

Health Careers Opportunity Program at SUNY Stony Brook Talking Points

- The Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) is a federally funded program located at Stony Brook University and affiliated with the School of Health Technology and Management in the Health Sciences Center. HCOP's goal is to provide a diverse and competitive applicant pool of under-represented individuals in grades 7 through 12, as well as adults, to pursue careers in the allied health professions. HCOP accomplishes this by offering programs for social, academic and career oriented students, parents and community members.
- We are the only HCOP aligned with allied health professions on Long Island, and one of two such programs state-wide.
- We have had over 2000 students, grades 7-12, who have attended HCOP-sponsored events, and we are currently tracking 131 students who have graduated from our six-week 2010 and 2011 Summer Academies.
- Over ninety-percent of the 61 students who graduated from our 2010 Summer Academy reported being enrolled in college. We believe that the high percentage of 2010 HCOP students currently enrolled in college is a strong indicator that many of these students will enroll in allied health professional programs.
- It is too early to tell whether these students have chosen an allied health profession, as the students enrolled in our first Summer Academy are now in the first year of college. Most allied health professional programs require that students applying to their programs must first complete their second year in college.
- In collaboration with our participating high school guidance departments, we are using the on-line Naviance program to follow our Summer Academy graduates college application process.
- Previous studies have shown that one of the main reasons minority groups are underrepresented in college admissions is that these students are not acquiring college-ready skills in their previous education.
- This program provides high school students with an interest in the fields the science and math, and the English skills needed to attend the many 2- and 4-year programs offered on Long Island. We are also partnered with Suffolk County Community College to promote the Joint-Admissions agreement which guarantees acceptance to a four-year SUNY college.
- In 2009, students at Wyandanch, William Floyd, Brentwood and Amityville High Schools ranked among the lowest on Long Island in terms of math, science and English comprehension regents examinations, SATs, and graduation rates. These schools have the lowest SAT scores in Suffolk County.

- We currently have 210 students in 11th and 12th grade enrolled in Method Test Prep. (MTP), an on-line SAT Preparation course supported by in-school tutoring. During the 2011 Summer Academy, student-participants' SAT math and reading comprehension skills both increased 48 percent from pre-test to post-test results.
- There is a growing demand for Allied Health Professionals on Long Island. The New York State Department of Labor has identified the following Allied Health fields as the fastest growing on Long Island:
 - Physical Therapy 29.6% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-14.
 - Occupational Therapy..... 21.3% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-14.
 - Physician Assistant 24.3% growth projected statewide, 2004-14.
 - Clinical Lab Sciences..... 10.7% growth projected for Long Island, 2002-12
 - Athletic Training..... 20% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - Respiratory Therapy..... 16.4% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - Registered Dietician..... 7.1% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - EMT/Paramedic..... 16.7% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - Anesthesia Technology... 18.8 growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - Radiologic Technology... 23.6% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
 - Nuclear Medicine Tech... 13% growth projected statewide, 2004-2014.
 - Medical Dosimetry 14.3% growth projected for Long Island, 2004-2014.
- HCOP participants will be given opportunities to learn about allied health professional careers which are highly needed in the medically underserved communities on Long Island in the communities of North Bellport, Hempstead Village, Roosevelt, Long Beach and Inwood. All of these communities are within 40 minutes from Stony Brook and a reasonable commute for residents of Wyandanch, Brentwood, North Bay Shore, Amityville, North Amityville, Shirley, Mastic and Mastic Beach working in Allied Health.
- We do not challenge the rationale that which has been proposed for the elimination of HCOP funding, cited by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, which is that the wait lists for the training programs to enter the allied health professions are full. The facts are that students currently enrolled in allied health professional programs, as reported by School of Health Technology and Management (SHTM), do not reflect the demographics of the diverse students served by HCOP from the high-needs communities of Amityville, Brentwood, William Floyd and Wyandanch.
- According to the NYS Department of Labor the diversity of the current healthcare workforce in Suffolk County does not accurately reflect the demographics of the area it serves. The U.S. Census estimate for 2006 places the white population at 73.9% of the population, and non-white is 26.1%. Minority representation in various allied health occupations is 13% for dietitians, 22% for physician assistants, 19% for occupational therapists, 10% for physical therapists, 20% for respiratory technologists, 15% for diagnostic support technicians, and 10% for miscellaneous health technicians.

- Cutting funding to HCOP will only reverse the progress that has been made in these communities. There is a clear demand for more employees in allied health, and an underrepresentation of minorities entering into allied health professions – we strongly urge Congress to maintain funding for this critical program.



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