

Health *focus*

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS LEAD TO STRONG PROGRAMS

From the Executive Director... health care delivery is one of the most important topics of discussion in this country today. Whether we are listening to a Presidential speech or the nightly news, health care is among the top issues. Finally, the development of the healthcare workforce is now part of this discussion. We are grateful that organizations like MSI AHEC are in the business of preparing our youth to take their place on the next front line of health care delivery.

MSI AHEC is now in its sixth year of operation and has provided health career exploration, college guidance and preparation, educational enrichment and mentorship programs for thousands of students. For those who have had the good fortune to participate directly in one of the programs they have experienced one-on-one encounters with experienced and caring program staff, and health care professionals in both Manhattan and Staten Island. For those who have visited either of our three web sites for information and linkages to other health career information, they have found the most up to date resources and data available.

In this, our first Annual Report, you will find an interesting array of articles prepared by staff, board, and students. You will also be introduced to our newest component, the Alumni Advisory Board. Please enjoy at your leisure, and we are always happy to get feedback.

Highlights of this year's activities include:

- ★ Participation in a meeting convened by the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, in Washington, DC to discuss the nation's healthcare workforce. This was a unique opportunity to join two other representatives of the National AHEC Organization and provide significant input about collaborations that would strengthen the development of primary care providers in the future. Other participants included the National Health Service Corps, the National Association of Community Health Centers and the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research.
- ★ MSI AHEC becoming a National Health Service Corps Ambassador, and participating in its first Ambassador's Conference, in Kansas City, Missouri. MSI AHEC will engage in recruitment activities to increase the numbers of underrepresented minorities beginning their health profession career in medically underserved communities across the country; thereby reducing or eliminating their education debt.
- ★ As the Chairperson of the National AHEC Organization's (NAO) Center Director Constituency Group, I have had the pleasure of developing the agenda for our annual meeting, coordinating the scholarship activities, which provide for Center Directors from around the country to attend NAO Policy Days, and have been elected to the office of Secretary to the NAO Board of Directors.
- ★ Recognizing the need to stay abreast of the educational and supportive needs of our students, we have established an Alumni Advisory Board. This group will advise MSI leadership on programmatic needs of students who participate in our programs and those who may wish to do so. I am extremely proud to announce that The Alumni Advisory Board will be Co-Chaired by Rossmery Barzey, former MSI AHEC Program Director and Elisha Medina, former program participant and current MSI Board Member.



★ Lastly and perhaps most importantly, I am pleased to formally welcome the newest members of the MSI AHEC family. Samantha Bernardine, MA, Program Manager for My Health Career, and Francisco Lucio, JD, Program Director have come aboard and shared their talents, knowledge and expertise to enhance the delivery of our programs. They are each committed to the MSI AHEC mission and seek to strengthen our efforts going forward. We are fortunate to have them both.



Message from the Board Chair... What an amazing six years! 2009 marks the 6th Anniversary of the Manhattan Staten Island AHEC and I am honored to say that the Board, in partnership with the incredible staff of MSI AHEC, has worked tirelessly to create an organization committed to its mission and offer programs designed to meet the real academic and non-academic needs of educationally and economically disadvantaged students. Our high-quality staff, programs, and services help students attain academic success in the educational pipeline until they have accomplished their goal of becoming a well-trained health care professional.

To that end, I was asked recently why I support MSI AHEC as a board member. I thought I'd share my response in this newsletter. Simply put, I personally connect to the mission, vision, and programs of MSI AHEC because I am a product of similar enrichment and education pipeline programs as a first-generation minority college graduate. I would not have had the academic and career success that I have attained thus far without the participation in and benefit from such programs. The program design, program management and leadership were all important factors in making me feel as a participant that my "tipping points" (i.e. where low self-confidence or the lack of mentorship and guidance could have led me away from my goals) were anticipated and addressed by program staff. My participation in such programs nurtured my self-confidence and the coaching and mentorship provided allowed me to feel supported. It was important to not feel alone and have a support system that was different from home life, school life, and work life.

Keeping this experience close to me while having the pleasure of working with a committed, engaged, and enthusiastic board of directors over the past six years, we believe the MSI AHEC will serve as a wonderful example of what works in equipping economically and educationally disadvantaged students with tools necessary to become successful health care professionals.

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2009 Middle School Academy students at Staten Island University Hospital for a day.

Middle School Students Explore Health Careers

By: Francisco Lucio, Program Director - MSI AHEC

“Who knows what a perfusionist does?” asks the man behind a surgical mask. The ten students wearing scrubs and mesh hats look at our speaker with wide-eyes and blank stares. No one responds. Behind the perfusionist, a team of health professionals is performing open-heart surgery.

“A perfusionist monitors the patient’s blood as it passes through a heart and lung machine during surgery, so a surgeon can work on a heart that’s not beating,” says the

perfusionist as he is called back into the surgical room. The students stand quietly and observe the procedure through a window. A few minutes later he returns and an onslaught of questions ensues.

“How much money does a perfusionist make?” “How many years of school do you need to become a perfusionist?” “Who else is in the room?” “Does it smell in there?”

These are exactly the types of questions we were hoping the students would ask. And yes, even the smell question.

For the fourth year in a row MSI AHEC implemented the Middle School Academy for Health Careers Program for 20 students at IS 49 Bertha A. Dreyfus in Staten Island. Students were selected after hearing a presentation on healthcare disparities and writing essays on what they learned.

On May 21st, 10 students visited Staten Island University Hospital and 10 students visited The Community Health Center of Richmond. They spent a fun-filled day touring the various departments of each health facility. Doctors and nurses took time to speak to the students and answer questions. Students met medical billers, occupational therapists, social workers, sonographers, hospital administrators and many more health professionals. In addition, students were able to observe and participate in some medical procedures.

Once back at school, students were given an assignment to discuss what they learned on their respective visits.

The goal of the Middle School Academy for Health Careers Program is to expose young students to healthcare professions and have them one day be the professionals who answer *odor* questions from a group of students.

It Takes More Than Just Attending Class to be a Good Physician

By: Syed Iqbal, Community Health Experience Intern - MSI AHEC

As a second year medical student at Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine, I have learned a lot about the human body. All the information in our basic science courses is important to understand the conditions of our patients. But in order to treat our patients effectively, we need to understand who our patients are. In medical school we are not taught about our patient’s communities or their socioeconomic circumstances. Working with MSI AHEC as a Community Health Experience Program (CHE) participant, I got a glimpse of some of the underserved communities in New York City, and the people who live there.

One of my main duties in the program was to coordinate a group of thirty under represented minority local high school and college students as they took part in their health internships. The students were also required to work on a health care research project, which I helped them on as well. During the course of this program, I was exposed to a wide range of medical and health care professionals. This was a great opportunity for me to learn about their roles in the health care field. I also got the opportunity to visit various health care facilities around Manhattan and learn about the different services they provide.

Four days a week, I worked at MSI AHEC’s office. On Fridays, all the CHE participants placed at various sites across New York City came together for didactic sessions. In these sessions, I learned what projects others were involved with as well as sharing with them about my experiences. There were also workshops about health disparities with a focus on the role race and class plays in a patient’s care and treatment. We toured the neighborhoods of East Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant to learn about the disparities present in those two communities.

Through these experiences, I have learned how different factors in poor neighborhoods affect health outcomes. As a future physician, I must understand the communities my patients belong to in order to treat them effectively. The CHE program helped me learn about the communities I may one day serve.

Syed was one of 11 medical students from the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine and the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine participating in the summer CHE Program. Other participants worked on diabetes education campaigns, HIV prevention projects, medical records, and asthma initiatives just to name a few.



The 2009 Community Health Experience Interns and Ann-Gell Palermo, MSI AHEC Board Chair

AHEC of a Summer!

By: Francisco Lucio, Program Director - MSI AHEC

In the midst of economic distress and at the heels of healthcare reform, MSI AHEC continues to provide paid internships to students via the Summer Health Internship Program (SHIP).

SHIP is a six-week paid internship for underrepresented and/or disadvantaged high school juniors to college sophomores. Students intern at hospitals or health centers throughout Manhattan and Staten Island. The goal of SHIP is to expose students to the wide variety of careers in the health care field with the aim of developing future health professionals who will serve the neediest areas.

The Internship

This year 30 students participated in SHIP. They worked at hospitals and health centers such as Harlem Hospital, New York Presbyterian/Columbia, Gouverneur Hospital, Staten Island University Hospital, Ryan Chelsea-Clinton Health Center just to name a few. Students worked in many departments ranging from the emergency room to oncology.



Sarfraz Abid, 2009 Summer Health Internship Program student

Roselind Vanderpuije, an intern at Gouverneur Hospital said, “I am really happy you placed me in the nursing department. I really want to become a nurse practitioner.”

Baomin Dang initially wanted to become an optometrist, but after working in a dental department said, “I found out I want to become a dentist!”

In addition to the student’s great experiences, preceptors had wonderful things to say about the students.

Christina Walker, Patient Safety Specialist at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia said, “Patricia’s performance has been great. She picks things up quickly and asks a lot of questions.” Patricia is a sophomore at Hunter College and wants to become a general surgeon. She worked in the peri-operative department.

Stanley Majors was an intern at Harlem Hospital and worked in the neurology department where he was able to go on rounds with medical students. His preceptors said he had great insight, and they loved having him there.

Didactics

Every Thursday students met at MSI AHEC’s office for didactics. Didactics are an opportunity for students to learn more about a variety of health careers. MSI AHEC invited health professionals to share their experiences with our students.

This year, students heard the inspiring story of Dr. Warria Esmond’s journey to community health, and Dr. Carla Boutin-Foster’s knowledge on cardiovascular disease, as well as, Dr. Vincent Tranchida’s intriguing and sometimes gory stories as a senior medical examiner. In addition, students learned how to perform CPR from an FDNY presentation, and they also visited the Bodies Exhibit.

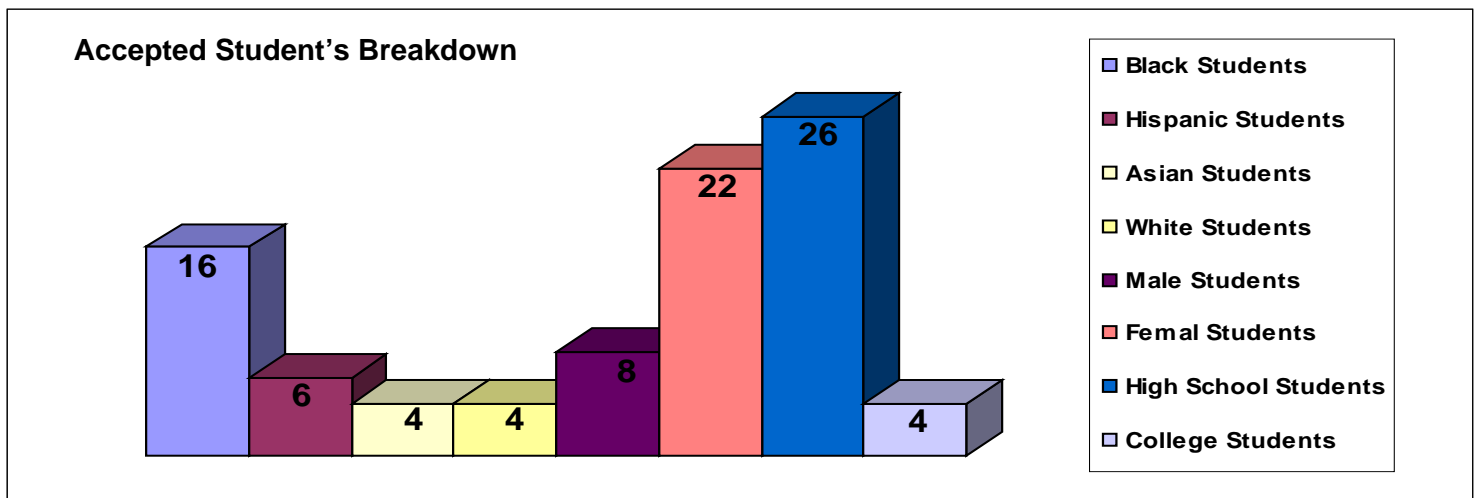
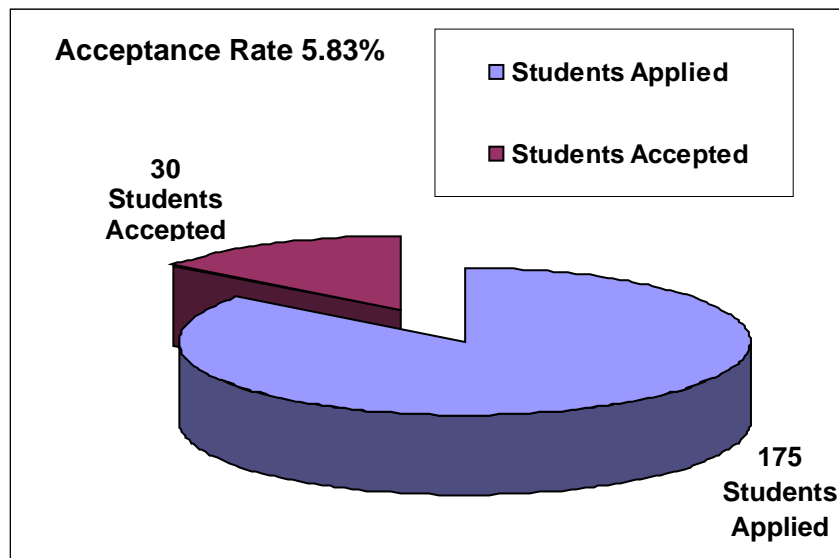
The above experiences were only a few of the exciting opportunities offered to our students this summer.

Projects

As part of SHIP, students were required to complete health projects. Projects consisted of a research paper, PowerPoint presentation and poster board presentation. The project portion of SHIP was designed to have students interact with their preceptors, sharpen their writing skills and build their presentation skills. Syed Iqbal, a medical student at Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine, worked with the students this summer to guide their progress.

Students presented on topics ranging from dementia to childhood obesity in low-income communities. The breadth of knowledge exhibited by our students was tremendous.

SHIP was a great success this year. MSI AHEC appreciates the support of its partners and looks forward to providing health career exploration opportunities for many more students in the years to come.



Mentor Connection: Irving Ladies Experience Life Outside the Classroom

By Melinda Fernandes

Eight young women from Washington Irving High School made this year's Mentor Connection Program (MCP) a success: Hannai Espinoza, Elizabeth Falcon, Rachel Jean Baptiste, Rafelina Pena, Shaina Shannon, Ardelis Vargas, Melissa Vero, and Elzbieta Zachara.

MCP is a course for credit at Washington Irving High School that allows students an opportunity to learn outside the classroom. MCP is divided into weekly group seminars, one-on-ones with the program coordinator, and on-site time with a health professional mentor. Students were paired with mentors from Sports Physical Therapy of New York, PC. Mentors included past participants Dr. Afriqiyah Woods and Dr. Crystal Thomas, and newcomers Dr. Rick Daigle and Dr. Ithamar Jotkowitz.



**2008 – 2009 Mentor Connection students;
Melinda Fernandes, Program Coordinator and
Francisco Lucio, Program Director**

The students learned from a variety of experiences. During weekly group seminars at the Institute for Family Health, the students interacted with medical residents. They got the facts on the Swine Flu and found out just how important nutrition is to health. On a visit to New York-Presbyterian University Hospital, Weill Cornell, the students saw the inside of an ambulance, observed the burn unit and learned about smoke cessation. One of the most enjoyable experiences was an overnight trip to Cornell University. The students toured the campus, attended a lecture and slept in a dorm.

Rafelina explained, "Mentor Connection introduced me to college life. I had a great time!"

The heart of MCP is the time students spent with their mentors. Students were at their sites three times a week for about two hours. Students observed their mentors in action and even assisted in rehabilitation exercise routines with patients. The mentors were excited to have a positive influence on these young ladies.

Elizabeth said, "Mentor Connection is a great program because it gives everybody the opportunity to find out what they are really interested in."

It was sad to see the year come to an end; however, it was filled with wonderful lessons and memories. MCP's Closing Ceremony held at the Langone Medical Center at New York University was the highlight of the year. The students showed their friends, family and mentors how hard they worked and how much they matured over the course of the year. They showcased project presentations on health topics ranging from spina bifida to depression. The students did an amazing job all year, and I wish them the best of luck in the future.



All Roads Lead to My Health Career

By Samantha Bernadine, My Health Careers Program Manager - MSI AHEC



It is with great excitement that MSI AHEC announces a new addition to its pipeline programs – My Health Career® (MHC). Launched this past February, www.msiahec.MyHealthCareer.org, is a free comprehensive career exploration program designed to introduce and engage users of all ages and levels of education and work experiences, in exploring, identifying and developing career possibilities in the health care industry.

In keeping with the mission of MSI AHEC to address health care disparities through increased workforce diversity, MHC is a wonderful learning tool to inform users of the growing demand for health care workers, especially as Americans are living longer than previous generations. According to the U.S. Census, it is estimated that by 2030 one-fourth of the population will be over the age of 65, requiring more care services.

MHC is divided into five key categories: **Career Exploration, Academic Training, Employment, Career Builder and Programs and Continuing Education.**

Under Career Exploration, users can explore over 300 health related occupations. The site has two interactive assessments, the Interest and Work Profile. Once completed, users can view what specific health occupation and what type of working environment is right for them.

Users are directly linked to the program of interest. Students interested in learning about paid and non-paid internships can access the Enhancing College Level and Technical Training Programs section available on the site.

Our Career Resource section has hundreds of scholarships, grants and loan programs available for students pursuing health careers including funding specifically for minority students. MHC also has a database of enrichment programs for high school, college and post-baccalaureate students.

The Career Builder component allows users to build and store their resumes. This user-friendly application allows a user to customize their resume with just a few clicks of the mouse. In addition, there are tips on developing a professional portfolio. There is also an employment section with positions through out the city.

For users looking to advance their career, our Programs and Continuing Education section is updated with over 200 academic institutions in the Tri-state area.

Visit our site to learn more about career exploration and so much more, www.msiahec.MyHealthCareer.org

Career Guide to Industries: Health Care

Health Care Occupation	Projected Increase by 2016
Personal and Home Care Aides	53.0
Home Health Aides	46.9
Medical Assistants	36.1
Pharmacy Technicians	31.6
Dental Hygienists	30.4
Physical Therapists	30.4
Dental Assistants	30.3
Physical Therapist Assistants and Aides	29.7
Physician Assistants	29.6
Counselors	29.3
Social and Human Service Assistants	28.9
Occupational Therapists	28.4
Service Occupations	27.1
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	25.5
Registered Nurses	25.2

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Career Guide to Industries, 2008-09 Edition*, Health Care, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm> (Last Modified Date: March 12, 2008).

Spotlight on the Pipeline

By Francisco Lucio, Program Director - MSI AHEC

Bao-Yen Dang started her medical career path with MSI AHEC's Mentor Connection Program as a junior at Washington Irving High School. Now a sophomore at Stony Brook University, Bao-Yen has completed her first summer with the MedPrep Program. MedPrep is a three-summer medical school preparation program in collaboration with MSI AHEC, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New Jersey Medical School and Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

What MSI AHEC Programs have you participated in?

Almost all of them. I was in Mentor Connection, the Summer Health Internship Program twice, the College Guidance and Admissions Program and now MedPrep.

What has been your favorite MSI AHEC program?

All of them, but if I had to choose one it would be the Mentor Connection Program. Dr. Hendricks at New York University Medical Center was my mentor. She inspired me to become a neonatologist, and I still keep in touch with her today.

What have you been doing in the MedPrep program?

A bunch of stuff. We did lab work and dissected a cow eye, which was really cool. MedPrep has strengthened my desire to go to medical school.

What have you found the most valuable from being a part of MSI AHEC programs?

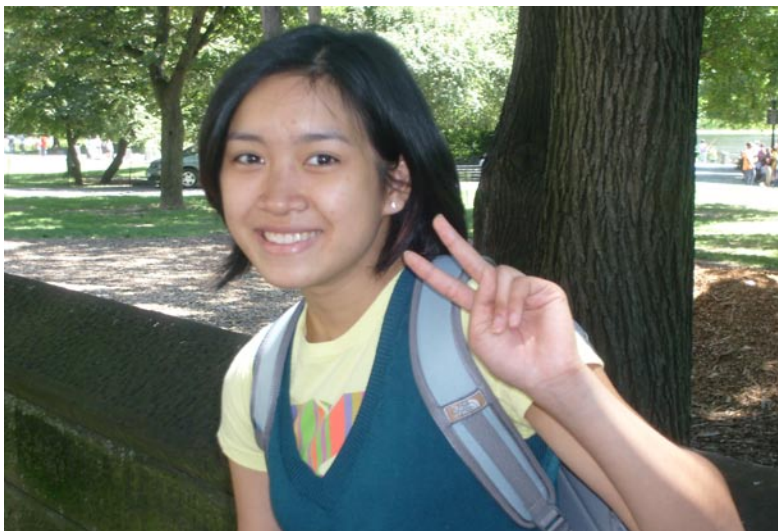
Being in the MSI AHEC programs has given me the motivation I need to pursue my dreams. When I think about MSI AHEC, I know that there are people supporting me. This is important because with their support I believe in myself and work harder to make them proud.

Has MSI AHEC helped you set any goals?

Yes. Working with MSI AHEC has inspired me to help students like me who want to become health professionals.

How would you feel if MSI AHEC did not exist?

I'd feel no one would support students like me. When I needed help, I'd go to MSI AHEC to do my work. They helped me stay on track.



Bao-Yen Dang

Dr. Bao-Yen Dang

Medical School



Mentor Connection → SHIP → CAGP → College → MedPrep



MedPrep: Partnerships Providing Medical School Preparation for Underrepresented Students

By Francisco Lucio, Program Director - MSI AHEC



Last fall, MSI AHEC was invited to join the Northeast Regional Alliance (NERA) comprised of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Columbia University School of Physicians and Surgeons, and New Jersey Medical School. The collaboration of these institutions was stewarded to implement programs that will help underrepresented and economically disadvantaged youth enter the medical field. This summer, NERA launched the MedPrep Program provided by the Health Careers Opportunity Program from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration.

Ann-Gel Palmero, Associate Director of Operations-Center for Multicultural & Community Affairs at Mount Sinai School of Medicine notes, “The American Association of Medical Colleges reported that in 2007, Hispanics and

Black/African American applicants to medical school comprised 7.1 % and 7.4 % respectively. MedPrep is our response to this challenge of increasing the diversity of the healthcare workforce.”

MedPrep is a three-summer, intensive medical school preparation program for college freshman interested in attending medical school. MedPrep prepares students for entrance into medical school and success once in medical school.

Dr. Lloyd Sherman, Director of the Center for Excellence in Youth Education at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, explains, “MedPrep is important because it gives students a first-hand glimpse of the world of medicine, its theory, basic sciences and practice; and delivery of health care in hospitals and clinics -- providing for the first time in their early lives the idea of a career through personal encounters with scientists, physicians, medical students, and graduate students in biomedical science: in the end, a mirror in which they might also see themselves.”

The MedPrep curriculum includes MCAT preparation, science enrichment courses, research training and clinical experience. In addition, students receive academic counseling and mock admission interviews.

MSI AHEC helped recruit MedPrep’s first class and is proud to report that 77 students were accepted. Thirty-three students attended MedPrep at New Jersey Medical School, and 44 students attended MedPrep at Columbia University School of Physicians and Surgeons.

The first class will be grouped together for the next two summers. These students will add diversity to the medical field as the next generation of doctors.

My Health Career Summer Club

By Samantha Bernadine, My Health Careers Program Manager - MSI AHEC

My Health Career Summer Club (MHSC) was developed this summer to motivate students on their health career paths. This two-week intensive exploration program is designed for high school and college students interested in entering the health care profession. The goal of the program is three-fold: 1) **DISCOVER** a strong sense of self, an understanding of the health professions and the importance of public service; 2) **CONNECT** with local community hospitals, clinics, and educational institutions; and 3) **TAKE ACTION** by identifying health disparities and the impact on underrepresented and low-income neighborhoods, and educate and inspire others through community projects.

MHSC is a unique opportunity for students to “jump start” their academic plans in a nurturing and supervised environment. This summer, MHSC offered three sessions: July 6-17, July 20-31 or August 3-14. Twenty-nine students participated.

Tiffany Austin, a junior at the High School of Fashion and Design said, “I learned a lot from this program. It informed me of the many pros and cons of health disparities. I recommend this program for any future health profession student.”

Participating in the My Health Career Summer Club enables students to:

- Explore interests and ambitions
- Gain insight into possible career goals
- Develop skills in becoming leaders of tomorrow
- Obtain professional guidance and valuable contacts
- Learn about Enhanced College Level and Technical Training Programs in New York
- Gain a competitive edge for college
- Gain knowledge about health disparities in underrepresented and underserved neighborhoods
- Earn 40 hours of community service



MHC students visiting the Gross Anatomy Department at City College. They were able to view a female cadaver and several human body parts.

Jason Chon, a senior at Staten Island Technical High School explained, “This program provided me with invaluable information and insight on a variety of topics from health insurance to different careers in the medical field. I learned about the disparities in availability and the quality of healthcare in New York and America along with some of the reasons why these disparities exist and how issues are being addressed.”

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Board Members Respond: What makes MSI AHEC Great?

“Its closeness to the community and understanding of community needs. Its efforts to address fundamental community challenges, education and health. Its energy...”

“I see MSI-AHEC's mission and work as a direct extension of the Civil Rights Movement in that our efforts are designed to counteract structural inequalities that are direct legacies of slavery and segregation, particularly in education.”

“Commitment - to young people, to diversifying the health care workforce, to being recognized as a community-wide resource, to growth A lot of talent and hard work...strong leadership at the staff and board level”

“Programs are designed to meet the real academic and non-academic needs of educationally and economically disadvantaged students and bridge these students towards attaining academic success in the educational pipeline.”

“I am a product of MSI-AHEC and this has very much become a strong personal interest of mine. I participated in the very first Summer Health Internship Program offered by MSI-AHEC. I attribute much of my career success to this program, having stayed in contact with Mary Mitchell and many other professionals that I was connected to through MSI-AHEC. After my internship MSI-AHEC was there for me when I graduated college, during my 1st interview, when I was having troubles with my employers, and helping connect me to wonderful resources for support.”