

Student Interest Increasing in Health Care Work-Based Learning Opportunities

Schools and hospitals around the state are working together to provide high quality and enriching Career-Based Learning Experiences (CBLE) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities for middle and high school students, and data just released shows that health care is a top choice. These encounters are aided by the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Direct Patient Care Pathway and Pathways Wisconsin.

WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk, along with hospital leaders from across the state, are active participants in the development and updating of the health care career pathway and notes the importance of having this resource.

"Regional Career Pathways provide a foundation for students and their teachers and adult influencers to learn more about what it takes to join the health care workforce," said Zenk.

Pathways Wisconsin released their mid-year report on CBLE and WBL in the [Career Pathways Quarterly Newsletter \(Volume 2 Issue 2\)](#). 40,921 students participated in 859 learning opportunities. Direct Patient Care moved up to the second highest opportunity students pursued for career learning opportunities.

"It's great to see so many students exploring a health care career, and especially to see health care so near the top." Zenk noted, adding, "And with everything WHA, our members and our partners in education have been working on, I could see us moving to the top of that list."



Mid-Year 2023/2024	Mid-Year 2024/2025
1. Advanced Manufacturing	1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Agriculture, Food, Natural Resources	2. Direct Patient Care
3. Direct Patient Care	3. Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
4. Education and Training	4. Business Administration
5. Architecture and Construction	5. Education and Training

Growing interest in hospital careers has been a top priority for WHA and WHA members, and seeing the gains made in career and work-based learning is an encouraging sign. However, providing thousands of students with health care career exposure through classroom speakers, hospital tours, shadowing, mentoring or career fairs doesn't just happen. It requires support, partnership and engagement.

WHA's [So Many Options](#) campaign and hospital careers website provide a great resource to schools and students and support for WHA members to use in their own career promotion. WHA and its members have grown key partnerships with DPI, Area Health Education Center (AHEC), Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) and others to expand opportunities for students. The

partnership with HOSA Future Health Professionals included active participation in regional and state [HOSA events](#) that inspired the WHA Foundation to establish [HOSA chapter scholarships](#). HOSA credits much of their more than 30% growth in Wisconsin school HOSA chapters to the WHA scholarships and the exposure WHA and their members have fostered.

WHA will continue to support the key role hospitals and health systems play in providing career exposure for middle and high school students. Pathways Wisconsin is always seeking more employers and industry partners to get involved with [Career-Based Learning Experiences and Work-Based Learning Opportunities](#). Hospitals can reach out to their [RCP Coordinator](#) to get connected to schools in their [region](#).

Contact WHA's [Ann Zenk](#) for questions about this or any other workforce topic.

Other Articles in this Issue

- [President's Column: Addressing Financial Strain, Workforce Shortages and Administrative Complexity in Health Care](#)
- [Student Interest Increasing in Health Care Work-Based Learning Opportunities](#)
- [Integrity for Data Equity and Accuracy \(IDEA\) Initiative](#)