

Health Career Pathways



The Dignity Health Foundation seeks to advance innovative health care and education programs in low-income communities to help at-risk students plan for their future and achieve their full potential.

The Need

High school students in low-income, underserved areas face myriad challenges to succeeding in school, graduating, and **launching themselves on a career trajectory**. They often lack family or neighborhood role models for completing high school and post-secondary education, as well as meeting the expectations of a professional work setting. Absent, too, are exciting opportunities to explore the world of work through internships and job shadowing that will help them match their interests and skills to satisfying careers.

These students require comprehensive support to develop their full potential and compete in the marketplace.

The Solution

Exposing students to employment opportunities within health care not only has the potential to strengthen and add diversity to our growing health care sector, it also stands to **enrich the communities served by Dignity Health hospitals**. To be effective, we must respect students' time and intellect, generate curiosity and excitement about the field, and open their eyes to a brighter future. Our hospital staff members are eager to share their enthusiasm, while offering an inside look at their own educational and professional journey.

Through mentoring, educational activities, and internships, we can provide at-risk students with the experience and leadership skills they need to succeed.

The Opportunity

To help level the playing field, Dignity Health will pilot its Workforce Development Program in three regions served by our hospitals. In light of above-average unemployment rates in these areas, we have targeted **Southwest Merced and East Merced, South Kern, and South Sacramento**.

Building upon existing Dignity Health programs, we will expand the number of substantive internships and mentoring opportunities for low-income students.

In addition to developing new external partnerships, **we have secured support for this program at the highest levels of**



Dignity Health. Staff throughout our health system understand the value of investing in and inspiring the young people to help foster more vital communities that enhance the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages.

Project Elements

Our goal is to involve high school seniors in internships in each pilot city, and offer periodic hospital-based programs for interested juniors. **Seniors will be competitively selected based on grades,** teacher recommendations, and completion of a comprehensive application.

Seniors will be assigned a mentor in a hospital department, and participate in job shadowing and other activities. They will also work

with program staff to design health education programming for 9th and 10th graders and encourage younger students to follow in their footsteps in exploring health careers.

An intern coordinator/wellness manager at each pilot site will closely monitor and support students' progress, making referrals for mental health and social services as needed to help students follow their dreams.

Dignity Health will also leverage its position in each pilot community to convene leading employers and other allies to **vastly increase the resources brought to bear in developing future workers.** Strengthening these relationships will help to break down the silos that now impede coordinated activity, helping participating organizations align workforce training at all levels and increase available internship and job opportunities.

The Value of Your Support

Your support will enable Dignity Health to implement the pilot project at three sites under the guidance of an overall project coordinator and site-specific staff, while also leading regional efforts to collaborate on workforce development. Dignity Health employees will contribute substantial mentoring hours, and we envision system-wide expansion upon completion, evaluation, and refinement of the pilot programs.

In Conclusion

Your help in fueling these efforts will improve students' wellbeing and the quality of their career-focused education and exploration, while deepening their level of commitment to the health care field and to serving their communities.

Together, we can all grow stronger.

Join Dignity Health Foundation in this important effort by supporting the Health Career Pathways – visit dignityhealthfoundation.org to get involved, donate, and learn more.