**Career Activity Curriculum Topic: Brag Sheets and References**

**Career Activity:** Brag Sheets and References

**Activity Summary:** This lesson will help students organize themselves to get the best possible letters of recommendation.

**Estimated Time:** 30 minutes (plus At Home Tasks)

**Learning Plan Activity:** 11th Grade **Additional Activities:** 12th Grade

**Learning Outcomes**:  Students will gain tools to help them prepared to approach professionals for letters of recommendation, that may increase chances of receiving awards, admittance to college, scholarships or obtaining a job.

**Materials Needed**:  PowerPoint, Handouts, Pen

**Academic Vocabulary:**

* **Letter of Recommendation:** A document written by a professional to help identify an individual’s talents, skills, and personality to obtain a scholarship, a job, internship, an honor, or admission to a college.
* **Reference:** A professional who is willing to provide information about their experience working with a candidate for a variety of things, such as a job, scholarship, or admission to college.

**Introduction**: *[Use PowerPoint]* Today we are going to talk about how to get the best letters of recommendation. You have two assignments you will be bringing back in (tell them when it is due). One of which is a brag form for your parents to fill out.

What might you use a letter of recommendation for? Job, College Application, Scholarship, Honors Application for College, Anything else?

**Learning Activities/Procedures:**

* ***Letter of Recommendation Brag Sheet:*** *Give each student a copy of the handout\_Letter of Recommendation Brag Sheet.* Collecting references from teachers that you’ve built relationships with is a great way to bolster your college or job application. To best help the letter writer help you stand out in writing a letter about you, provide as much information about yourself on this brag sheet.
* ***Parent/Relative Brag Sheet:*** *Give each student a copy of the handout\_Parent/Relative Bragging form. Be clear about a due date.* This next form, you will take home and have a parent/relative complete. This is another tool to use when asking other people to write a letter of recommendation for you.

**Class Discussion:** Use PowerPoint

**Questions:**

**Requesting Letters of Recommendation**

* **What might you use a letter of recommendation for?** Job, college application, scholarship, honors application for college, anything else?
* **Who to Ask?** Choose individuals who: know you well, are familiar with your accomplishments and are able to make positive statements about your ability, character and special talents**.**
* **Who should you ask for a letter of recommendation?** Counselor, teacher, employer, coach, administrator, volunteer work supervisor, club supervisor, and/or extra-curricular supervisor
* **Who should you not ask for a letter of recommendation?** Parents (relatives in general)

**Getting the Best Letters of Recommendation**

* **When to ask?** The more time the better. Two weeks is best, one week minimum. Do not wait until the deadline day. You will most likely be denied, it’s disrespectful and you will not get the letter you need to get what you want.
* **What to provide?** Resume, Recommendation Form, Parent Brag Form, Deadline, A description of what you are apply for to help the writer tailor the letter, and also a mailing address or email address to the organization if it needs to be sent directly
* **Provide as much information about your as you can on your letter of recommendation brag sheet:** List ALL your activities and leadership roles beginning in 9th grade (clubs and organizations, awards and honors, athletics and church and youth group activities), plans for leaving high school, college placement exam scores, work experience, community service and other fun facts about you.

**Adaptations:**

* Have students complete both the Letter of Recommendation Brag Sheet and Parent/Relative Brag Sheet as homework.
* Have students actually ask for and receive one or more completed letters of recommendation.

**Evaluation:** Students will be able to use their completed Letters of Recommendation Brag Sheet and Parent/Relative Brag sheet to ask for letters of recommendation.

**Closing**: After completing the assignments you will have those documents to use when you need to ask for letters of recommendation in the future. You will be able to make copies of the forms to provide to professionals writing you a letter to help you stand-out. Being organized will help you get a better letter. Put them in a file for easy access.

* Remember that providing two weeks to write a letter is a good ballpark amount of time. Do not wait until the deadline to ask for letters or you may be denied. Also feel free to include extra paper with any other information you would like to share.
* Remember the more information you provide the better letter you will be able to obtain. All students are standouts, but a letter writer can’t let that be known without you providing enough information! Get organized, get thorough in the information you provide, and you will get the prize you are shooting for!