



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT PROFILE

Rochester General Hospital/New Vision Medical Careers Program
Rochester, New York

About The New Vision Medical Careers Program

Originally launched in 1994, the New Vision Medical Careers Program is a one-year program that allows high school seniors to explore careers in healthcare through partnerships with Rochester General Hospital. Rochester General Hospital is large inner-city hospital that also serves as a teaching hospital.

Students participate in a rigorous academic program with hands-on experience in medical careers. Students participate in four 10-week rotations in different medical departments of the health care facility. This placement provides the student with an in-depth look at the responsibilities of patient care in a health care facility.

The New Vision program is offered through the Monroe #1 BOCES to students in partner school districts that include the suburbs of Rochester, New York. It serves 20 high school seniors who apply to participate in the program and was originally launched in the early 1990s.

Student Characteristics

Admission to the program is selective, and students are typically high performers academically. There is not a pre-requisite to have taken CTE health occupations or related courses prior to enrollment in New Vision.

In most years, including the most recent (2012-13), enrollment is about 80 percent female and 20 percent male. Students are reflective of the populations of their sending school districts, mostly white and from middle class families. As an inner-city teaching hospital, most of the patients that the students work with are poor and largely African-American.

A large percentage of the students intend to study in a healthcare field such as pre-med, Physicians Assistant, Nursing, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy. Of the current group of 20 students, two students have determined that the health care industry is not a good fit and that they will pursue a different career path. Program Instructor Gina Lord considers this decision a “victory” in itself, as it will save the students both time and money from a misdirected college career.

Program Structure

Students are on site from 7:45am to 11 am and return to their home school in the afternoon. They can either be transported by public school transportation or use their own cars.

The program is taught in an integrated format, but has been validated to offer both academic and CTE credits. Classroom instruction happens on Monday and Friday, and work-experience learning takes place on the remaining weekdays. The program conveys credit for 12th grade English, government, economics, and health, as well as three CTE credits.

Students are also eligible for up to 15 dual enrollment credits through a thorough dual enrollment agreement with Monroe Community College. Students pay one-third of the typical community college credits and receive a college transcript (with no indication that the credits were earned as high school students.) While most of the students go on to a four-year college program, the credits are fully transferable, subject to the program requirements of the college to which they matriculate. The elective credits awarded by the college are: economics, community service learning, leadership development, health and wellness, and death and dying. If a student struggles with the course, they will be removed from the postsecondary enrollment so the course does not reflect poorly on their future postsecondary efforts.

Partnership Model of Work-site Learning

At the beginning of the program, students participate in a general hospital orientation experience and then a one-week patient care tech. The hospital considers itself a teaching hospital, so that is a normal part of the hospital culture.

During the forty-week school year, students participate in about four 10-week rotations. In each work-site, the program specifies what students should learn and has students perform hands-on work with the medical staff; it is not meant to be a “look over the shoulder” job shadow, but to allow the student to become a productive member of the team.

The individual departments review the skill level of each student, teach them new skills, and assign them tasks that are within the student’s skill level and within legal parameters. Although there is no official requirement that the department teach skills to the students, the hospital as a whole embraces the teaching-hospital approach, so students typically learn skills and are considered an active part of the team during their rotation.

Emphasizing Meaningful Work

Program Director Gina Lord explains that the “kids gain a lot and give up a lot” to participate in the New Vision program, gaining hands-on experience. She works with each department to make sure that the student experience is more than just carrying out the lowest-skilled tasks. This is important for student learning and also for equity among the students.

Students also are required to conduct community-service projects as part of the program; this helps students develop leadership and teamwork skills. Each year, students worked with the hospital’s pediatric clinic to host a “Safe” Halloween event for the patients and families. (many live in areas in which it is unsafe to participate in “traditional” Halloween events) In past years, they conducted a toy drive, hosted a holiday party, managed a book drive, and led a hand-washing/hygiene campaign for staff. The service programs are suggested by the students or the hospital to meet specific needs.

Maintaining Multiple Departmental Relationships

While Rochester General is one legal entity, there are multiple departments with which the program instructor has to maintain contact. There are between 18 and 25 departments with which she must maintain relations at any one time. Typically, most departments only take one student at a time, so Ms. Lord must monitor students in 18 to 20 different offices on an ongoing basis.

Some departments opt out of the program at times, particularly when the department is going through a leadership transition or has a significant turnover of frontline staff; so they can provide the best learning opportunity.

Ms. Lord says that the most important aspect of keeping the work experiences is to maintain a strong relationship with each department in the organization. She says that a large part of her job is “public relations.” She works to keep lines of communications with staff and visits regularly with each team, making a point to observe her students in action.

Pay-off for the Hospital

Rochester General Hospital makes a significant commitment, not only hosting the students in about 20 rotations at any one time, but also in providing adequate classroom space for the program. The goal of the hospital is training their future workforce.

When asked about the value that New Vision students bring to the hospital environment, supervisors offered the following responses:

- *“The biggest benefit of having a New Vision student on the floor is having a fresh face that is eager to learn that gives the time and attention to the patients. “*
- *“New Vision students are able to assist the nurses in the direct care of our cath patients by doing EKG's after instructions, and assist in transferring patients to discharge area or to inpatient room.”*
- *“The New Vision students in our unit provide an amazing opportunity to introduce them to and share positive experiences in the medical field. We have a wide variety of patients across the age spectrum. Our unit is very much a teamwork environment and we love to teach. The students are so bright, energetic and sponges to learn. It is an awesome collaborative program. I feel honored to be a part of it.”*

Continuing Relationships Between Students and the Hospital

It is not uncommon for students to get hired for a part-time medical patient care job at the hospital, which students keep while they are enrolled in a local college. Some college students are enrolled as far as an hour away from Rochester, but the hospital, as a 24-hour-a-day operation, offers tremendous flexibility and a good rate of pay, between \$9 and \$11 hourly for part-time work.

St. Ann’s Community Site

A similar program with students in the New Vision program is conducted at the St. Ann’s Community, a senior living facility also in Rochester. The worksite skills obtained at St. Ann’s are somewhat different than at Rochester General, but the high school academic credits and dual enrollment credits offered are the same at both the St. Ann’s and Rochester General sites.

Contact Information

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