

Reviving our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development

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Institutions that educate the nation's future healthcare professionals must work together to devise innovative solutions to the myriad of challenges we face.

Education and training initiatives that successfully transform health care will do the following:

- Address healthcare workforce shortages in clinical and non-clinical areas.
- Train and retool practicing professionals in areas where the need exists.
- Educate and train the future workforce utilizing innovative models.

- The workforce needs facing GHS:
 - Physician and physician extenders, i.e., physician assistants and nurse practitioners. Needs vary by specialty.
 - Registered nurses, particularly at the baccalaureate and masters level. The current oversupply of nurses will not last long as baby boomer nurses retire and the U.S. population ages. As technology advances, we need highly skilled nurses.
 - Strong programs in other clinical areas – pharmacy, therapies (physical, occupational, speech), mental health counseling and social work (social problems contribute greatly to health status), wellness (prevention) – especially nutrition, smoking cessation and exercise.

Overall, we need to prepare for an aging America – helping individuals stay independent by getting supportive services without necessarily being admitted to a hospital or long-term care setting.

- The key qualities that graduates need to excel in the local workforce, especially the health field:
 - “Hard skills” – strong STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) at the undergraduate level for positions requiring graduate education. Rigorous clinical training at the undergraduate or graduate level (depending on the profession).
 - “Soft skills,” such as conflict management, critical thinking, team building, leadership and communication.

- The partnerships/pipeline programs GHS has developed with local K-12 and institutions of higher education to address these workforce needs:
 - GHS' newest pipeline program is the Medical Experience (MedEx) Academy, which launched summer 2010 and through which GHS collaborates with academic institutions to provide clinical and non-clinical experiences for students interested in careers in health

care. The pipeline is a critical component of the expanded University of South Carolina School of Medicine-Greenville campus.

- The program works with K-12 and higher education to enhance student career decision-making through “real life” experiences. It targets high school seniors and college undergraduates.
- College-level pipeline partners include but not limited to the following: Anderson University, Claflin University, Clemson University, ECPI College of Technology, Furman University, Greenville Technical College, South Carolina State University and University of South Carolina.
- The pipeline runs broad and deep; it also includes AHEC Minority Council, Boy Scouts of America, GHS Minority Council, Greenville County Schools, the Governors School for Science & Math, S.C. Alliance of Black School Educators, Upstate AHEC and Upstate Coalition.
- Student support includes potential scholarships, academic development and financial assistance