

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

(Section 46a-68-93)

September 2023

This section was found to be in compliance in the previous filing, and there were no proposals/recommendations.

UConn Health acknowledges that the development and implementation of programs not covered elsewhere in Sections 46a-68-75 through 46a-68-114, inclusive, is an important part of the road to affirmative action. Accordingly, UConn Health's executive and senior management staff view these regulations as a minimum framework in which to further develop innovative comprehensive programs and to create opportunities for potential and existing staff that may not otherwise be available. Such innovations work to ensure the full and fair participation of protected class people in all areas of the employment process.

Examples of innovative programs are as follows:

- Summer employment programs
- Youth programs
- Apprenticeships
- Work-study programs
- Internships
- Day care programs
- Creation of new positions
- Outreach for high school and college students
- Reassignments
- Positive, results-oriented program designed to achieve affirmative action.

The Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs also actively engages underrepresented medical and dental students and supports those who are enrolled throughout the academic year. Creating a pipeline of programs has been successful in helping participants realize their dreams of becoming health care providers. This department-focused outreach is instrumental in aiding the development of the future health career workforce in the United States.

UConn Health has developed and implemented the following initiatives to further its commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action:

Utilization of noncompetitive programs

Opportunities were created that resulted in full and fair participation of all protected group members using promotions through re-classifications. Human Resources has a formalized policy for reclassification of filled positions which sets forth a procedure to determine if an employee is

performing duties outside of their current classification. Noncompetitive advancement is available in medical technologist, physical therapy, social worker positions. In the area of nursing, the Health Unit Clerk (Office Assistants) positions are under filled at the Clerk Typist level and the incumbents are reclassified after meeting the training and experience requirements. There are two (2) nursing clinical ladder programs, one for inpatient and one for outpatient nurses. Both programs have established criteria for promotion and employees can be promoted by applying for and meeting the standards. New graduate nurses are brought in at a CN1 Level and promoted to the journeyman CN2 Level after completion of the probationary period and orientation.

Day Care Program

The Creative Child Care Center is located on the lower campus of UConn Health, and it is primarily for UConn Health employees. It provides programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergarten-aged children. The program enlists qualified, degreed teachers with low student to teacher ratios. The Center uses students from Early Childhood Education programs to assist in maintaining ratios as well as providing an educational experience for the students. This facility remained at full capacity throughout the plan year allowing employees to benefit from a program that allows them full and fair participation in UConn Health employment opportunities.

Internships/Externships

The Clinical Engineering department provides clinical internships for graduate students in the Master of Biomedical Engineering program. The internships afford participants the opportunity to work in a health care environment. The internships are for a period of one (1) year.

The University Medical Group (UMG) has contracts with the following educational facilities to provide both internships and externships for students in the fields of nursing, medical assisting, and other related areas:

Stone Academy	Sawyer Business School
Stony Brook University School of Nursing	University of Hartford
Quinnipiac University Branford Hall - Southington and Windsor	University of Connecticut Department of Communication Sciences
Lincoln Technical School	Porter and Chester Institute - Rocky Hill, Enfield, Watertown Campuses
Institute of Healing Arts and Sciences	Northwestern Connecticut Community College

Saint Joseph College - Psychology Department/Advanced Practitioner Registered Nurse Program	Gateway College
Goodwin College	Manchester Community College
Yale School of Nursing	
Tunxis Community College	

UMG is continuing to develop contracts with other facilities to expand this program.

UConn Health’s School of Medicine’s **Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs** has spent nearly two decades of outreach efforts partnering with the generous support of the **Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI)**. This relationship has been truly incredible and transformative for the youth of Connecticut and the future of medicine. These programs have been critical in getting more young people from across the state, of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, interested in medicine and science and to go on to enter the health professions. It has served as a continuous pipeline for middle school, high school, and college students of diverse backgrounds to realize their dream of becoming future doctors, dentists, and health professionals.

UConn Health’s School of Dental Medicine also enjoys strong partnership in the many opportunities offered through its **Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs** and the **Aetna Health Professions Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI) Pipeline**. These pipeline programs enable UConn Health to enrich its applicant pool and empower underrepresented minorities to pursue dental schooling. UConn Health’s Health Career Opportunity Programs serve as a model for professional schools to emulate. There are few dental schools that directly participate in similar pipeline programs. For the dental profession to represent the patients they treat; UConn Health is committed to inspiring students to unlock their potential and pursue a career in the health care field. The Health Career Opportunity Programs and the Aetna HPPI Pipeline programs are very successful in meeting this challenge. These programs are made possible by the participation of faculty, staff, and mentors who serve as the backbone of the initiative. The focus is to present the possibility of a career in dentistry to underrepresented students. The belief that the level of dedication and intellectual curiosity at such a young age is not only admirable, but a surefire way to pave a road to success.

In the SOM, 24% of the graduating class are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars, while 31% of the graduating class in the SODM are Health Career Opportunity Programs scholars. UConn Health is also proud that 59% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SOM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students, and 34% of the underrepresented students currently enrolled in the SODM are Aetna HPPI pipeline students.

The Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine are actively committed to the recruitment, retention and graduation of diverse medical and dental students who can provide culturally competent health care. The Biomedical Science Graduate Program is committed to supporting graduate students from diverse backgrounds who will discover the medical cures of tomorrow. The program supports currently enrolled medical, dental and graduate students of diverse backgrounds and has expanded its programs for middle school, high school and college students to realize their dreams of becoming health professionals. Participants in the programs have successfully completed their undergraduate degrees and have actualized their goals of entering medical, dental or graduate school. It is for this reason that the programs and activities sponsored through the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs are recognized as a national model.

In the Summer 2022 program, 102 middle school, high school, and college students participated through the Aetna HPPI. During the 2022-2023 academic year, approximately 300 students are anticipated to participate in the Aetna HPPI Saturday Academy and college programs virtually.

Non-Paid Student Educational Experiences

This program allows departments to host/precept students that may be interested in pursuing a career in the health professions and would like to provide him/her with observational or internship experience. The goal of this program is to consistently pursue excellence and innovation in the education of health professionals; the discovery, dissemination, and utilization of new knowledge; the provision of patient care; and the promotion of wellness.

Summer Employment Programs

UConn Health hires summer students to work in areas such as the library, pharmacy, volunteer service, clinics, nursing units, research, administration, etc. The Department of Orthopedics has a program that is designed for students in undergraduate programs that provide knowledge of molecular and cell biology to work with biomaterials and tissue engineering. The program is for an eight (8) week period and designed to provide experience in biomaterials and tissue engineering and gives priority consideration to underrepresented minorities.

Aetna Health Professionals Partnership

UConn Health partners with the Aetna Health Professionals Partnership Initiative (Aetna HPPI Pipeline) to co-sponsor innovative programs and initiatives for Summer Employment Programs, Youth Programs, Work-Study Programs, Outreach for high school and college students, and several positive, results-oriented programs designed to achieve affirmative action. These partnership initiatives included the following during the annual reporting period:

Great Explorations Doctors Academy (for Middle School Students)

This science enrichment program engages 6th to 8th grade students in hands-on science activities and college exploration. This year a networking commitment was established with the Connecticut Science Center to allow students a more comprehensive and focused experience beyond the regular exhibits at the center.

This program provides educational enrichment in science, math, reading and college preparation activities during the academic school year at the following schools: E.B. Kennelly, CREC Two Rivers Magnet Middle School and Betances STEM Magnet.

The program offers a six-week, Monday through Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program for rising 8th grade participants. Students receive instruction in language arts, math, science, college awareness classes and engage in educational programs to raise awareness in the health professions. Students are provided breakfast and lunch. If the student is a Hartford resident, transportation is provided as well.

The program consists of a 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where 8th grade students can continue to strengthen their academic skills and college preparation. Parent/Guardian Orientation Workshops are held for all students participating in the 6-week summer and 30-week Saturday Academy Program. It is geared towards students who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) and demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. Parental Seminar Series are held for parents/guardians of all students participating in the program.

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Program (for High School Students)

This is an annual conference which brings together high school and college students to explore health care issues and prepare for health careers. It is geared for students who have expressed an interest in a career in the health professions and is beneficial in helping mentees gain insight into successful preparation for an application to professional schools. This program is student run and aimed at meeting the long-term objective of increasing underrepresented student representation in health professions programs. The program provides an opportunity for college and high school students to seek advice from mentors enrolled in professional health profession programs. A network is established which includes the middle school through professional school educational community. It is designed so that medical, dental, graduate, nursing and allied health students serve as mentors to college and high school students. And is sponsored by the local chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Student National Dental Association and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Program

The program is for 11th and 12th grade students, who are in state residents. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants. The students who are interested in pursuing careers in medicine, dental medicine, and the biological sciences. Applicants are selected by their school guidance counselors or science teachers.

The program consists of a series of eight weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by faculty members of the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine in two-hour lecture sessions. The topics include information on molecular biology, pharmacology, cardiology, oncology, and dental medicine.

High School Student Research Apprentice Program

This program is for 11th and 12th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants. It is a four-week summer program which provides students with research experience in one of the basic science or clinical laboratories. The 2022 summer program was held virtually for four weeks as a component of the Senior Doctors Academy. The students also participated in virtual presentations on Research Training & Responsible Conduct by Environmental Health & Safety, and a virtual UConn Health clinical simulation tour. At the end of the summer, the students gave oral presentations of their research results during a special virtual research symposium.

Jumpstart Doctors Academy

Is designed for 9th and 10th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is given to former Great Explorations participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

It includes daily classes in language arts, math, science careers and college awareness preparation, integrating PSAT strategies and support across the curriculum. Enrichment experiences both in and outside of the classroom are also included in the six-week, Monday-Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program.

There is an optional 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions. The program provides assessments and evaluations throughout a student's affiliation with Jumpstart and includes pre, mid, and post testing; student and parent surveys; mid and final progress reports; etc.

Classes are held at UConn Health and transportation is provided to Hartford residents. Students earn stipends while introducing young adults who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) to the medical field. Participants are encouraged

to demonstrate strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. There are Parent/Guardian Orientation Workshops for all students participating in the program.

Junior Doctors Academy

This program is developed for 11th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is allotted to former Great Explorations and Jumpstart Academy participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

The curriculum involves a review of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Chemistry, Language Arts and proven test-taking strategies to increase SAT and ACT scores. The course offers both a six-week, Monday-Friday, Summer Academic Enrichment Program and a 30-week, Saturday Academy during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions.

Students are provided assessments and evaluations throughout a student's affiliation with Junior Doctors Academy and includes pre-, mid-, and post-testing; student and parent surveys; mid and final progress reports; etc. Classes are held at UConn Health. Transportation is provided to Hartford residents. There is an opportunity to earn a stipend.

It is geared towards students who meet certain socio-economic guidelines (low income and/or first generation to attend college) and demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program and enables students to participate in the High School Mini Medical/Dental School Program during the following academic year.

Senior Doctors Academy

The Senior Doctors Academy is for 12th grade students interested in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research. Priority acceptance into the program is given to former Great Explorations, Jumpstart, and Junior Doctors Academies participants and students enrolled in Hartford Public Schools.

The syllabus includes a review of pre-calculus, calculus, biology, physics, anatomy and physiology, and writing. This is offered in either a 6 week or 30-week course offering during the academic school year where students can continue to enhance their academic skills, college preparation, and exposure to careers in the health professions. Classes are held at UConn Health and transportation is provided to Hartford residents. Additionally, students can earn stipends. This program is designed for students from low-income backgrounds and/or first generation to attend college students who demonstrate a strong motivation and potential to enroll in a four-year college program. Participants can then be eligible to participate in the Pre-college Enrichment Program during the summer of their graduating senior year.

Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Program

An annual conference which brings together high school and college students to explore health care issues and prepare for health careers. Developed for students who have expressed an interest in a career in the health professions. It is beneficial in helping mentees gain insight into successful preparation for an application to professional schools.

The course is student run and is designed at meeting the long-term objective of increasing underrepresented student representation in health professions programs. It provides an opportunity for college and high school students to seek advice from mentors enrolled in professional health profession programs. A network is established which includes the middle school through professional school educational community. The goal is to expose students to the medical, dental, graduate, nursing and allied health careers and offer students in the graduate arena to serve as mentors and models to college and high school students. The program is sponsored by the local chapters of the Student National Medical Association, the Student National Dental Association and the Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs.

The 2022 Bridge to the Future Science Mentoring Conference was held virtually with approximately 30 college students participating. The students were brought together with UConn Health faculty, staff, medical, dental, and graduate schools. The conference included an Admissions Panel, a Scholar-Athlete Panel, and a Medical and Dental Student Panel. There were also concurrent sessions that included dental and medical workshops.

Health Disparities Clinical Summer Research Fellowship Program

This initiative is for rising college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Priority consideration will be given to pipeline participants in the seven-week program. Students are provided with clinical research and enrichment experience and an introduction to health disparities, cross cultural issues, principles of clinical medicine and skills for public health research and interventions. There is also an invaluable overview of approaches to cultural definitions, public health issues and discussion of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings. Housing, meals, and a stipend are provided. The program is designed to provide the following: clinical research and enrichment experiences; an introduction to health disparities across cultures; principles of clinical medicine; public health issues, research and interventions; an overview of cultural definitions; and discussions of specific techniques for working with diverse populations in community settings. All the participants completed a clinical research project and presented a poster with their results at the end of the program.

Medical/Dental Preparatory Program (MCAT or DAT Prep Course; or Basic Medical Science Course)

The preparatory science course is for college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Medical/Dental Preparatory Program students are selected from various universities throughout

the United States to work on academic skills to prepare for medical school or dental school admission. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants to this six-week summer program consisting of two tracks. Track One MCAT/DAT Preparation Program is for students who will be taking the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) or Dental Admission Test (DAT). The program focuses on MCAT test preparation or DAT test preparation, application essay workshop, mock interviews, professional development workshops, and some exposure to clinical medicine or dental medicine.

Track Two Basic Medical Science Program is for all other students not on Track One. This track focuses on a course emphasizing essential principles of cell and molecular biology correlated to team-based learning activities including laboratories and case studies. The course has two purposes (a) to facilitate the entry of these students into medical and dental schools by improving their performance on admissions tests and through professional development activities and (b) to increase the retention of successful matriculants to professional schools through early exposure to professional education. This program provides housing, meals and a stipend. A total of 47 college students and recent college graduates participated in virtual academic classes, seminars, workshops, test-taking strategies, and other enrichment activities.

Summer Research Fellowship Program

This program has been developed for college sophomores, juniors, seniors or recent graduates. Priority consideration is given to pipeline participants in this nine-week program. Emphasis is on laboratory research enrichment experience and some exposure to clinical medicine or dental medicine. This program attracts students who are interested in a career in medicine, dental medicine or biomedical research and for applicants who have completed some college coursework in biology and chemistry (preferably through organic chemistry). Students must commit to approximately 32 hours per week of work on a research project and 8 hours per week to required clinical experiential. Housing, meals, and a stipend are provided.

The selected students identify a faculty sponsor, who develops and makes available suitable project descriptions. The students contact his/her faculty sponsor in April or May and develop a research protocol. Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) students are encouraged to apply. At the end of the summer, the students gave a poster presentation of their research results during a special research symposium.

High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series

The High School Mini Medical/Dental School Seminar Series offers eight weekly lectures and demonstrations presented by faculty members of the UConn Schools of Medicine and Dental Medicine. The 2022 seminar series included topics in medicine, dental medicine, and

biomedical research. Eighty-six Connecticut high school juniors and seniors participated in the 2022 program.

Parental Seminar Series

The Parental Seminar Series is an opportunity for students and parents to learn more about the college admissions process and important health issues affecting their community. Parents are asked to submit a survey on the topics they are most interested in learning about, and the series of lectures are then tailored to their needs. Each academic year, UConn Health's Department of Health Career Opportunity Programs invites college admissions personnel, physicians, dentists, and other health professionals to speak to the parents and students on college admissions and various health topics such as hypertension, asthma, stress management, diabetes, obesity, and nutrition. The scheduled seminars occur approximately twice per semester on a weekday evening from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at UConn Health in Farmington.