

Workforce Solutions Spotlight: Reading Hospital – Tower Health Internship program connects students with careers in health care

As Pennsylvania ages, many health care professionals are reaching retirement age just as the need for health care is rapidly growing. Hospitals and health systems are leading the way in growing the next generation of health care professionals to care for Pennsylvanians and our communities.



This week, Reading Hospital – Tower Health welcomed its new class of high school interns. Twenty-nine students from a dozen local school districts will experience working in a variety of clinical and non-clinical disciplines, including nursing, cardiology, Children’s Health Center, emergency department, labor and delivery, oncology, Center for Public Health, and the McGlinn Cancer Institute. The interns will also build their professional skillset in areas such as financial literacy, resume writing and mock interviews, and health care career roundtables.

“September is an exciting month for us because it’s when we welcome our new interns to Reading Hospital and get to expose them to all the moving parts that make a healthcare system function,” said Desha Dickson, vice president of diversity, equity, inclusion, and community wellness at Tower Health. “We value education and growth within our system and strive to share that knowledge with our community through the various programs and opportunities available with us.”

Of the 88 students who have gone through the program, close to a third have remained engaged with Reading Hospital, participating in job shadowing, college internships, and—for 12 participants, returning to the hospital for employment. All 30 of last year’s graduates are pursuing higher education and 97 percent are seeking careers in health care.

The High School Internship Program is one of the hospital’s **Pathways Programs**, which offer opportunities to learn about health care careers through hands-on experience, job shadowing, and volunteering.

HAP and Pennsylvania’s hospital community are committed to developing tomorrow’s health care workforce. In addition to their own initiatives and community partnerships, hospitals are advocating for public policies to grow and support the health care workforce.

Learn more about HAP and the hospital community’s workforce advocacy [online](#).

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