

About AHEC

Gulfcoast North AHEC (GNAHEC) connects students to careers, professionals to communities and communities to better health. We inspire, train, recruit and sustain a diverse and broad range of health professionals to practice in communities where the need is greatest.

GNAHEC is part of the **USF AHEC Program**, which began in 1993 and covers a nine-county area on the central west coast of the state. Community activities are carried out by two local AHEC Centers, Gulfcoast North AHEC in Land O' Lakes serving Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties and Gulfcoast South AHEC in Sarasota, which serves Charlotte, Desoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties.

We inspire youth to choose a career in the health professions with our health career camps, mentoring programs, college preparatory courses and more. We focus on recruiting more minority and disadvantaged youth into health careers because research and experience indicate they will be more likely to care for the medically underserved. As our population becomes more diverse, it is important that our health care workforce reflects that diversity.

These opportunities are designed for students to discover the possibilities available in the health professions, introduce them to the requirements for college and equip them with the tools, information and resources they need to pursue a health career.

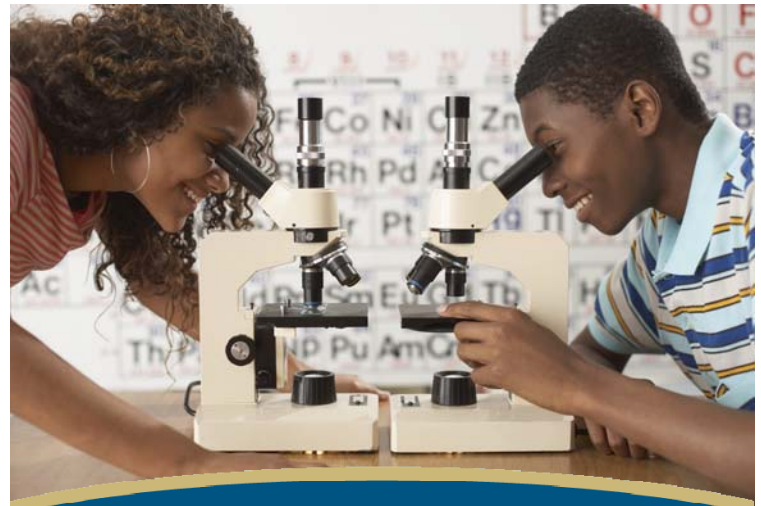
The **"Discovering Health Careers"** guide is designed to provide a reference tool for students, teachers and parents who are seeking college preparation programs and field experiences in the health professions. This guide describes youth health career programs available at USF AHEC and its affiliated center, Gulfcoast North AHEC. The programs offered by AHEC give students the opportunity to learn about various health professions, the health care needs in special populations, and in-depth information about how to approach the rigorous pre-college course requirements for health professions colleges and schools.

To obtain additional copies of this guide or for more information about AHEC programs, contact:

Gulfcoast North AHEC

Phone: (813) 929-1000

www.gnahec.org



Discovering Health Careers

Student, Teacher and Parent Guide

GULFCOAST NORTH
AREA HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER



Connecting students
to careers, professionals to
communities and communities
to better health.

Health Professions Summer Academy

The USF AHEC Health Professions Summer Academy is a two-week residential academic program intended to increase the college preparation skills of high school students interested in health professions careers such as medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, allied health and public health.

The Academy strongly encourages enrollment of students from groups underrepresented in the health professions. Those groups include:

- African Americans
- Mexican Americans
- Native Hawaiians
- Pacific Islanders
- Puerto Ricans
- Low-income, urban or rural community students



Program Activities

During the two weeks in the program, students have an opportunity to engage in the following activities:

- SAT/standardized test preparation courses
- College admission workshops (including financial aid and scholarship information)
- Visits to USF Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health and School of Physical Therapy
- Visits to Tampa General Hospital and Shriners Children's Hospital
- College preparation workshops and seminars

Responsibilities

Students must adhere to all rules throughout the two-week program. Failure to comply with agreed rules will result in dismissal of the student from the Academy.

- Students must attend all classroom and extracurricular activities
- Students will be unable to check-out for overnight or weekends at home, except for emergencies
- Only consenting parents are authorized to visit student participants. No other visitors including boyfriends or girlfriends are permitted

11th Grade

- ☑ Obtain an exam schedule for the ACT/SAT. Select a date to take the ACT/SAT
- ☑ Gather a list of at least 10 colleges/universities and research their admission information. Visit them if you can. Apply to colleges and universities
- ☑ Be aware of admission deadlines and other requirements for colleges you are considering
- ☑ Research financial aid and scholarship opportunities
- ☑ Meet with your guidance counselor and/or teachers regarding your course schedule
- ☑ Look for people who can write recommendation letters for you
- ☑ Continue with extracurricular activities, including volunteer and community service opportunities
- ☑ Continue to search for summer health career programs

12th Grade

- ☑ Do not slack! Continue to take challenging courses and commit to completing community service hours
- ☑ If scores can improve, take the ACT/SAT in the fall
- ☑ Complete and submit college applications by October
- ☑ After January 1st, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for grants and free federal aid (www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- ☑ Wait for college admission decisions and financial aid award letters
- ☑ Once accepted to a selected college, inform the other colleges/universities about your decision

For more information on health career planning, contact:

Coordinator of Clinical Training
and Enrichment
Gulfcoast North AHEC, Inc.
17819 State Road 52
Land O'Lakes, FL 34638
(813) 929-1000
www.gnahec.org

College & Financial Aid Resources

Preparing your child for college can be a daunting task. The information and tips provided here will help your child choose the right college, complete a college application, and understand all financial aid options available during the college decision-making process.

Selecting Colleges

Select a college based on your child's unique needs, interests, and goals. Every college is different, but there are also some personal criteria that you need to consider when making your selection. Let's begin by analyzing the two basic types of post-secondary education institutions. They are:

- ☑ **Community, Technical, and Junior Colleges** - Most of these colleges offer education and training programs that are two years in length or shorter. The programs often lead to a license, a certificate, an associate of arts (A.A.) degree, an associate of science (A.S.) degree, or an associate of applied science (A.A.S.) degree. A.A. and A.S. degree programs in an academic discipline are often comparable to the first two years of a general academic program offered by a four-year college or university. In many cases, students who earn two-year degrees may enter four-year schools and receive credit toward a B.A. or B.S. degree.
- ☑ **4-year Colleges and Universities** - These schools usually offer a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree, which lays the foundation for more advanced studies and professional work. Some colleges and universities offer graduate and professional degrees. These institutions may be either public or private.

Here are some characteristics you will need to consider to help your child choose the right college.

- ☑ In-State or Out-of-State
- ☑ Public or Private
- ☑ Academic Programs
- ☑ College Size and Class Size
- ☑ Location
- ☑ Campus Life/Student Activities
- ☑ Cost



Applying to Colleges

To successfully complete a college application and apply to colleges, student's must budget and manage their time, follow each college's instructions, and most importantly, take a good look at themselves and their interests. There are a variety of on-line and print resources that will assist student's with developing a timeline and checklist for college applications. Below are few websites to assist your child with their college application:

- ☑ www.collegeboard.com
- ☑ www.petersons.com
- ☑ www.act.org



USF AHEC Access Day

Access Day is designed to inform high school students of career opportunities in the health professions such as medicine, nursing, public health, physical therapy, pharmacy, and allied health. Access Day has been very successful in educating disadvantaged and underrepresented students who have no previous exposure to higher education. It provides a forum for them to discover the possibilities available in various health careers. Students residing in Charlotte, Citrus, DeSoto, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties are invited to participate in Access Day activities. These counties are located in the USF AHEC nine-county service area.

Access Day is held in the spring and fall of each year at USF Health in Tampa. Invitations are sent to high school science, mathematics and health teachers as well as guidance counselors and career advisors. Students interested in health careers are selected to participate by their teachers.

Access Day Participants

Access Day activities are supported by the faculty, staff, and students at USF main campus and USF Health as well as the surrounding health care community including:

- ◆ Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
- ◆ H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute
- ◆ Tampa Shriners Children's Hospital
- ◆ University Community Hospital
- ◆ Hillsborough Community College
- ◆ St. Petersburg College
- ◆ Gulfcoast North AHEC
- ◆ Gulfcoast South AHEC



For more information on Access Day, contact:

University of South Florida
AHEC Program Office
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. MDC 76
Tampa, FL 33612-4799
Phone: 813-974-3507
www.health.usf.edu/ahec

Gulfoast North AHEC Health Career Expeditions

Gulfoast North AHEC offers funding to community-based organizations to develop and implement “Health Career Expeditions” in Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas counties. Although GNAHEC’s Health Career Expeditions vary in many aspects, they all seek to effectively recruit students into health profession careers while providing a valuable and rewarding experience for the students. An essential component of the program involves the recruitment of students from underserved, rural, and inner-city communities or disadvantaged backgrounds into primary care health fields, including medicine, nursing, and other health professions. The purpose of the expeditions are to expose students to health careers, assist them in establishing a career in health, and encourage them to work in underserved areas.

Health Career Expeditions are offered in Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas counties and in most cases are available to middle and high school students. To obtain information about upcoming Health Career Expeditions or to inquire about Request for Proposals (RFP), contact:

Coordinator of Clinical Training & Enrichment
Gulfoast North AHEC, Inc.
Phone: (813) 929-1000
www.gnahec.org

For more information about AHEC programs in Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough counties, contact:



Gulfoast North AHEC, Inc.

17819 State Road 52
Land O'Lakes, FL 34638
(813) 929-1000
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USF AHEC Program Office
College of Medicine, MDC 76
12901 Bruce B Downs Blvd
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 974-3507
www.health.usf.edu/ahec

The Application Process

When completing a college application, either online or written, there are several important documents that must be included with your application. Some of the documents will be sent with the application and others will be sent to the college by other people. Once your child has decided which colleges to apply to, make a checklist of all the deadlines and tasks to complete. Remember to allow time for other people to assist you. Below are some items that will need to be included with the college application:

- ☑ Application fee
- ☑ High school transcript
- ☑ Admissions test scores (SAT and/or ACT)
- ☑ Letters of recommendation
- ☑ Essays (for some institutions, not all)
- ☑ Interview (for some institutions, not all)



After you submit all of the required application materials, contact your colleges and confirm that they were received.

Financial Aid Resources

There are many options when it comes to paying for college. Become familiar with the various forms and sources of financial aid. Millions of students across the United States receive some type of financial aid. Financial Aid is available in four forms:

- ☑ Grants - Free money
- ☑ Scholarships - Free money
- ☑ Work-study - Money earned which can be applied to your tuition
- ☑ Loans - Money borrowed that must be repaid, with interest



Financial Aid Awards include:

- ☑ Merit Based - Aid based on GPA and/or test scores (*see Bright Futures below*)
- ☑ Need Based - Aid based on financial need (*see FAFSA below*)
- ☑ Talent or Career Based - Aid based on the students unique talent or career interest (*see NHSC below*)

Financial Aid Resources for Students:

- ☑ Bright Futures Scholarship: www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf
- ☑ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): www.fafsa.ed.gov
- ☑ The College Board: www.collegeboard.com/pay
- ☑ Fast Web: www.fastweb.com
- ☑ College is Possible: www.collegeispossible.org
- ☑ Peterson’s Financial Aid: www.petersons.com/finaid
- ☑ National Health Service Corps (NHSC): www.nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov (*for students interested in health careers*)

Although the majority of financial aid is provided by the Federal Government, State Government, and colleges and universities, students are encouraged to seek other sources of aid including private sources from companies, banks, community groups, and civic organizations.

Plan to be successful!

Brain Expansions Scholastic Training (B.E.S.T.) Program

The Brain Expansions Scholastic Training (B.E.S.T.) Program is an East Tampa Initiative that focuses on engaging middle school and high school students in health careers while enhancing their academics using memory skills and chess. Components of the program include after-school tutoring/mentoring, educational projects, and a five-week summer program.

The program's primary goal is to ignite interest and expose minority and underrepresented students to careers in science technology and health.

During the school year, B.E.S.T. students have the opportunity to participate in various after-school activities including:

- ☑ Educational projects that bring real life scenarios into the classroom lessons
- ☑ Memory skills training that lead to long term retention which is needed for academic success
- ☑ Intense tutoring that incorporates memory and meaning to their school assignments.
- ☑ Interactive comprehensive math and science enrichment program designed to teach students about the brain and nervous system
- ☑ Activities that promote safe and healthy behaviors
- ☑ Chess classes that enhance and sharpen mental functions (creativity, patience and critical thinking)

These multidimensional activities give students the opportunity to discover their own strengths and to learn to create school work that is praiseworthy. B.E.S.T. after-school program is currently at six Hillsborough County middle and high schools.

In the summer, the B.E.S.T. program offers a five-week program that allows students to participate in hands-on activities and field trips to various health care facilities. Students are introduced to different health professions including primary care careers in medicine, dentistry, physical therapy, radiology, optometry, and more.

For more information on the B.E.S.T. program or to obtain an application, contact:

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Land O'Lakes, FL 34638
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Health Careers Presentations

Health Careers Presentations are provided by Gulfcoast North AHEC and Gulfcoast South AHEC in conjunction with Life Skills, Medical Skills, and Anatomy & Physiology classes at middle and high schools in the GNAHEC and GSAHEC service areas which includes Charlotte, Citrus, DeSoto, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties.

Middle and high school students are given information about AHEC, its mission and goals. The purpose of the presentations is to:

- ◆ Educate students on a variety of health careers
- ◆ Identify schools in Florida that students can attend for health professions training
- ◆ Provide insight on how to research the type of health professions programs offered at each school
- ◆ Discuss the benefits of a health career
- ◆ Provide financial aid information

The Health Careers Presentations motivate students to start thinking about a career and help them to establish some short and long term goals in an effort to achieve the necessary training for that career. It is AHEC's goal to encourage students (especially minorities and the underserved) to see the health care industry as a potential future employer.

Students, schools, and community organizations are encouraged to take advantage of the broad array of health career programs and resources available at each AHEC Center. Visit the Florida Health Careers Guide to explore career possibilities in a wide array of health fields.

www.flahec.org/hlthcareers/



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