

# CareerTEC's Health Occupations Youth Apprenticeship

## Pathways Spotlight Briefs

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pathways  
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### Health Occupations Youth Apprenticeship (HOYA)

Grade Levels: 11-12

Students: 67 in HOYA I and 21 in HOYA II

The Career and Technical Education Consortium (CareerTEC) is an Illinois Education for Employment (EFE) regional delivery system that serves six high school districts in Northwest Illinois: Dakota, Durand, Freeport, Orangeville, Pearl City, and Pecatonica. CareerTEC oversees the delivery of Career and Technical Education programs, dual credit, and industry-recognized certificates to prepare students for postsecondary opportunities. CareerTEC offers programs in auto body, auto mechanics, cosmetology, early childhood, graphic design, health occupations, construction trades, business, culinary occupations, welding fabrication and print reading, Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training, and computer information systems. For additional information regarding CareerTEC (e.g., programs, programs of study, newsletters, and general information), please visit <http://www.careertec-il.org/>

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### College and Career Preparedness Through Apprenticeship

This brief describes CareerTEC's Health Occupations Youth Apprenticeship (HOYA) program and outlines numerous positive effects that this initiative has for its student participants.

### Health Occupations Youth Apprenticeship Program for College and Career Readiness

The Health Occupations Youth Apprenticeship I and II (HOYA), a flagship CareerTEC program, operates classes in Freeport, Illinois. All high schools in the CareerTEC EFE system participate. HOYA I and II are dual credit courses offered in conjunction with Highland Community College, and utilize apprenticeship, job shadowing, intense lab work, and on-site visits to promote college and career readiness in various health occupations. HOYA I is a comprehensive exploration into health care occupations that provides foundational skills and broad-based training in a variety of health care careers. HOYA II features on-site clinical work experiences and academics related to a specific health career or health industry area of student interest.

HOYA I and HOYA II are yearlong, double-period courses. Junior and senior students are eligible to enroll in HOYA I, those who complete the program earn two high school credits per year (4 credits at Freeport High School). Students in HOYA I are dual enrolled through Highland Community College, where they earn 8 credits by successfully completing Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) theory and clinical training. Additionally, HOYA I participants, can earn CNA certification by successfully completing 40 hours of clinical training typically offered in the evenings and by passing the state examination (given at Highland Community College). Juniors who have completed HOYA I with a grade of C or better and have a 95% class attendance rate may enroll in HOYA II. Through HOYA II students earn 2 high school credits (4 at Freeport) and 3 credits while dual enrolled at Highland Community College after passing the Medical Terminology exam. HOYA II prepares students for their particular health career of interest through a combination of on-site clinical work experiences and academics. Additionally, HOYA II students spend a minimum of 8 hours each week working at health care internship sites.

The HOYA program provides the foundational skills and broad-based training necessary for healthcare occupations. While many participants seek careers in nursing, HOYA also prepares students for a range of healthcare occupations, including medical coding, mortuary science, veterinary medicine, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, dentistry, community and public health, radiography, chiropractic, and holistic/homeopathic care. Classroom academics are combined with introductory on-site visits of numerous health careers. On-site visits to professionals working in various health careers enrich and make relevant in-class study. HOYA courses are designed to help prepare students for more in-depth postsecondary study toward a particular career in health care using hands-on study, including work-based experiences.



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**Impact on students.** HOYA I sets high expectations for the students and encourages self-direction, with the overarching goals of college and workforce preparedness. 21st Century Skills, such as Team work, also are stressed. According to Elizabeth Chambers, HOYA Lead Instructor and Program Coordinator, healthcare invariably features collaborative workspaces. Chambers stated, while she hopes that students determine a career pathway, part of the HOYA mission is for students to “find out what they don’t want to do.” HOYA II deploys both self-study and group projects. Between November and April, HOYA I students must choose between 10-12 job shadowing sites. Two days before visiting a site for job shadowing, students submit memos that outline the career outlook, necessary skills, and responsibilities for the particular position of the individuals they will shadow, and they generate 10 interview questions. Afterwards, students submit a reflection about the experience. HOYA II students also submit formal papers (case studies, for example) at the end of each quarter. Chambers also makes regular visits to the internship sites to monitor and evaluate student progress.

Although obtaining CNA certification is not a requirement for students in HOYA, many choose to earn this credential. Those scoring 80% or better in the 1st semester are then eligible to sign up for clinicals towards completion of the CNA certification process. Last year, 82% of eligible participants passed the Illinois CNA state exam. HOYA has formed partnerships with three local long-term care facilities for students to complete their hours: Freeport Rehabilitation Center, Liberty Village, and Presence Health.

*“Students are like trees, and we [fellow students, teachers, sponsoring professionals] are the branches, and without light and energy, they cannot grow. Without others, they cannot grow.”*

~ Ms. Elizabeth Chambers, HOYA Lead Instructor and Program Coordinator

**Key points.** As Program Coordinator, Chambers is conscious about elevating the number of underrepresented students who are enrolled in HOYA. In 2013, 30% of HOYA participants were from underrepresented populations. Candidates for HOYA must submit an application and complete an interview. Chambers uses these gateway events to accept students with a variety of academic interests and abilities. (Applying rising juniors must have the prerequisite keyboarding skills, grade point average of C or better, have satisfactorily completed Algebra I, and have at least an 8th grade reading ability.) Chambers has discovered that HOYA provides students direction and motivation, leading to improved academic performance beyond HOYA. Additionally, HOYA’s partnership with Highland College enables college field trips, dual enrollment opportunities, hands-on activities with cadavers, and tours of the EMT department for participating students. Partnerships with many local employers are key to the numerous work based learning opportunities.

**Program notes.** Chambers attributes much of HOYA’s successes (especially its growing enrollment, completion rates, and increasing state exam scores) to the involvement of student leaders, faculty, administrators, and various sponsors from the local healthcare industry. HOYA instructors and administrators are excited to be a part of this apprenticeship program, and Chambers asserts that leaders must be empathetic and attuned to student needs. Guest speakers, including recent appearances by physical therapists, nutritionists, a mortician, a firefighter, and mental health professionals make relevant and extend in-class study. Additionally, HOYA’s pedagogy embraces three different learning styles: hands-on (bodily kinesthetic), visual, and auditory. Chambers attributes many of their successes to this sensitivity to diverse learning styles. Chambers urges administrators seeking to implement a program like HOYA to have a strong accountability process in place. To this end, the Illinois Department of Public Health provides program feedback, allowing for a process of continual evaluation. Students also participate in the continual improvement process by evaluating instructors at the end of each term.

HOYA webpage: <http://www.careertec-il.org/vnews/display.v/ART/46d2fcb25c4ff>

CareerTEC Partnerships: <http://www.careertec-il.org/vnews/display.v/ART/2014/04/29/535f9c5907446>

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