went to school in an urban environment, and the event provided exposure to schools I had no experience with. iMentor's curriculum opened up both of our eyes."*

Above all, Rebecca appreciates that iMentor has stretched her beyond her comfort zone, introducing her to a role model that she would never have otherwise met. She says *"iMentor is a really great program. It's great to speak to someone besides my parents and friends at school about the future. I hope that the program continues with the other grades at CLA. High school isn't easy, but iMentor provides the extra support it takes to make it easier."*

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