

HIGH-STEP

Take the High-STEP: Preparing for an Exciting & Promising Career in Health Science!

Health care is a booming business in our area and across the world. Some may even call the boom a “crisis” in terms of the future of healthcare. A severe shortage is predicted for the next 30 years in many medical careers. The generation of “baby boomers” is approaching retirement and needing more services as they age, so it stands to reason the need for qualified workers in this area and across the world is becoming apparent.

South Central Service Cooperative and the Greater Mankato Area are taking a proactive step to this problem through an innovative partnership between schools and businesses. High-STEP (Health Science Technology and Education Partnership) was formed to encourage high school



students to explore Health Science and Health Careers as an option for their future. The mission of High-STEP is to develop a dynamic regional partnership between K-12, post-secondary institutions, and local business and industry that will provide secondary students with Health Science coursework and work-based learning experiences. This will excite and prepare them for Health Science career opportunities in Minnesota.


The partnership includes large and small area healthcare businesses, high schools and post-secondary institutions. They promote courses and programs such as: Introduction to Health Occupations courses, Certified Nursing Assistant Programs, Healthcare Internships, and a Career and Technical student organization (HOSA). High-STEP encourages students to take higher

level science and math as these will also further them in their work and post-secondary futures.

Both student and community benefit from such a unique program. Students get the opportunity to explore careers in Health Science first hand through job shadows, field trips, community speakers, and career fairs. They learn core skills needed for all levels of medical careers while gaining leadership and networking skills with current and emerging Health Science professionals.

Communities will find more students becoming excited about health occupations and be able to retain quality, trained employees.

Healthcare facilities in Greater Mankato have taken students on as interns through the schools and have hosted several career days and expos.

For further information, contact Kim Mueller, (507) 382-6541 or Glenn Morris, (507) 389-5106, or visit the High-STEP web site at <http://mnspsc.org>. 

Bio-Medical Health Science Curriculum in Minnesota

The National Consortium on Health Science and Technology Education (NCHSTE) is a national partnership of individuals and organizations with a vested interest in health science and technology education. Organized in 1991, its purpose is to stimulate creative and innovative leadership to ensure a well-prepared healthcare workforce.

We know that the demographics for the Region Nine area and Southern Minnesota are changing. With the aging of the baby boomers, industries will be in competition for highly qualified

workers. The healthcare industry is no different in that need. The healthcare workforce is aging and according to the Department of Employment and Economic Development there will be a major healthcare workforce shortage by 2008-2012.

Nationally, healthcare is the fastest growing industry when counting individual positions. Healthcare Occupations are roughly two-thirds professional and technical positions. According to Valerie DeFor, Director of the Healthcare Education Industry

Partnership (HEIP), “Minnesota’s healthcare community is on a demographically induced collision course defined by an increase in retirees and fewer workers coupled with a growing demand for healthcare services”. The Healthcare Education Industry Partnership is a project of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities founded in 1998 to identify and address critical healthcare workforce shortages.

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BIO-MEDICAL*(continued from page 7)*

NCHSTE is creating a series of 39 integrated bio-medical health science units that will be delivered in academic subjects offered in a high school curriculum. In addition, the equivalent of four career and technical education health science courses are being developed using the National Healthcare Foundation Standards as the framework for the content.

The design of the Program of Study requires academic and career and technical educators to work together on the planning and delivery of the integrated units. This interdisciplinary approach provides teachers with the resources to provide their students with relevant and rigorous content.

Professional Development will be available for all teachers implementing the integrated units and the health science sequence of four courses. The Department of Education and the Healthcare Education Industry Partnership will be working with the National Consortium on Health Science and Technology education on implementation in Minnesota. This curriculum will be free to school districts in Minnesota because Minnesota is a member of NCHSTE. Rochester Public Schools is currently developing two of the integrated units as a pilot site. For more information on this curriculum and partnerships in this region, contact Glenn Morris (507) 389-5106 or Sonya McNamara, HEIP, (507) 389-3262. ☺

HIGH-STEP (continued)*Direct Experience: Certified Nursing Assistant*

Students throughout south central Minnesota who have an interest in healthcare are being offered an incredible opportunity to take a unique stepping stone in the world of work through a course entitled 'Certified Nursing Assistant' (CNA). The demand for Certified Nursing Assistants in this region is incredibly high. By implementing a new CNA program we can assure local nursing homes, assisted living facilities and home health care agencies future employees and skilled workers, as well as preparing students for future careers in direct patient care. Future opportunities in direct patient care could be nursing, doctors of medicine, physical/occupational therapy, and many more. In Minnesota, LPN and RN programs require the CNA course as a prerequisite to enter into their programs. It is a wonderful "stepping stone" into any direct patient care profession as well as filling an enormous void in our workforce.

The CNA program will allow students from the region to take this course and do clinicals at health care facilities in their own community. CNA's can work in long term care facilities (local clinical sites), hospitals and home health care agencies among other areas. Research has shown that people who get experience (even entry-level) in their community healthcare facility, like a nursing home, are more likely to come back after college and work in their community.

The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program provides classroom and clinical training for students interested in pursuing direct patient care. Students are also prepared for the state exam and are then eligible to obtain full-time work within the



health care industry. The course includes orientation, basic skills assessment tests, classroom training and hands-on clinical training. Upon completion of all class hours, students will be eligible to take the state exam offered at South Central College and upon passing, will be recognized by the state of Minnesota in its registry of Certified Nursing Assistants.

Local nursing homes are eager to support such a program in the schools as the demand in their facilities is so high. South Central College offers a CNA program, but the program is consistently filled, difficult to get into and is not currently filling the need for skilled workers in our area. The new CNA program would run cooperatively with SCC as they have offered concurrent enrollment and to be a testing site for regional high school students. This is an opportunity to get students into a work-based learning environment that will gain them certification in a field that continues to be in high demand and provides students a valuable "stepping stone" to future post-secondary educational opportunities in direct patient care.



HIGH-STEP (continued)*HOSA—A Health Science & Technology Student Organization*

In Fall of 2006, students in the Greater Mankato Area were invited to take part in a unique Health Science student organization. Students from the SCSC High-STEP program (Health Science Technology Education Partnership), including Lake Crystal-Wellcome-Memorial, Mankato East, Mankato West and Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton high schools, joined the HOSA family.

HOSA is a national student organization endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education and the Health Science Technology Education Division of ACTE. HOSA's two-fold mission is to promote career opportunities in the health care industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. HOSA's goal is to encourage all health occupations instructors and students to join and be actively involved in the HSTE-HOSA Partnership.

Their national theme for 2006-07 is: "HOSA: Healing with Our Hands, Helping with Our Hearts"

HOSA provides a unique program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for secondary, postsecondary, adult, and collegiate students enrolled in HSTE programs. HOSA is 100% health care!

The Greater Mankato Area HOSA chapter has done many exciting things since it started just a few months ago. One of the first projects the students initiated was decorating a local long term care facility for the New Year. HOSA students also spent an evening decorating the windows of Taco John's restaurant in North Mankato for Valentine's Day.

Currently, students are working on a campaign to bring awareness and funding



for Autism research. "Autism Speaks" has been adopted for 2006–2008 as HOSA's National Service Project—watch for the blue puzzle piece campaign in area businesses in April.

HOSA students can compete against other chapters at Regional, State and National Conferences. Examples of the over 50 competitive events are: Medical Terminology, Medical Photography, Health Career Display, CPR/First Aid, Biomedical Debate, and Creative Problem Solving.

Minnesota's State Leadership Conference will be held April 17–19, 2007 in St. Cloud. Students who are successful at the competition will be able to go on to the National Conference in Orlando, Florida in June. The students from the Greater Mankato HOSA chapter are planning to compete at the state conference.

For more information about HOSA visit: www.hosa.org or contact: State HOSA Advisor: Candy Rice Leopold - cmleopold@minnesotahosa.org, 952.995.1510 or Greater Mankato Area HOSA Advisor: Wendy C. Foley, wfoley@rice.willmar.mn.us, 320.231.4376.

