

Healthcare Pathways



Joining or Starting a Health Professions Student Organization

On high school campuses across California, students are learning about healthcare professions and sharing experiences in student clubs and organizations. Joining a student health professions or pre-health professional club, and becoming involved with others who want to learn about health careers, can add a sense of direction to your career goals. It will also give you new insights into medicine, pharmacy or nursing programs.

There are many advantages to belonging to or starting a health career or pre-health professional club in high school. Not only will you have a better understanding of careers in medicine, you may also meet practicing healthcare professionals who will describe their training, daily job duties, work environment, or perhaps observe health professionals in a practice setting.

Many student groups meet for a few hours every week to discuss skill development, promote problem-solving and decision-making, and practice leadership skills. Together, they learn about college requirements and the application process, build writing skills and professionalism, conduct research projects and develop community service activities, and build confidence in their unique skills and talents. This will help them make more informed decisions in high



Students of the California Health Occupation Students of America (Cal-HOSA) at the 2011 Annual National Leadership Conference

In This Issue:

- Joining or Starting a Health Professions Student Organization
- Are You Experienced (In a Work or Job Setting)?
- Creating a Clear Path to College
- Professional Manner and Dress
- Healthcare and Training Online Resources

school and college, as well as remove barriers to success in future careers.

By participating in a student pre-health professional club, you can:

- Build leadership skills
- Explore careers
- Reinforce college preparation
- Find student mentors, job shadowing, and internship opportunities
- Discover valuable resources
- Connect with your community
- Enhance relationships with students, faculty, and healthcare professionals

Across the state, students are demonstrating that they don't have to wait until college to make a difference in the community. High school clubs are helping students to learn about future career paths and about the needs of the community they live in.

At Sequoia High School in Redwood City, the American Cancer Society Youth Club has over 100 members who participate in community activities to raise awareness of health issues and promote a healthy lifestyle of exercise and good nutrition. "They're really invested. The world has become a smaller place," stated Sequoia High School Principal Bonne Hansen in a recent interview.

Continued on next page

Joining or Starting a Health Professions Student Organization

Continued from front page

Many healthcare-related clubs already exist on campus, but if your school does not have one, you can take a leadership role and start your own!

At Los Altos High School, students made a decision to join with a statewide campaign to raise awareness and acceptance of mental health care known as “LETS” or “let’s erase the stigma.” During Mental Health Awareness Week in May, the LETS club distributed turquoise ribbons and made posters to raise student awareness. Statistics on mental health were read by club members over the school intercom every day to educate the student population.

Many healthcare-related clubs already exist on campus, but if your school does not have one, you can take a leadership role and start your own! In order to start a health-related club on a high school campus, a faculty sponsor is needed along with a group of students who share an interest in health careers or becoming active in promoting healthy lifestyles or combating health afflictions in the community. Many high school clubs become affiliated with state or national organizations, such as the Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) or the Latino Medical Student Association among others.

Becoming part of a larger organization allows for greater networking and learning opportunities through workshops, conferences, and competitions. But any high school club can become a great resource for future health careers and a great way to get together with friends, have fun, and get involved!

The Latino Medical Student Association represents and supports Latino and Latina medical students across the country and provides a voice for underrepresented medical students. More information at: <http://lmsa.net/students/new-chapters>.

The Health Occupation Students of America has over 120,000 members in high school and college chapters who learn leadership and technical skills through competitive events, meet working healthcare professionals, and tour healthcare facilities. More information at: http://hosa.org/join_hosa.html.



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The Health Careers Training Program online resource page lists professional and student organizations in the healthcare industry, which can offer professional guidance, licensing/certification requirements, skill development, and opportunities for networking and job seeking. Many of these organizations advocate for changes in patient care, increased public health awareness, and improving the skills of healthcare workers. Visit the Health Careers Training Program online resource page at: www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/HCTP.html.

The American Medical Student Association (AMSA) offers community service and training opportunities for its members, along with career development and guidance. Learn more at: www.amsa.org/AMSA/Homepage.aspx

The Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association (APAMSA) brings together students and professionals in the Asian community to promote healthy living and to address community health issues. More information at: www.apamsa.org/

The California Nursing Students’ Association (CNSA) represents nursing students and professionals throughout the state and develops leadership, activism, and advocacy. More information at: www.cnsa.org

The Student National Medical Association (SNMA) is committed to supporting underrepresented minority medical students and addressing the needs of underserved communities. Learn more at: www.snma.org/

Are You Experienced (In a Work or Job Setting)?

If you are a dedicated worker and quick learner, prove it! Regardless of the type of work, a job or volunteer position demonstrates responsibility and dedication. It also shows your understanding of the value of money and hard work. For future health professionals, learning the day-to-day operations of professionals in a healthcare setting can boost your ability to attend college and help you choose a rewarding career path that meets your goals.

College recruiters and admissions staff often ask a simple question of students applying to college, “What job experiences have you had?” Surprisingly, many students have had no work experience whatsoever. This means never having the opportunity to build a day-to-day work ethic of arriving on time, working as part of a team, and finishing what you start.

So how can someone gain initial work experience? It may be as simple as volunteering, working as an intern, or taking an entry-level job. Regardless of the type of work, it is important to show your commitment and dedication. Volunteer and internship opportunities often come without pay, but there is no better way to show your skills or build your knowledge than to maintain a job or volunteer position in a career field you are interested in. Making sacrifices or “paying your dues” early in your career can benefit you greatly in the future.

Through a volunteer or job internship, you can:

- Discover mentors and role models
- Learn about the needs of the community, especially in medically underserved areas
- Find a rewarding and challenging career in one of the many healthcare fields
- Demonstrate your ability to make (and follow through with) a commitment of your time and energy
- Create new problem-solving skills and learn to participate in group efforts

For listings and descriptions of enriching work experiences, visit the Health Careers Training Program’s resources page for internships and volunteer opportunities at: www.OSHPD.ca.gov/HWDD/Internships.html.

Information on allied health careers and resources available through community colleges and Regional Occupational Programs (ROP) can be found at: <http://desertcolleges.org/alliedhealth/>



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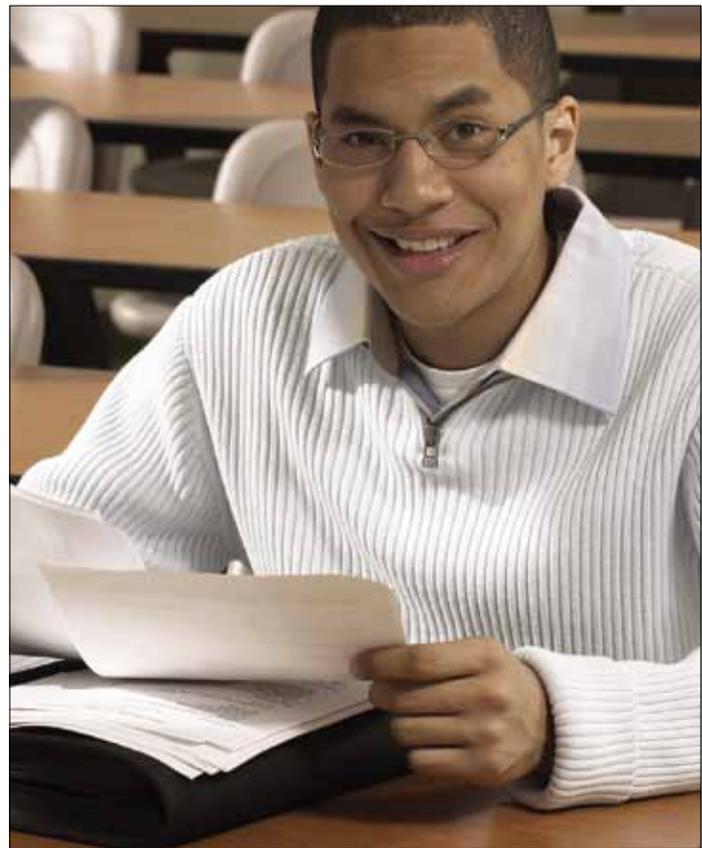
Creating a Clear Path to College

When thinking about college, the first thing that comes to mind is grades. It is true that good grades are important, but taking the right courses and building the right skills are also essential to college admission. Luckily, there are many free resources to assist you in making good choices in high school and creating a clear path to college admission.

So what will it take to be accepted into college? It often depends on the college itself. Standards range greatly between private and technical colleges, community colleges, state colleges, and University of California campuses. Each has its own particular requirements; but in general, California colleges and universities review academic and personal factors which include:

- High School grade point average and course difficulty
- National test scores
- Class rank
- Recent or marked improvement in academics
- Potential for leadership
- Special talents, achievements and awards
- Community service

Becoming eligible is the starting point to attending college. That means taking the right courses to meet the subject requirements (also known as the “A-G” courses). With proper planning, college is never out of reach, even for students with average grades. However, the most



competitive academic programs and campuses will select those who greatly exceed the minimum requirements.

There are many ways to demonstrate your academic strengths, such as enrolling in advanced placement (AP) courses while maintaining a high grade point average. Practicing and scoring well on national tests such as the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test), the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) or the ACT (American College Testing) exams is also essential to show your exceptional talents.

In order to prepare for a career in healthcare, study as many different sciences as possible, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. Maximize mathematical abilities through advanced courses, learn a foreign language, and build your computer skills. Extend yourself beyond the classroom and participate in science fairs and career fairs, or get involved in math or science clubs.

All students should start to make a plan to attend college as early as possible. If you are not sure of your career direction, take career self-assessment tests to discover your strengths. Volunteering or finding an internship at a clinic or hospital is one of the most beneficial ways for future health professionals to find a field of medicine that most appeals to them. Discussing your college and

Find Out More about College Admission Tests for High School Students

Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT)
www.collegeboard.org

SAT Reasoning Test (Scholastic Assessment Test)
www.collegeboard.org

SAT Subject Tests
www.collegeboard.org

ACT Tests (American College Testing)
www.ACTstudent.org

California State University Early Assessment Program (EAP)
www.calstate.edu/eap/

California State University Placement Exams
(English and Mathematics)
<https://ept-elm.ets.org/CSU/>

California State University Advanced Placement (AP) exams
www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html

Student High School Guide by Grade Level

The following guidelines provide general information on preparing for college and completing academic requirements, based upon California State University and University of California requirements. Be sure to discuss your course and test exam schedule with a school counselor or college admissions office in order to meet the specific requirements of individual educational programs.

9th Grade

- Review the requirements for University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) admissions and create a 4-year plan with your school counselor to meet or exceed these standards.
- Involve yourself in activities outside the classroom and connect with your community.

10th Grade

- Register for the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test) in October.
- Get involved with student clubs or organizations, which can connect you with like-minded students and mentors who can assist with your college goals.
- Continue to build your interests outside of school. Look for leadership opportunities or ways to volunteer your time.
- Plan your summer activities (this year and next) to include volunteering or finding an internship in a career field you are interested in.

11th Grade

- Review the required “A-G” courses and talk with your school counselor about completing any courses still needed.
- Register for the October SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) or ACT (American College Testing) in September. Ask your school counselor for assistance.
- Take the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) exam to measure your strengths in college-level math and English/language arts. Register for an additional SAT at least a month prior to the testing date.
- Register for the December SAT or ACT in November.
- Consider taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams if you have taken AP classes. High test scores may help you earn college credits.
- Learn about specific college academic programs, plan college campus visits, and create a list of colleges to apply to.
- Request college applications and create a calendar of important college application dates, fees required, and financial aid application deadlines.

12th Grade

- Apply for scholarships and financial aid early in the year.
- Prepare college applications for October-November mailing.
- Register for the CSU’s placement exam, which may be required prior to enrollment.
- Make your final choice of college admission and financial aid.



career interests with your instructors and counselors, parents and mentors, and within student organizations on campus will also give you a greater understanding of what you can accomplish and the many resources available to help you achieve your goals.

Don't wait until you are a graduating senior to begin the process of applying for financial aid benefits. Be sure to apply for financial aid before finding out if you

have been accepted to college. To be considered for grants, loans, and other financial aid, you must submit the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA at: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. Foster youth may be eligible for unique financial aid awards in addition to other sources.

Just as you (hopefully) complete and turn in your school assignments on time, stay on track with college

Continued on page 6

Creating a Clear Path to College

Continued from page 5

admissions and financial aid applications and deadlines. Let your hard work, skills, and determination determine how far you can go!

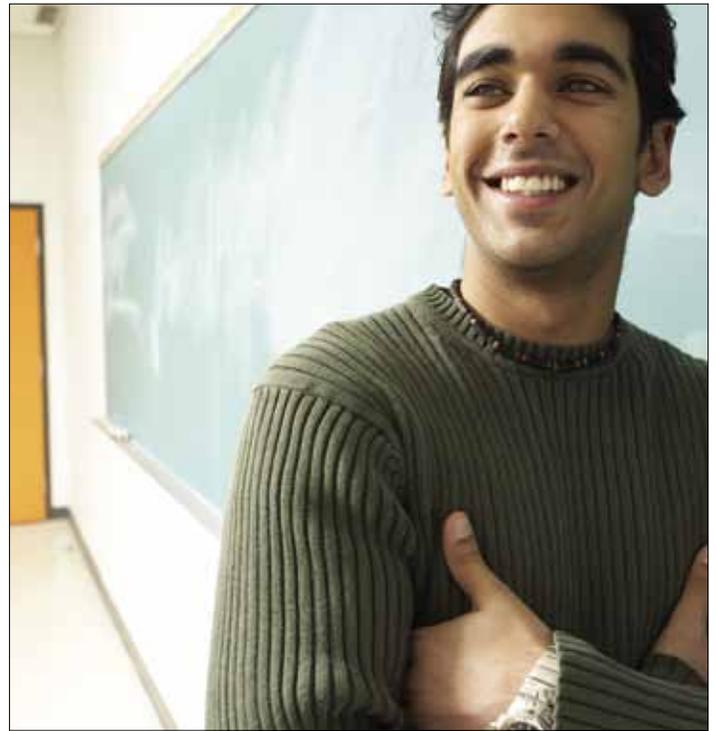
For more information, please visit the following:

Explore careers, plan for college, find financial aid, and locate college admissions requirements for all California colleges and universities at: www.californiacolleges.edu

CSU Mentor is a free online resource to help track and plan coursework and learn more about CSU campuses. To start your online planner, visit CSU Mentor at: https://secure.csumentor.edu/Planning/high_school/

The University of California subject and examination requirements for admission, along with other helpful information, can be found at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/requirements/index.html

A comprehensive guide to California Community Colleges and financial aid benefits can be found at: www.icanaffordcollege.info/



Required “A-G” Courses

The following courses are required for freshman admission to the California State University, University of California, many private colleges, and are recommended for community colleges. Be sure to discuss your course schedule with a school counselor or college admissions office in order to meet the specific requirements of individual educational programs. For more information, visit the California State University’s CSU Mentor at: www.csumentor.edu/planning/high_school/subjects.asp

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| A History/Social Science, 2 YEARS REQUIRED
Includes U.S. History, U.S. Government, Civics, World History Cultures, and Geography | E Language Other Than English
3 YEARS REQUIRED/4 YEARS RECOMMENDED |
| B English, 4 YEARS REQUIRED
Includes composition along with classic modern literature studies | F Visual & Performing Arts, 1 YEAR REQUIRED
Includes dance, drama/theater, music, and visual art |
| C Mathematics
3 YEARS REQUIRED/4 YEARS RECOMMENDED
Includes algebra, geometry, intermediate algebra and other approved integrated courses | G College Preparatory Electives, 1 YEAR REQUIRED
One additional year required in any of the A-F categories |
| D Laboratory Sciences
2 YEARS REQUIRED/ 3 YEARS RECOMMENDED
Includes biology, chemistry and physics | |

Note: At least seven of the 15 year-long courses must be taken in your last two years of high school.

Professional Manner and Dress

It is not difficult to make a great first impression during a job interview, college interview, or important meeting. Keeping your thoughts and words focused, along with professional manner and dress, shows your determination and confidence when you present yourself to others. Remember, you only have one chance to make a first impression, so dress for success.

The first thing an employer or college interviewer will notice is your attire and general attitude. Are you smiling and content? Or stressed and concerned? The clothes you wear and the smile on your face speak very loudly before you say your first words of greeting. Your actions can demonstrate courtesy and professionalism in any situation. Not sure if you look your best? Ask a friend or neighbor you admire to take a look at your outfit and offer suggestions.

Everyone has a style of their own, but try to be modest and conservative in choosing your attire. The goal is to be professional and respectable, fitting in with the company or organization.

Everyone has a style of their own, but try to be modest and conservative in choosing your attire. The goal is to be professional and respectable, fitting in with the company or organization. Clean and comfortable clothing which fits you well can make a very strong impression and give you a competitive edge. Remember that as an employee, the company pays you to work and to carry the company image.

You may wish to contact your prospective employer's human resources office and ask about the company dress policy. Or plan on a visit to the company office ahead of time to investigate and observe what current employees are wearing. While visiting, ask for company information which can help you better understand the company's culture and what the company expects from its employees.

When meeting or greeting individuals for the first time, proper business etiquette shows your strength and confidence in an honest way. Be sure to make eye contact, offer a warm smile and not-too-firm handshake. Speak clearly using full sentences while avoiding slang or phrases only your friends would understand. Your body language and voice can be a great tool to show others that

you are someone easy to work with and can be "a great addition to the team."

Make a good first impression and avoid common mistakes:

- Don't wear tight or wrinkled clothing. Be comfortable and don't constantly adjust yourself when sitting or standing.
- Don't wear flashy jewelry or piercings. Keep it simple and let your professionalism be noticed, not your "bling."
- Don't forget to keep your nails well groomed and use only a minimum of perfume or cologne. Strong fragrances can be overwhelming for many people.
- Don't be too serious. Show a relaxed and confident smile and maintain a calm presence.
- Don't talk too much or too fast. Be sure to think before you speak and let your intelligence show through your words.

Keep in mind that you are marketing a most unique and talented product – yourself! Keep your chin up and a smile on your face to show others that you are worth the time and effort. No matter the circumstance or setting, well-groomed and mannered persons will be noticed.

For more information on preparing for professional interviews, visit the College Board at: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/138.html>

A variety of resources on preparing for college and finding careers can be found at www.MyCali.ca.gov, a website created for students ages 13-18.



Healthcare and Training Online Resources

O SHPD's Healthcare Workforce Development Division (HWDD) has a wide variety of resources for students, counselors, instructors, and health professionals.

Health Careers Exploration

Find detailed information on a wide variety of health careers, including educational requirements and training, expected salary ranges, and gain a better understand of exactly what health professionals do each day.

Scholarship and Loan Repayment Opportunities

Locate health-related scholarships, government grants, and loan repayment programs which can assist with the financial demands of higher education.

Health Professions Education Program Search Tool

A free application that allows users to identify schools that offer health education and training programs in California. Results are displayed on a map and in a listing. You can focus your search by health career, location, school type, or degree. No log in or sign up is required.

Additional Information and Organization Links

Discover new resources and information! You can find links to state and national organizations for students and healthcare professionals, locate internships and volunteering opportunities at Health Jobs Start Here, browse through the archives of the Healthcare Pathways newsletter, or check the statewide calendar for career fairs near you.

All these and more can be found at the Health Careers Training Program resources page at: www.OSHPD.ca.gov/HWDD/HCTP.html.



Healthcare Pathways

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