



## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

A SERVICE OF SARATOGA HOSPITAL

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### SSOAR Program

~Students Sharing Opportunities and Responsibilities~

Saratoga Hospital Volunteer Services Department

Started nearly twenty years ago, framed and refreshed by four successive Directors of Volunteer Services, and gaining popularity with each passing year, SSOAR is a unique summer youth program offered only at Saratoga Hospital. Available to rising high school juniors and seniors, SSOAR is an ideal opportunity for students to explore a healthcare setting and achieve at least 48 community service hours.

Annual announcement and application instructions are on the Saratoga Hospital website, published in area newspapers, and emailed to surrounding high schools in late January. Interested students of at least 16 years of age may submit completed applications and will be contacted by email to come in for an interview. Acceptance into SSOAR includes a health assessment and attendance at a mandatory SSOAR Orientation held the last Friday in June. The Orientation is presented by Hospital leaders including Education, Public Safety, and Compliance and includes the teaching of proper wheelchair usage and a Hospital tour. Students will receive their SSOAR assignments along with service guidelines, supervisor contact, badge, and vest.

Once through Orientation, SSOAR students are ready to begin service in the Hospital, one of its many campuses, or at one of two retail establishments run by the Saratoga Hospital Volunteer Guild: the Gift Shoppe and Treasures Consignment Boutique and Thrift Shop. Other areas of service include D3, ED, Regional Therapy, and Inpatient Information. Students generally serve two four hour shifts for six weeks during and much of their service area is determined upon availability and other summer commitments.

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.

