

MAKING THE Connection

TO
Career Technical Education

Thursday, January 25, 2024

CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS

Preparation to meet Michigan's healthcare demands starts here

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When it comes to high-wage, high-demand careers, healthcare is currently at the top of the state rank list regularly issued by the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education, and Chippewa Valley Schools (CVS) has a long and proud history of providing entrance into the medical field for its students enrolled in what is known as the Medical Academy.

This integrated, cross-curricular program blends a state-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) healthcare curriculum along with an English curriculum that is designed to prepare future healthcare professionals.

The two-year sequence of courses, starting in the 11th grade, consists of Medical Careers, Anatomy of Health and Disease, Medical English, and during the student's senior year, a hands-on patient care experience at either Henry Ford Macomb Hospital or McLaren Macomb Hospital. Utilizing the flexibility of the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC), Medical Academy English teachers correlate lessons with Medical Academy Health teachers that meet all the college prep English 11 and English 12 standards using materials that focus on issues, ethics, and practices in healthcare.

Completers of this two-year program also earn 1.5 elective science credits toward graduation because of the related Anatomy lessons therein.

The capstone experience of the Medical Academy happens in the senior year, where advanced students combine classroom learning with work experience at one of our two partner hospitals.

This work-based learning experience, meeting six to eight hours per week at the hospital is essentially an internship where students rotate through several departments within the 7 months that they attend.

Working alongside healthcare professionals, students come away from this intensive, hands-on learning having taken part in a host of routine hospital functions ranging from obtaining vital signs and blood glucose levels, to drawing blood and assisting patients with their needs. Students are also able to observe advanced procedures such as cardiac catheterizations, c-sections, live births, IV therapy, trauma care, pharmacy procedures, and chemotherapy sessions, to name a few. Beyond the obvious skills learned, working in this environment allows students to sharpen their communication and employability skills while

they work with hospital staff.

Julia Boscaglia, Henry Ford Macomb Hospital Volunteer Coordinator, who will be representing Henry Ford Health (HFH) this year as the Outstanding Business Partner of the Year for CVS shared that "dozens of Dakota graduates are currently employed in various positions throughout the [HFH] system in Michigan. When Dakota students apply for positions, there is almost no hesitation to hire because of the experience that these graduates come to us with...they know our system."

Year after year, graduates of this program who are continuing their education in the field of healthcare find themselves far more prepared than their peers and regularly share this with their former Medical Academy teachers.

The preparation they get while in the classroom, while academically demanding, sets them on this course of excellence. 2023 Dakota High School graduate Yousif Basheer recently shared with his former Medical English 12 (ME12) teacher, Kristina Sobota, his current college academic writing class is "an easier version of ME12."

He was thankful to have already learned APA format for an upcoming research paper because of the experience in her class. "You were totally right every time you said: this is exactly what your college professor is going to ask you to do," said Basheer.

Correspondence from former students and comments like these are not uncommon for both English and Health teachers in the academy, evidence that this program works well to prepare students.

Many program graduates go on to some sort of post-secondary training in healthcare and roughly 10-15% of their students are directly admitted to Health Education programs at Oakland University, Wayne State University, Michigan State University, and University of Detroit Mercy annually.

Former student Paige Woodman, who just graduated nursing school, will begin her nursing career as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Children's Hospital.

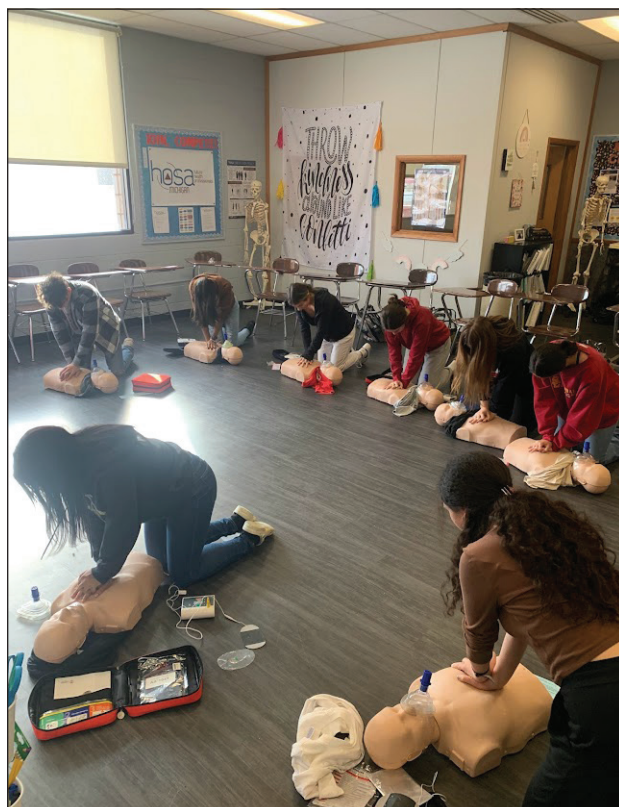
She recently shared with her former instructors that "the Medical Academy as a whole was definitely a big factor" in her pursuit of nursing as a career.

And Samantha Folley, a Patient Care Technician at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital, recently accepted a position as a NICU RN at Henry Ford Main in Detroit. Samantha shared that after reading the book *Holding Silvan* written by Monica Wesolowska



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS

Healthcare program students take a minute to pose for a group photo.



Students practicing CPR on mannequin.



Students wearing gowns, gloves and face shields commonly referred to as personal protection equipment in the healthcare field.

while in the Medical Academy, she dreamt "of working with neonates" and that reading the book was the reason why she entered a nursing program after high school. "It was my motivation to push forward through every obstacle, including working at a hospital during a pandemic," shared Folley. Success stories like these are but a small sample of what the Medical Academy and its collaborative education model, one that combines health industry training with related readings that satisfy MMC English language graduation requirements, can boast of after twenty-five years in existence.

The goal of all CTE programs is to provide students with learning opportunities that are directly connected to their future

success.

The Medical Academy program in Chippewa Valley Schools, in partnership with Henry Ford Macomb Hospital and McLaren Macomb Hospital, provides direct access to careers in healthcare for students while also meeting the needs of the medical community.

By combining a hands-on learning environment taught by instructors whose resumes are filled with industry experience, and with support from industry advisory panels that help instructors tailor curriculum and guide lesson planning, students are provided with real world learning in a real-world work environment. What better way to get a jump on this high-wage, high-demand career pathway!



The program emphasizes health care skills. This student is monitoring vital signs and entering them in the patient's file.

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