

Empowering Tomorrow's Healthcare Leaders

By Aaditi Diwan and Maison Kennedy

Educators 4 Education (E4E) and Drexel School of Medicine partnered to host its first Health Career Camp for Philadelphia youth. The Camp began on June 24, 2024 and ended on June 28, 2024. E4E partnered with Drexel Medical students through The Arnold P. Gold Foundation in the creation of the Career Development and Health Awareness Summer Program for 12 young men from Philadelphia. The program was also made possible by funding from the City of Philadelphia Anti-Violence Community Expansion Grant.

Doger Norceide and Vikki Rueda-Juarez, students from Drexel University College of Medicine, were the camp facilitators for the week and their goal was to encourage the young men, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, to consider pursuing careers in healthcare. Doger stated that the motivation for creating the health career exploration camp started when working with E4E, "We noticed many students faced adverse childhood events (ACEs) that hindered their growth. We aimed to help them realize their potential by providing tools to cope with challenges based on the 7 C's of resilience: competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control." To successfully teach youth those skills, Doger and Vikki's curriculum focused on "life skills, mentorship, and career development, especially in healthcare, to empower them for a positive future."

During the camp, the 12 high school students learned from faculty and physicians from Drexel University College of Medicine. They learned invaluable professional and medical skills ranging from how to tie a tie to learning how to perform life-saving CPR. Nahdeem age 17, one of the

young men that participated in the camp, reflected on how impactful some of the skills he learned were, "You never really know what's going to happen with a baby, so I really liked the hands-on CPR we were given in order to help a baby in distress. I even got a certificate for the training. I will take these skills with me for life!"

Nahdeem went on to further mention just how impactful the program as a whole was for him, "I recommend this program for people who would like to have an eye-opening experience in ALL aspects of health care. I came in here not knowing what I'd like to do, and now I think I'd like to possibly be a nurse." Many students do not always understand the various paths in healthcare or what they can do in those roles. The goal of this camp was to bridge that gap and inspire young students in Philadelphia to pursue their goals.

Exposing these students to the various fields of healthcare is important in the step towards fostering an inclusive and diverse future workforce. Having these eye-opening experiences early on helps to not only empower the students, but also give them encouragement and mentorship towards whatever future careers they wish to pursue. It's also important to emphasize that regardless of the students' background, they can achieve so much more than they believe. The program ultimately helped them to realize their potential and give them some much needed confidence.

Educators 4 Education looks forward to providing similar programming in the Fall. If people are interested in getting involved or contributing, they can reach out to the office at (215) 792-3171 or via email at info@educators4education.org.




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