

PBA SPOTLIGHT

Toby Rose helps students qualify for college

BY LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD

In 17 years, Toby Rose has helped thousands of students get into college. Rose is the owner of Toby Rose's College Prep, a Village-based company at 12683 S. Dixie Hwy., geared to demystifying the college entrance process and helping kids find the best way to get into the best schools. Not only that, she helps them apply for scholarships that will help pay for school.

"I recommend that kids start early," she says, adding that she initially meets with the parents and students and works up a plan from ninth to 12th grade. "We plan what they do in the summer. We make it so they are not in a pressure cooker. We plan ahead for what SAT courses they'll need. By the junior year, they are already doing essays and on-line applications."

They also take practice SAT tests to get them ready for the real deal. That test is graded by a teacher. From there, they evaluate what a student needs to do to get ready for the actual test.

Rose says the changes in the SAT make the test even harder than before. But it's not just the addition of the writing section.

"It's all hard because it's a five-hour test with two five-minute breaks," she says. "It's like a test of stamina. It's hard to sit there."

The counseling also includes participating in meaningful community-service projects.

"I am able to get them involved in things they would have never been able to get," she says.

One of Rose's requirements is that the children read, read, read.

"I want them to read an hour a night," she says. "Reading is everything."

Each student is given her personal phone number to use in case of emergencies.

"I'm very involved with these kids,"



Toby Rose

she says. "It isn't just getting money for a course."

In the past, students could coast somewhat in their senior year and still get into a good college. Today, that could keep them from getting into the top universities.

"In your senior year you do not let up," she says. "Most of my kids who are applying to Ivy League schools take five or six Advanced Placement classes."

Her advice to parents who want their kids to go to college?

"Make sure they take the most difficult courses that they can," she says, adding there is a caveat. "If you can't make an A or a B in the course, don't take honors or Advanced Placement classes."

Because she works with lots of students, Rose knows quite a lot about the multitude of colleges and universities that would be a good fit for her students. She says there is a school for everyone.

That said, she does have her favorite institutions of higher learning. Tops on her list is the University of Florida.

"It has everything a student could possibly want," she says. "The kids who graduate from there are basically assured of a job."

For information, call 305-238-7737.