

**School of Health Technology and Management – HCOP
SUNY – Stony Brook
Summary of SUNY Stony Brook - HCOP Action Activities**

Update on our response to the proposed legislation to eliminate federal funding for HCOP through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA).

On Wednesday, September 21st, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed its Labor-Health and Human Services, and Education (L-HHS) FY 2012 bill. This appropriations bill funds the federal government programs related to health care, including the Title VII health professions training programs. In this bill, funding for the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) was eliminated. The Committee's rationale for eliminating H-COP was that the wait lists for health professions training programs were full. However, the reality is that minorities (African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans) and underserved individuals are extremely under-represented in the health professions.

On Thursday, September 29th, the House Appropriations Committee released its draft L-HHS FY 2012 bill. This draft bill would propose a drastic 50% cut in the Minority Centers of Excellence (COE) program and elimination of H-COP.

On Tuesday, October 11th, we received the aforementioned information from the National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions (NCDHP) sent to us from Mr. Lodriguez Murray – an advocate from the Health and Medicine Counsel of Washington.

On November 1st, we received an action alert from the National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions (NCDHP) sent to us from Mr. Lodriguez Murray. This action alert specified that we call should our House of Representatives members to ask them to sign on to the letter, authored by U.S. Representative Jesse Jackson Jr., to the Senate Labor-Health and Human Services (L-HHS) Subcommittee chairman, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin. This letter additionally advised us to call our U.S. Senators to request level funding for HCOPs (22 million dollars) and COEs (24 million dollars).

On November 7th, we learned from Monica Mahaffey, Stony Brook University Assistant Director of Governmental Affairs, that New York City HCOPs and COEs have successfully lobbied both U.S. Representatives Gary Ackerman and Yvette Clarke and have obtained their support. Our concern is that Long Island may be left behind if funding is only partially restored, as it previously was resolved in 2006.

We have responded to the NCDHP action alert by contacting our local federal representatives: U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand, U.S. Representative Steve Israel, U.S. Representative Tim Bishop, U.S. Representative, U.S. Representative Gary

Ackerman, U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy, and U.S. Representative Yvette Clarke. We have notified these representatives of our position and have provided them with the 83 letters of support we have received, and the over 1500 signatures on our petitions from faculty, students, and community partners in our participating school districts: Amityville, Brentwood, William Floyd and Wyandanch, and from faculty and students from Stony Brook University: School of Health Technology and Management, School of Dentistry, and Admissions.

On November 17th, we established a political action letter mechanism on the website of the United University Professions to request the more than 34,000 academic and professional faculty of SUNY to submit an online petition at www.uupinfo.org.

In speaking with U.S. Representative Tim Bishop, on November 18th, we have been advised to contact both U.S. Representative Peter King and U.S. Representative Tom Reed to notify them of the importance in maintaining full funding for all HCOPs and COEs. We have attempted to schedule a meeting at Congressman King's office although have not received a response.

On November 22nd, we met with staff members from the local offices of U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. We have been made aware that our Senators are supportive of the Title VII health professions programs, including HCOP, which provide education and career awareness to under-represented communities. We also have learned that the Senate Appropriations Committee has passed a bill to sustain funding for the Title VII health care programs, however the House Appropriations Committee has made no such progress.

On November 28th, we met with staff members from U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy's office and learned similarly of her support for programs to increase career opportunities for under-represented students especially in the health care. In turn, we gladly accepted an offer to attend Congresswoman McCarthy's Health Care Career Fair on December 10th.

During our conversations, we have emphasized our talking points which highlight several of the following strengths of our program:

- We are the only HCOP on Long Island which promotes the allied health professions and only one of two allied health-centered programs statewide. We have provided activities to over 2000 students, grades 7-12.
- We are currently tracking 131 students who have graduated from our six-week Summer Academy.
- We are proud that 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 are a strong indicator that many of these students will enroll in allied health professional programs.
- 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.

On November 30th, we spoke with Mr. Lodriguez Murray from the Health and Medicine Counsel of Washington and shared with him our progress and our talking points. He expressed the importance of keeping our federal legislators informed, and was eager to address these legislators in Washington with our talking points.

On December 1st, we received a email from U.S. Representative Steve Israel confirming his support of our program and informing us that the House of Representatives has not made any progress concerning funding for the Title VII health care programs. We learned from Congressman Israel that this past February President Obama had released his fiscal year 2012 budget request to Congress, in which he requested \$22.1 million for the Health Careers Opportunity Program – this being \$47,000 more than what was funded in fiscal year 2010. Congressman Israel wrote that “at this time, the House Appropriations Committee has not sent to the full House for consideration its fiscal year 2012 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies funding legislation. As fiscal year 2012 funding bills make their way through Congress, please be assured that I will continue to monitor and support programs that help future health care workers on Long Island.”

On December 10th, we attended Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy’s Health Care Career Fair at Hofstra University. In speaking with Congresswoman McCarthy, she expressed her appreciation for our attendance and her support of healthcare and education opportunities as she has a health care career background in nursing. We are looking forward to accepting an offer to attend Congresswoman McCarthy’s spring 2012 Health Care Career Fair.

On December 13th, we spoke to Ms. Anika Daniels-Osaze, Assistant Director of Minority Affairs at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, and began a collaborative effort to campaign for sustained funding of both SUNY Downstate and SUNY Stony Brook HCOPs using the UUP’s political action letter mechanism.

On December 16th, we received word from the New York State United Teachers Union (NYSUT) that they will create a link on their website to post the UUP’s political action letter mechanism requesting sustained funding for HCOPs. NYSUT’s website reaches more than 600,000 people who work in, or are retired from, New York's schools, colleges, and healthcare facilities.

Between September 2011 and December 2011, we have continued to provide college readiness, SAT Preparation, and allied health professions awareness activities – meeting with over 900 students. These activities have included over 50 high school presentations, and two Stony Brook University Admissions Information Sessions and Campus Tours. These tours gave 70 students the opportunity to tour Stony Brook University East Campus and HSC while then receiving presentations about admissions, financial aid, School of Health Technology and Management, School of Medicine, and School of Nursing. We are looking forward to implementing our 2012 activities and recruiting our next 75 student-participants for our Summer Academy.

We have sent thank you letters to U.S. Senator Gillibrand, U.S. Senator Schumer, U.S. Representative Tim Bishop, U.S. Representative Steve Israel, U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy, U.S. Representative Gary Ackerman and U.S. Representative Yvette Clarke for their support. We continue to provide these Senators and House Representatives with additional letters of support and signed petitions in our efforts to maintain their awareness of the necessity of our program.