

Tuskegee Area Health Education Center
Health College Connection Program

Yvonne E. Allen, MPA, HCCP Program Coordinator
Dr. Cheryl G. Davis, Interim Executive Director

Health College Connections was developed to introduce high school students to careers in the healthcare industry. The program is usually conducted in a tactile environment where students can immerse themselves into the overall experiences of health care professionals. The global pandemic forced the logistical shifting of the program to totally virtual for the 2020 and 2021 delivery.

As in 2020, participants for the program were recruited in three Black Belt counties, Lowndes, Bullock and Macon. Recruitment was conducted through digital flyers and applications sent to Boards of Education, Guidance Counselors, Principals and Non-Profit Organizations. Through these efforts the program received nine times the number of applicants with 27 total applicants. Seven times the number of participants were selected this year for a total of 14 students. The selected students met and completed all the selection criteria listed in the recruitment tools. (GPA of 2.5, FT/HS student, Outstanding disciplinary record, Transcripts or final grade report, Completed application and Two letters of reference).

Breakdown of Participants:

- 13 represented Black Belt Counties (4 Lowndes County, 1 Wilcox County, 1 Marengo County, 1 Bullock County, 5 Montgomery County, 1 Harris County, Georgia, and 1 represented a non-black belt county Monroe County, MS.
- 100% female
- Ethnicity: Black (12), Hispanic (1), Other (1)
- Career Interest: Air Force/Pediatric Dentist, Nurse Practitioner, Pediatrics, Neurosurgeon/Anesthesiologist, Neonatal Nurse, Physical Therapy, Health Information Management/ Occupational Therapy, Pharmacology, Medical Assisting, General Medicine, Graphic Designer/Computer Engineer which later changed to recreational therapy.
- 85.7% of the participants completed all 10 days

The increased program participation can be contributed to several factors such as, but not limited to, parents seeking opportunities for supplemental summer engagement due to students being at home throughout the year, wider recruitment window and increased community visibility.

There were no connectivity issues throughout the program that prevented continuous virtual engagement. Classes met daily July 12-26th 2021 from 4p-6p on through Google Meet video conferencing and engaged with content through Google Classroom. Study.com is a virtual learning platform that provides engaging and efficient ways to help students acquire information and provides quizzes, courses and immediate feedback that was utilized to deliver research-based content. The program was facilitated by Yvonne Allen and Dr. Cheryl Davis with the intent of meeting four (4) specific objectives:

1. Students will explore career opportunities in the healthcare industry
2. Students will prepare for college course of study in healthcare careers
3. Students will develop personal and professional goals and skills.
4. Students will acquire skills for health career preparation

Day 1: “Prepared People are Propelled into Their Purpose!”

Students were introduced to each other and the facilitators of the program. A brief overview of the program and expectations were provided. Students were advised of their stipend and CPR certification given the opportunity to express comments and/or concerns. A pretest was administered to participants to assess students’ knowledge of the anticipated content to be delivered. Students were given the time to introduce themselves and answer the ice breaker question. Icebreaker questions were designed to give participants the opportunity to think passionately about their visions and the world. The icebreaker questions were delivered Days 1-5.

Icebreaker question 1. “Would you rather have telekinesis (the ability to move things with your mind) or telepathy (the ability to read minds)? WHY?”

There was a great mixture of answers with the majority choosing telekinesis. One of the most notable answers was, “I would probably go crazy knowing peoples’ thoughts ALL of the time!”

Day One content began with the concepts and definitions of Health and Wellness. Students were delivered virtual lessons through the Study.com platform titled, “Health and Wellness Definitions and Dimensions and a timed game was played on the platform upon completion to reinforce the lessons.

Day 2: “Does the walker choose the path, or path the walker?”

Icebreaker question 2. Do you think the world will be a better or worse place 100 years from now? Why?

Students were so thoughtful in their responses. Answers ranged from, “Based on the technological and scientific breakthroughs that we are making I think the world will be a better place,” to “We do not respect each other or our planet so I think the world will be much worse.”

Healthcare and Healthcare Systems were defined, and discussions ensued about the dynamics of health care and the health care system. A health care system organizational chart was reviewed with students to demonstrate the complexities and varied scopes in health careers, importance of Health Care Teams and the roles they play in their communities and hospitals. Students identified roles and careers in both the Community and Hospital Team. Students completed the Study.com lesson, “Health Services-Definitions/Types/Providers,” upon completion the game was played among all participants. Information was shared with students on the top reasons that careers in healthcare are a good choice (Job Stability/Outlook, Diversity, Financial Security, Options,), followed by a Career One Stop Video titled, “Health Care Overview, Careers in Health. “

Day 3: “The nation’s morals are like its teeth, the more decayed they are the more it hurts to touch them”

Icebreaker question 3. Would you accept \$3,000,000 to leave the country and never step foot in it again?

Most students would not take the money to leave the country as they noted loyalty to their family and country as the main reason. Others stated that they would leave to experience different cultures and avoid the burdens and social injustices of America, noting that their families could visit them and learn something new as well.

The Levels of Health Care were introduced to students as, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary to home in on the concept that there are so many varied aspects of the health care system and how they are all interrelated. Students were introduced to the concept of Direct Patient Care vs. Indirect Patient Care. Students compared the two different types of occupations and the skills required to provide these levels of care and were provided opportunities to identify professions that align with each. Students were introduced to the five (5) healthcare pathways, therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services and biotechnology research and development. Examples of each trek were provided. Allied Health Professions were introduced to provide an overview of the third largest and most diverse professionals in the healthcare industry. Students completed the Study.com Lesson and Quiz, “Allied Health Professions: Definition & Examples, to better understand what this category of professionals encompass and receive examples of careers in this setting. Public Health was defined and introduced as; a health care pathway that can help improve the health of the entire community. Students completed the lesson and quiz on Study.com to understand how public health allows one to help large numbers of people become healthier through policies and practices opposed to helping one.

Day 4: “Find out what you like doing best and get someone to pay you for doing it”

Icebreaker question 4. When you were six years old what did you want to be when you grew up?

Several students have had their same career choice since they were six. Most notable responses was, “Every since I visited my aunts office as an Occupational Therapist and saw how she helps people, that is all I ever wanted to do.” “I learned about Ben Carson and I wanted to be a neurosurgeon.”

Students watched the movie by Montgomery College, “Health Science Careers” that brilliantly depicts that life of an individual going through each facet of the healthcare system and interacting with the healthcare team. Students were then administered and completed the O*NET career interest profiler through, Mynextmove.org to find out what their interests are and how they can relate to the world of healthcare and decide what type of careers they might want to explore. Upon completion of the profiler, the students shared their results with group and 100 percent of participants were able to successfully align each of their interests with a healthcare pathway. The student that wants to be a Graphic Designer was ecstatic to learn that Art and

Music Therapy was a health care profession that aligned with her interests and never realized that she could use her interests to be such a benefit to others. Students were informed of the requirements for their final projects.

Please include the following about your chosen career:

- Definition of Occupation
- Scope of Work
- Average Salary of that Occupation
- Job Outlook

Answer the following Questions:

- What role does this occupation play in the Health Care Team?
- Is this occupation a part of the Community Health Team or the Hospital Team?
- Is this an Allied Health Profession?
- Which Level of Health Professional is this career aligned with? (Direct or Indirect Patient Care)
- What category of Health Care Pathways does this career align? (Therapeutic, Diagnostic, Health Informatics, Support Services, Biotechnology Research and Development?)
- What certification is needed to be able to obtain this job?
- What are examples of required classes to obtain the certifications or requirements needed to secure this job?
- Where do you go to obtain the requirements?
- What are your plans with the career choice? Do you intend to stay in this role indefinitely or eventually pursue other roles? If you intend to transition, describe how that transition looks.
- How do your interests align with the chosen career path?
- What skills are required for you to be successful in this career?

Day 5: “The future depends on what you do today”

Icebreaker question 5. If you started an activist group, what would it fight for and what would it be called?

I have great hope for our future with the it being in the hands of this brilliant, thoughtful and capable group of young people. The students wanted activism groups for social justice, health

insurance/prescription cost and equitable healthcare, human trafficking, environmental sustainability, and immigration.

Career Paths were discussed based on their interest profiles. Students were further introduced to other professions that align with their interests and salaries, educational requirements, job outlook, and various levels of those fields were explored. The careers that were discussed:

Epidemiologist, Mental Health Careers, Biomedical Engineering, Physical Therapy, Respiratory Therapy, Radiation Therapist, Nursing (LPN, RN, MSN, ARNP), Physician Assistant, Speech-Language Pathology, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Clinical Laboratory Technician, Dentistry. Several entry level health care jobs were presented to help students understand that there are various treks to becoming a health care worker, many of which require large amounts of schooling and resources and others that do not.

Day 5 concluded the content delivery and ice breaker portion of the program. Students had an opportunity to ask any questions that they had about their final projects and review Study.com lessons through the interactive game for each lesson that we played together.

Day 6

Day six was devoted to guest speakers that had been procured to provide students with an in-depth personal view of various career treks and give students the opportunity to ask questions and engage with real health care professionals. The presenters are below:

- Jannette Lewis Clark, OTR/L, OTD, CLT, Department Head of Allied Health; Interim Program Director, Occupational Therapy, Tuskegee University. Dr. Clark was accompanied by a fifth year OT student Shakyra, a resident of the Macon County. Dr. Clark spoke to students about Allied Health Sciences and the entry process and outlook for OT programs. Shakyra spoke to the students from a professional student's perspective to help prepare them for what they would face in college.
- Dr. Russell Johnson, DVM. Dr. Johnson spoke to participants on the parallel between animal and human health. Dr. Johnson was successful at making his presentation personal and advised students to be true to themselves about the type of school that works for them and assured them that it is okay to change your mind.

- TAHEC Interim Director, Dr. Cheryl Davis presented an overview of Clinical Lab Sciences and the varied paths one could pursue.

Day 7

TAHEC employee Michael Henderson, MPA, delivered the American Heart Association CPR training to the students. Two students were excused for the class, as they already have the training.

Day 8

Day eight was a continuation of guest speakers. Ms. Simaya Moore, Clinical Licensed Social Worker and Health College Connection Alum, spoke with students about her path to becoming a Social Worker and discussed the importance of the community health care team and the wide scope of Social Work. Choona Lang, RN, BSN, MHA, DHEd, Homecare Division Director of Home and Community Services, Alabama Department of Public Health spoke with students about Nursing as a career and Public Health. Dr. Chastity Bradford, Tuskegee University Department of Biology Chair, spoke with students about the interconnectivity of research and practice. She stressed the importance of biology as a course.

Day 9

Student presentations on health careers.

Day 10

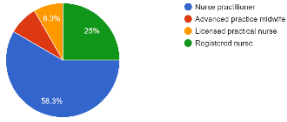
Student presentations

EVALUATION

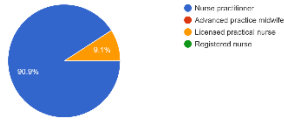
1. Students will explore career opportunities in the healthcare industry.

- One hundred percent of students were able to name 20 health care careers on the post-test which is an increase from fifty percent on the pretest.
- The students' knowledge of nursing roles increased

What type of nurse is someone who can prescribe medication and practices family medicine, adult care, pediatric care, or geriatric care
12 responses

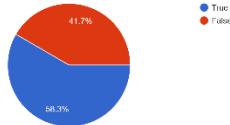


What type of nurse is someone who can prescribe medication and practices family medicine, adult care, pediatric care, or geriatric care
11 responses

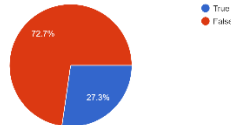


- Students understood that healthcare professionals work in various settings:

T/F: Most healthcare professionals work in the hospital
12 responses

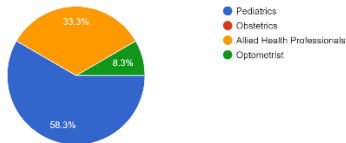


T/F: Most healthcare professionals work in the hospital
11 responses

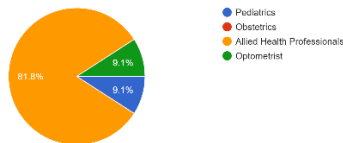


- There was an increase in knowledge about health care professionals:

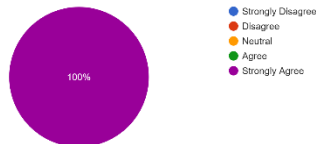
The third largest and most diverse group of healthcare professionals are
12 responses



The third largest and most diverse group of healthcare professionals are
11 responses



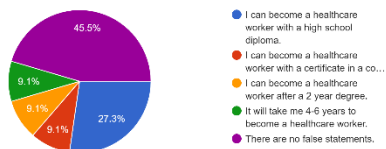
The Health College Connection Program introduced me to new healthcare careers
10 responses



2. Students will prepare for college course of study in healthcare careers.

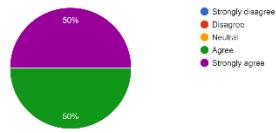
- By the end of the project students understood that health care careers can be obtained with various levels of education ranging from a high school diploma to an advanced degree.

Which statement is false?
11 responses

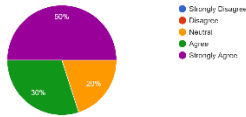


- One hundred percent of students understood the skills need to be successful in a health care career and 80 percent understand what college courses are needed.

I understand the skills that I need to be successful in a healthcare career.
10 responses



I have a better understanding of what college course I need in order to have a career in healthcare.
10 responses

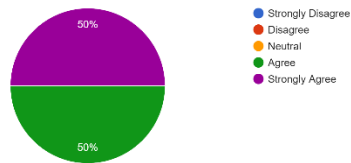


3. Students will develop personal and professional goals and skills.

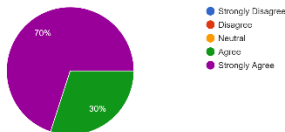
One hundred percent of students completed and presented their final projects, outlining their goals and pathways to achieve it.

- Student surveys indicate that one hundred percent of students agree that the program helped them to develop their professional goals and one hundred percent understand the personal characteristics need to secure healthcare careers.

The Health College Connection Program helped me to develop my goals in the healthcare profession.
10 responses



I understand the personal characteristics that I must have in order to secure a career in healthcare.
10 responses



4. Students will acquire skills for health career preparation

Students were engaged throughout the entirety of the program and actively engaged with various career tracks in health care careers and health sciences. Their knowledge of various careers is evidenced by final surveys and pre/posttests. Based on the exit surveys completed by students, the Health College Connections Program 2021 was successful in introducing students to new careers in healthcare, increasing participants' knowledge of skills needed to be a healthcare

professional, develop professional goals, better understand college courses and personal characteristics needed to work in health professions. One hundred percent of students noted that they would recommend HCCP to their friends and peers and One hundred percent stated that they learned something that they did not know about Careers in Healthcare. Participants who were not already certified received American Heart Association CPR training and certification.

When asked how TAHEC could attract more students in the future the responses were informative in recruitment strategies that can be used for future programming:

- Commercials
- Tell more people or a website,
- Social media to get young people's attention
- Partner with Tuskegee University since they have great allied health programs
- Advertise throughout the school year
- Make it a traditional experience

The students indicated several things that they learned through the HCCP:

- Different careers I never knew
- That you can do it all in health, people don't have to be doctors and can be a graphic designer or computer scientist.
- More about the career I want to have in the health field and about other options
- The healthcare field encapsulates an abundance of careers, including careers I never realized were related to healthcare
- There are many options in the healthcare field
- Allied health professionals and the different types, requirements and categories that each healthcare position fall under and how they are done.
- I learned about wellness and I enjoyed that the most.
- The difference between health and wellness and the different careers you can have being a nurse practitioner.
- I learned a lot more about Allied Health Professions, career pathways and paths that doctors take

When asked, “Did the HCCP help you? If so, how?”

- Yes, it gave me different options
- Yes, because it made me familiar with allied health
- Yes, it helped me learn that there is more to the health field than just doctors, nurses, and therapists.
- This program did help me because it solidified my dream of becoming a pharmaceutical scientist and taught me how to become one by teaching me the needed courses and characteristics for that career.
- Yes, because it opened my eyes to see many things I never thought I could see and learn.
- Yes, this program helped me a lot to get me at the right point in my life that will help me to prepare for my future needs and be successful in the career that I’ve chosen.
- Yes, now I know which path I need to take in my future.

What would you like to see different with HCCP?

- Nothing
- Everything was amazing I just wish I could have been in person
- Since Covid19 has affected us greatly, I understand that face-to-face meetings were not possible, but I believe more hands-on learning would be better for the program.
- In person if possible in the future.
- Nothing at all
- More Pediatricians, pediatric nurse practitioners and more health travel agencies to talk to.
- Nothing comes to mind that I want to change
- I think the HCCP was a great way it was set up. I enjoyed the two weeks of learning.

What would you keep the same in the HCCP?

- Everything I enjoyed it
- Keep the information the same because that was good information
- The usage of power points because some people learn better that way.
- The people who organized the programs and spoke in the meetings. All of the speakers were kind and understanding of the students. The speakers made the experience even more enjoyable for me.

- Everything
- What I would keep the same is my career choices that I've set for myself
- The speakers and activities.
- The Study.com lessons, quizzes and games
- Everything was perfect for me so I really can't think of anything I want done differently.
- I would keep having guest speakers give information about themselves and their paths the same

Please tell in your own words your thoughts about the HCCP?

- It helped me find different options
- I loved it because it made me more familiar with my specialty.
- The HCCP is a good program for people who are going in the healthcare field and know what they want to be and it's also good for the people who want to be in the healthcare field but have no idea what they want to do. The program helps you to understand that there are many jobs you can get in healthcare that does not involve being a doctor or nurse. The program helps you to expand your knowledge of the healthcare field. This program is very good and it's worth it because it provides you with a lot of good information.
- This program is great for anyone interested in healthcare. The program goes into depth about healthcare as well as, its teams, pathways, and workers. Even if someone is not sure if they want to work in healthcare this program would be useful to them.
- Well, I think it was a great program that every person should attend who wants to be in the healthcare field or even not a healthcare field.
- I think this program was well needed for me to find out about the things that I need to be on the right pathway for my career choices, and to achieve my career goals.
- This program is very useful and helpful and anyone could use the knowledge that was given throughout the 2-week program
- This program has helped me get a better understanding about my field of work and getting better at understanding who I want to be. I thought you can only become a physician to interact with children but it turns out I can become a pediatrician or pediatric nurse practitioner. What surprised me the most was that I can travel while doing my job. So that means I don't have to stay all in one hospital when I can travel everywhere. But I

do hope the next program we have pediatric nurse practitioners and pediatricians as guest speakers, Thanks everyone for making this a fun summer for me.

- This program was truly inspiring and very helpful in many ways.
- I think the HCCP is a great program where students can learn more about their future health careers. It's not only a program of learning, it's a program where you can ask questions, express yourself and being open-minded. That's what I like the most about TAHEC.

The final project career presentations were as follows:

- Neurosurgeon
- Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
- Certified Medical Assistant
- Pediatric Occupational Therapist
- Recreational Therapist
- Pharmaceutical Scientist
- Neonatal Nurse
- Nurse Practitioner
- Pediatrician
- Dermatologist
- Dentist