



HEALTH CAREERS

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

Denver Partners Summer 2018

Prepared by Mitch Fittro
Central Colorado Area Health Education Center



Whether you are a healthcare consumer or provider, the quality of service is of utmost importance. Employers in the healthcare field have expressed that across their pool of applicants, there is a shortage of what are called “21st Century or essential skills”. These skills encompass simple but valuable attributes that are lacking in today’s workforce such as critical thinking skills, technology use, and interpersonal skills. The aim of our Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship Program is to not only to provide exposure to different careers in healthcare, but to hone these 21st Century skills for emerging adults. We want our participants to be the most qualified, competitive candidates, while making sure they have the skills to be successful in any healthcare industry job they are interested in.

Participants have access to experiential learning such as the cadaver lab at Anschutz Medical Campus, which offers a complete immersion into the human body with literal “hands-on” experience with organs and human body parts. Participants also visit University of Colorado Hospital for a tour of their facilities. Donor Alliance (an organ procurement organization), along with guest presenters from the Community College of Denver, Front Range Community College, and Metropolitan State University provide differing views of what healthcare professions can look like in their realm.

Participants receive the following certifications: Youth Mental Health First Aid, basic life support (BLS), bloodborne pathogens (BBP), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and ServSafe. Participants have a culminating project that they present to their peers, the Career Engagement Plan, which requires knowledge of training levels, income, education, and pathways of specific healthcare careers. Participants take advantage of career surveys, government workforce resources, mock interviews, journal



reflections, one-on-one career coaching, speakers who are currently employed healthcare professionals, and mentors.



Our program, held in conjunction with Denver, Adams County, and Arapahoe-Douglas County workforce centers, included 18 participants ages 17-14 who were identified as having an interest in healthcare and not currently enrolled in post-secondary opportunities. 9 of our participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, 8 as Non-Hispanic/Latino, and 1 chose not to report. It consisted of 3 weeks of programming on the Anschutz Medical Campus with weekly tours of the medical facilities and resources available. Class discussions included career exploration, employability skills, communication and technology etiquette, teamwork, self-awareness, time management, problem solving, adaptability, interpersonal skills, and critical thinking.

Career pathways that participants were exposed to and taught about included: Biotechnology & Research, Diagnostic Services, Health Informatics, Support Services, and Therapeutic Services. Careers directly observed or discussed included: social worker, recovery technician, medical assistant, nursing pathway, occupational therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy, medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, pet therapist, surgical technician, sterile processing, psychology, organ recovery specialist, surgery specialist, and research (including laboratory tech). Fields of study discussed included: hospice, palliative care, respiratory therapy, organ transplant and recovery, oncology, pediatrics, geriatrics, global health, traveling healthcare professionals, home health care, and skilled nursing facilities.



We are very pleased with the results of the program and it was exciting to see the participants make visible strides in their personal and professional goals. The participants' confidence levels grew each day as

they put themselves in real world scenarios that they now see as attainable futures. It was a pleasure to observe participants connect with professionals and instructors. In addition to the 5 certificates obtained, receiving individual coaching, and obtaining new skill sets, participants received a “pre-employment starter pack” which included blood pressure cuff, digital watch, pen light, blood oxygen monitor, and a stethoscope. This starter pack aims to avoid any material barriers that participants may encounter when applying for a health profession position.



Results of the 2018 Denver Summer Health Careers Pre-Apprentice Program:

- ✓ 100% of participants felt confident or very confident that they possess the essential/21st Century skills necessary to enter the workforce.
- ✓ 100% of participants felt confident or very confident that they have knowledge of the certificates that might be required in their preferred fields.
- ✓ 100% of participants felt very confident that they understand how to be a competitive applicant.
- ✓ 100% of participants felt very confident that they are empowered to achieve their career goals.
- ✓ 100% of participants felt confident or very confident that they understand what it means to be professional and presentable at a workplace

The parts of the program that participants found most valuable were **mental health first aid, career exploration, and interviewing.**

For more information regarding this program or to inquire about how we can tailor a program for your organization, please contact us at 303.481.8686 or Mitch@CentralCoAhec.org



CCAHEC is an affiliate of the Colorado AHEC Program and the University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Campus