



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



**PATHWAYS TO HEALTH
CAREERS ACADEMY
PIPELINE PROGRAMS**

PREPARED BY
Selam Hailu, MPH
Dulcie Kermah, EdD, MPH
Daisy Lopez-Batres, EdM, MA

✉ PHCA@cdrewu.edu

🌐 www.cdrewu/phca

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The **Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA)** at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) has made significant strides in 2023-2024, advancing our mission to prepare high school students (9th - 12th grades) from underrepresented communities for success in health careers. Since its inception in 2018, PHCA has continued to expand programming, strengthened community partnerships, and has provided over 210 students with direct exposure to healthcare professions.

With free, college-level Public Health and Mental health courses, Community-Based internships, and personalized mentorship, the program has directly contributed to fostering a new generation of diverse healthcare professionals. The program's focus on college readiness, professional development, and community engagement continues to position the PHCA as a key resource in the pipeline to health careers in Los Angeles.

This report provides details of PHCA's cohort 6 program, which was conducted during the 2023-2024 academic year

Program Highlights

Figure 1. Student Confidence



96% of Cohort 6 students who participated in internships gained career confidence and a clearer understanding of their career paths.

Figure 2. Percentage of Students Who Would Recommend the Program



**Yes
100%**

-
- **Served 40 Aspiring Health Professionals:** Engaged a cohort of 40 high school students in a year-long program designed to build awareness and readiness for college and health careers.
 - By the end of the program, students reported a 54% increase in having the necessary skills to be successful in both college and in the workplace.
 - **Immersive Career Exploration:** Through structured courses and mentorship, students were introduced to multiple health-related fields such as nursing, public health, mental and behavioral health, and biomedical sciences, helping them explore potential career paths and academic interests.
 - **Targeted College Preparation:** Delivered personalized support on college applications, financial aid, and health-related major selection, helping students align academic goals with career interests.
 - **Community-Based Partnerships:** Collaborated with local community-based organizations to provide students with culturally relevant mentorship, health career exposure, and support services that strengthened their connection to college and career pathways.

Program Overview

The Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA) Pipeline Program is designed to equip students with the academic support, mentorship, and professional experiences needed to become competitive college applicants, particularly in the fields of public health, mental health, and behavioral health. Through a combination of tutoring, mentorship, and specialized workshops, students build a strong foundation in healthcare education and career development. The program prioritizes students from underrepresented backgrounds in higher education.

Throughout the year, students engage in mentorship with healthcare professionals, receive academic tutoring, and participate in hands-on learning experiences, including a community-based internship that allows them to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. By the end of the program, students have strengthened their college applications with meaningful experiences, positioning them as strong candidates for higher education and future careers in healthcare.



“I learned how to create a resume that I got to use for some scholarship and university applications! I also got to learn great working skills in my internship.”

— **Nayely A.**

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

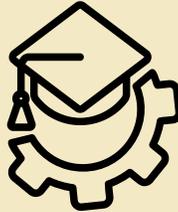
The PHCA Experience: Three Pillars of Student Growth

PHCA provides students with three core experiences that shape their journey through the program:

- **Community-Based Internships** – Students gain real-world exposure by interning with local organizations focusing on public health, mental health, and community wellness.
- **College Preparation** – Students take Introduction to Public Health, Introduction to Mental Health, and College Preparation courses and receive academic tutoring, mentorship, SAT preparation, and workshops designed to strengthen their college applications and prepare them for higher education.
- **Rites of Passage** – A culturally enriching course that fosters personal growth, self-empowerment, and leadership development. The course is complemented by Mental Health and Public Health Enrichment workshops, ensuring students leave the program with a strong sense of purpose, well-being, and confidence as they embark on their academic and career journeys.



**Community-
Based Internships**



**College
Preparation**



**Rites of
Passage**

The following section outlines the key program components that shaped their PHCA journey, from college-level coursework and enrichment workshops to mentorship, tutoring, and hands-on community engagement opportunities. These activities provided students with practical knowledge, career exposure, and valuable support systems to help them succeed in their pursuit of higher education and healthcare careers.

Summer Academy

The Summer session included a 5-week program where students were introduced to different courses: Introduction to Public Health (PHE 250), Introduction to Mental Health (PHE 110), Rites of Passage, College Preparation, and SAT/Math Enrichment. Among these courses Introduction to Public Health (PHE 250), and Introduction to Mental Health (PHE 110) courses are college level credit granting courses and students earned 2 credit hours for each course. Upon successful completion of the summer academy students received a \$1,000 stipend.



Enrichment Workshops

During the Fall session, PHCA students participated in 5 Mental Health Enrichment workshops to increase awareness of substance use disorders and mental health issues within their communities. In addition, students also participated in the Mental Health First Aid Training for youth and received certificates. In Winter, students participated in 6 Public Health Enrichment workshops to increase awareness of health issues within their communities and discussed addressing health disparities.



Mentoring & Tutoring

40 participants were matched with mentors from the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) at CDU. Mentors were required to meet with their Mentees for a minimum of 2hrs/month.

Tutoring is a year-long program available to all PHCA scholars. CDU undergraduates, graduates, and those taking a gap year supported PHCA scholars with all subjects (Math, English, Science, History, and more). Scholars receive one-on-one or small-group tutoring in subjects that require additional reinforcement.

Community Events

To enhance student learning and engagement, PHCA students actively participated in a variety of educational and career-focused events, including:

- Let's Move Community Event (2023): Encouraged students to engage with their community while promoting health and wellness.
- Pipeline Program's Science Day (2023): Provided hands-on STEMM experiences and exposure to scientific exploration.
- Field Trips with Saturday Science Academy II (2023): Included a visit to the Amgen Pharmaceutical facility, offering students a behind-the-scenes look at the biotechnology industry.
- Black College Expo - Los Angeles Convention Center (February 10, 2024): Allowed students to explore college options, meet admissions representatives, and learn about scholarships and academic programs.
- Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit - Los Angeles Convention Center (March 2, 2024): Introduced students to diverse careers in healthcare, offering mentorship and networking opportunities with medical professionals.

DATA SNAPSHOTS | 2023-2024

✓ Program Participation & Completion

- 40 students participated in Cohort 6 of PHCA.
- 32 (80%) of Cohort 6 successfully completed the year-long program.

✓ Community & Professional Exposure

- 100% of students gained hands-on experience working with community-based organizations (CBOs).
- Students collectively completed a total of 3,018 internship hours (an average of 94 hours per student).
- 19 students had the opportunity to showcase and present their work with CBOs at the PHCA Culmination Ceremony on May 25th, 2024, at CDU.
- PHCA students also showcased their health-related research at Career Day at CDU.
- Pipeline Programs hosted 5 community events, positively impacting local residents.

✓ College & Career Readiness

- Post-program interviews indicated several key outcomes regarding the lasting impact of the program.
 - Of the 40 Cohort 6 participants, 13 were seniors. One student withdrew from the program, and 12 seniors completed all program requirements.
 - Of the 12 seniors who completed the program, 9 students (75%) enrolled in college, 1 joined the military, and 2 did not report their post-graduation plans.

✓ Mental Health & Public Health Training

- PHCA students earned a Mental Health First Aid Certificate from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.
- Eleven Mental Health and Public Health Enrichment Workshops were conducted.



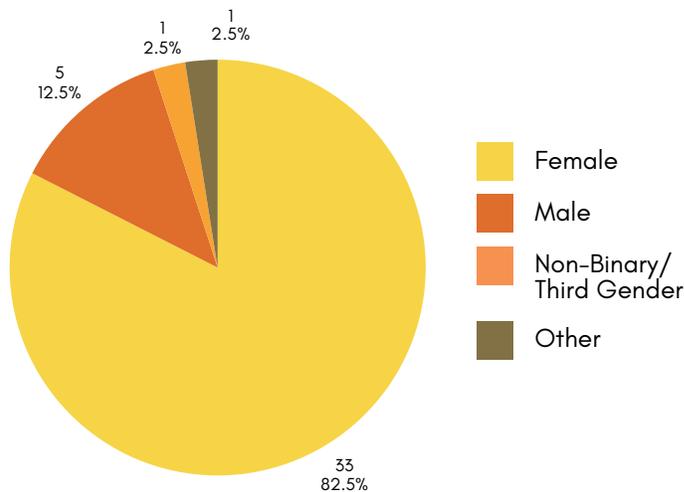
“Having the opportunity to take two college classes provided me with a glimpse into what post secondary education would be like. Now that I am in college, I can see how beneficial those two courses were in preparing me for this level of academia.” — **Kevin C.**

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

For the 2023–2024 program year, Cohort 6 of the Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA) received a total of 67 applications, from which 40, 10th - 12th grade students were selected based on the established selection criteria of the program. PHCA serves high school students residing in Los Angeles County Service Planning Area (SPA) 6 and underserved areas of SPA 8, including Inglewood, Hawthorne, Gardena, Carson, and Wilmington.

Selected candidates from the application pool each underwent a comprehensive interview process with program staff to assess their passion for healthcare and community impact, as well as their commitment to completing the year-long academic enrichment program. The following figures illustrate the demographic breakdown of Cohort 6 students, highlighting key characteristics such as gender, race and ethnicity, geographic distribution, and socioeconomic background.

Figure 3. Distribution by Gender



A majority of cohort 6 students (82.5%) identified as female.

Figure 4. Race and Ethnicity

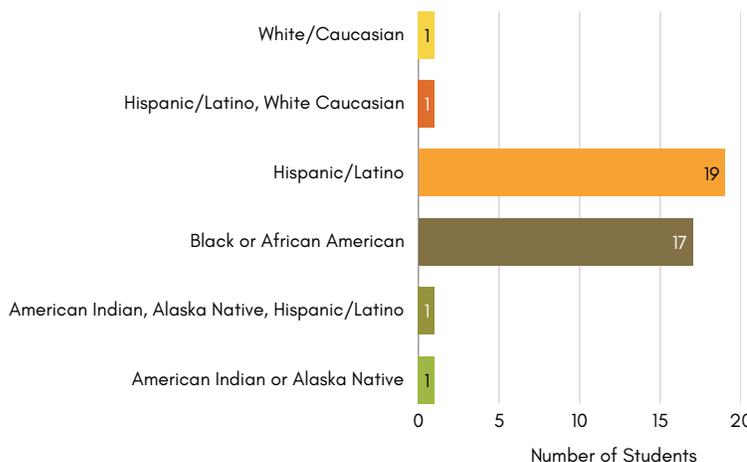


Figure 5. Student Grade Level

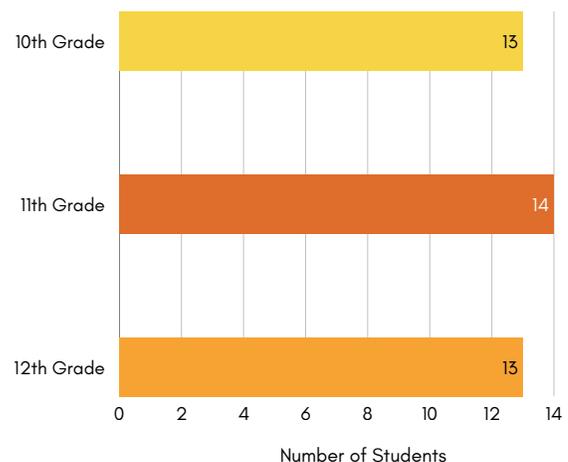
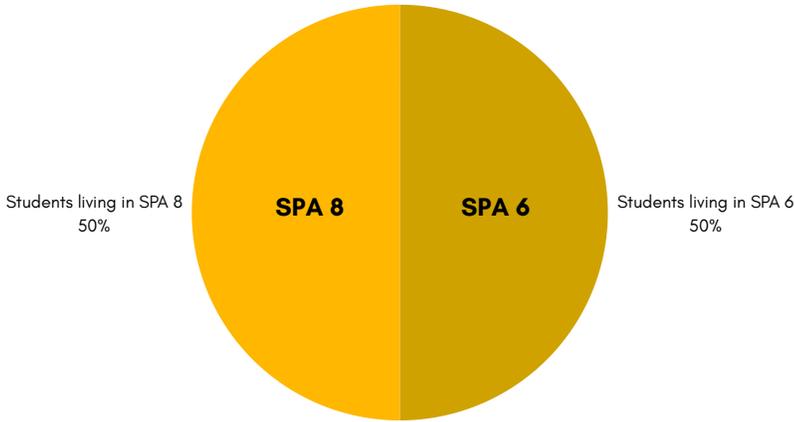


Figure 6. Geographic Distribution



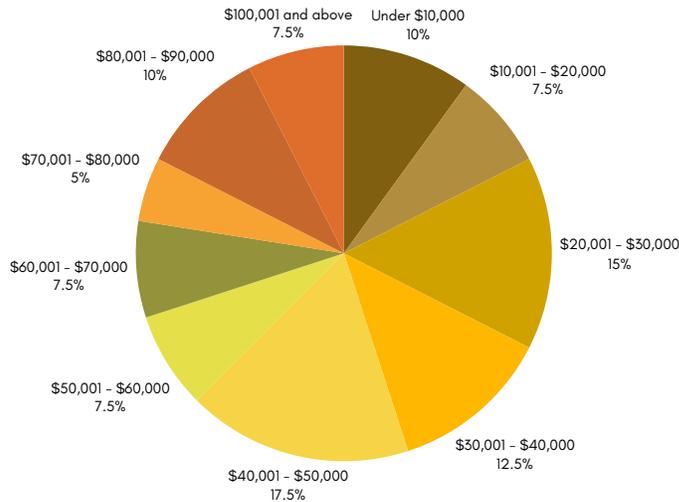
Cohort 6 recruitment indicates a balanced geographic representation, with 50% of students residing in SPA 6 and 50% in SPA 8.



Geographic Reach

During the program year, Cohort 6 students collectively attended 27 local high schools within traditionally underserved areas of South Los Angeles.

Figure 7. Socioeconomic Background



Nearly 62% of Cohort 6 students come from households earning less than \$50,000 annually, which is well below the amount needed to sustain a basic standard of living in Los Angeles County. According to the Economic Policy Institute, a family of two adults and two children in Los Angeles County needs to earn at least \$92,295 per year to meet essential living expenses. These figures underscore the financial hardships experienced by many PHCA students and their families, emphasizing the critical role the program plays in providing educational and career opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth.



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

Partnerships

The Academy's success is due in large part to our robust partnerships with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH, SAPC), Coachman Moore and Associates Inc., Epiphany Counseling, Consulting & Treatment Services, various school districts, and educational institutions.



- **Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU):** As the program's backbone, CDU continues to offer the academic framework that supports the PHCA's objectives.



- **Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH, SAPC):** As the primary funders for PHCA, DMH, DPH (SAPC) play a vital role in supporting the program's mission. Their insight, support, and input are instrumental in shaping PHCA's initiatives and through their generous funding and ongoing partnership, PHCA is able to provide impactful academic enrichment, mentorship, and career development opportunities for underserved youth.



- **Community-Based Organizations:** In collaboration with Coachman Moore and Associates Inc., PHCA students have access to over 14 local organizations to gain valuable experience.



- **Mentorship Network:** Over 36 student ambassadors from CDU's Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) mentor PHCA students, guiding them through college application and career development e.g., self-assessment, goal setting, soft skills, and employability skills.



- **Schools and School Districts:** Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD), Compton Unified School District (CUSD), Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Centennial High School, Manuel E. Dominguez High School, Alan Locke High School, King/Drew Magnet High School, University Pathways Medical Magnet High School, LAUSD community partners and students, Lynwood High School, College Track Boyle Heights, Community Health Advocate School, College Track Watts, and YWCA.



Summer Academy, Introduction to Mental Health Session

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

The following Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) served as internship placements for PHCA students, offering them valuable hands-on experience, professional development, and opportunities to engage with the communities they aim to serve. Through these partnerships, students applied their knowledge in real-world settings, developed essential skills, and contributed meaningfully to public health initiatives.

CBO Partner Sites:

- Avalon Carver
- Black Women for Wellness
- Community Coalition
- Essential Access Health
- Girls Club of Los Angeles
- On MY Grind INC.
- South Central Prevention Coalition
- Shield for Families
- UMMA Community Clinic
- Volunteers of America
- Watts Healthcare
- YWCA

Special Thanks to our participating CBOs!



Internships

During their internships, cohort 6 students conducted the following activities at their respective partner sites:

- Conducting community needs assessments, surveys, and focus groups to address public health and social issues.
- Engaging in outreach through flyers, social media, and events to inform the community about health topics and resources.
- Planning and participating in health fairs, awareness campaigns, and community events.
- Creating and delivering educational materials, including presentations, newsletters, and fact sheets on mental health, nutrition, and substance abuse prevention.
- Serving on youth leadership councils and advisory boards, contributing to discussions on policy and community advocacy.
- Attending professional development workshops to strengthen leadership, communication, and technical skills.
- Assisting with administrative tasks such as data entry, record-keeping, and grant-related documentation.
- Collaborating with supervisors and peers on key public health issues like the opioid crisis and community development.
- Mentoring peers, supporting youth recruitment, and learning strategies for academic and career success.
- Working closely with mentors on college readiness, applications, and career planning.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The 2023–2024 program year brought positive outcomes for Cohort 6 students, particularly in career confidence and post-secondary preparedness.

Figure 1 highlights how internship participation played a crucial role in shaping students' career aspirations, with a majority reporting that they felt more confident about their future career choices and had a clearer understanding of the steps needed to enter their desired fields. These hands-on experiences provided real-world exposure, mentorship, and skill development, reinforcing students' commitment to pursuing careers in healthcare and related fields.

Of the 40 participants in Cohort 6, 13 were seniors, 1 student dropped out, and 12 seniors completed the program; of those, 9 (75%) indicated that they were enrolled in college.

8 (89%) out of 9 college bound students are pursuing a health-related field, demonstrating a strong and growing interest in healthcare careers.

This trend reflects PHCA's success in fostering a pipeline of future healthcare professionals and guiding students toward higher education and career readiness in the medical and public health sectors.

“

It prepared me by allowing me to take college course levels at Charles R. Drew university and preform projects that helped me connect with my peers.—

Patience D.



”



"I became Mental Health Aid Certified! And gained knowledge on Mental Health that has inspired me to create a Health and Wellness Club at my school."

— **Emilio A.**

Student Assessment Results

To evaluate the impact of the Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA), students completed pre- and post-assessments measuring their growth in key areas, including public health and mental health awareness, college readiness, and career confidence. These assessments were conducted during the Summer Academy and the Public Health (PH) and Mental Health (MH) Enrichment Workshops to gauge changes in students' knowledge, confidence, and skills.

The following highlights showcase key findings from the assessments, demonstrating measurable growth in students' understanding of public health and mental health's impact on their communities, as well as their confidence in pursuing higher education and employment opportunities. Below Figures 8a-9b. demonstrate the growth students exhibited after completing the program. The scores centered in the diagram reflect the added percentage of students who either agree or strongly disagree with the statements.

Pre-Assessment

Figure 8a. 75% of students reported having prior knowledge of public health and its impact on their communities before participating in the program.

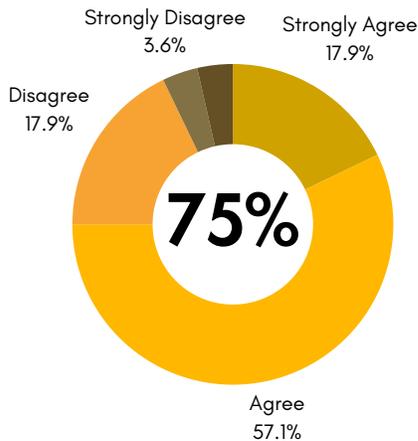
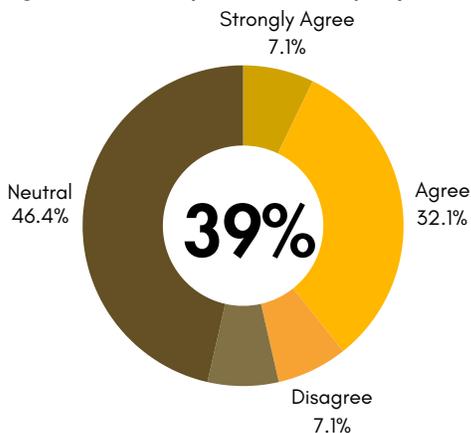


Figure 9a. Prior to participating in PHCA, 39% of students felt they had the skills necessary to be successful in college and in a place of employment.



Post-Assessment

Figure 8b. 100% of students reported gaining increased knowledge of public health and its influence on communities after participating in the program.

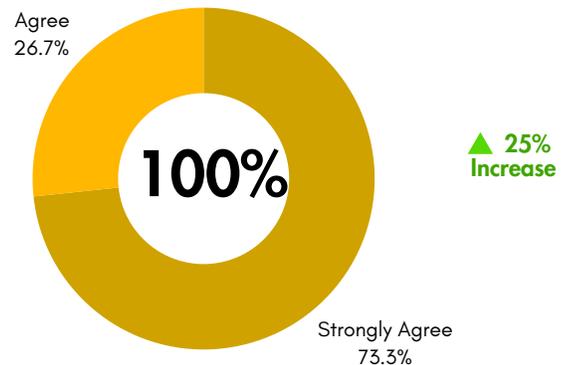


Figure 9b. 93% of PHCA Cohort 6 students reported having the necessary skills to be successful in both college and the workplace after participating in the program.

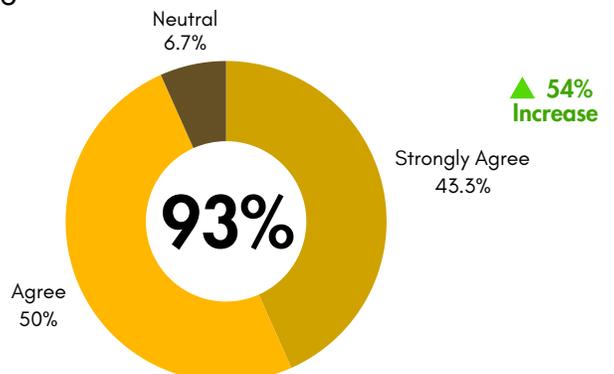


Figure 10. Mental Health Awareness

Before participating in the PHCA program, 89% of students reported having an understanding of what mental health is and how it impacts their community. Following their participation, 97% of students indicated an increased understanding, demonstrating an improvement in knowledge.

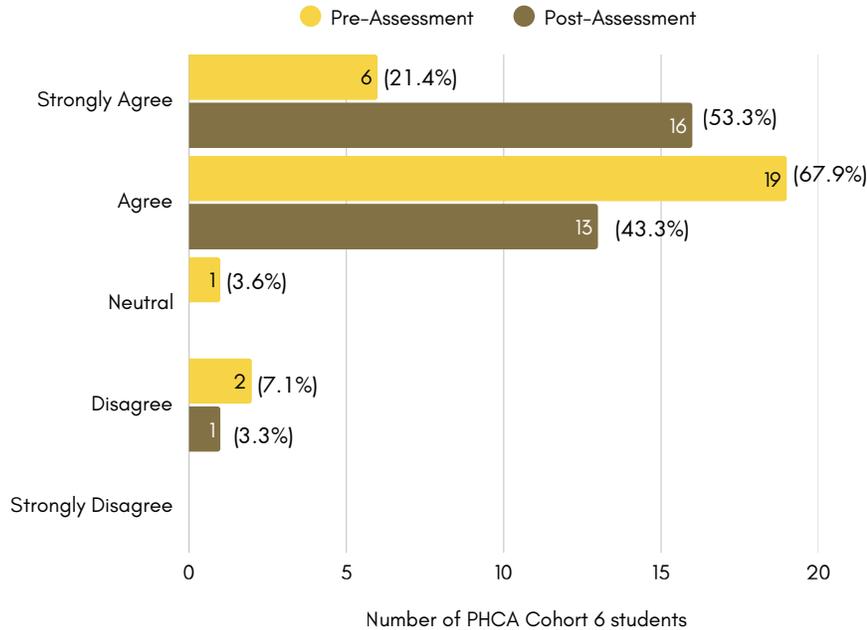


Figure 11. Student Confidence

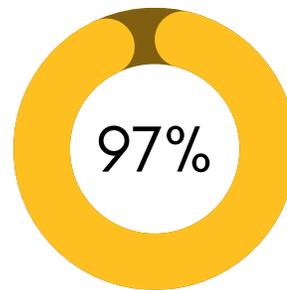
After completing the program



of students felt more confident in themselves to pursue college or a career.

Figure 12. Growth in Communication

After completing the program



of students felt they grew and earned valuable communication skills.

The post-assessment findings confirm PHCA’s success in enhancing students’ knowledge, confidence, and career readiness. Students demonstrated a greater understanding of public health and mental health issues, recognizing their impact on their communities. Additionally, they reported feeling more prepared for college and career pathways, with increased confidence in their academic, professional, and communication skills. These results highlight PHCA’s role in equipping students with the tools and experiences necessary for their future success.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

One of the primary challenges faced by the Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA) has been ensuring that all students complete their required internships. Over the past five years, many students have been unable to fulfill this requirement due to competing academic and extracurricular commitments during the school year. With demanding coursework, sports activities, volunteer work, and club participation, students have struggled to find sufficient time to engage in PHCA-sponsored internships.

Insights from other CDU Pipeline Programs indicate that student participation in Community-Based Organization (CBO) internships is significantly higher during the summer, when students have fewer academic obligations. Additionally, a survey of PHCA alumni revealed that many students believed they could have more effectively completed their internship requirements if the opportunity had been available during the summer months rather than throughout the school year. Given that CBO internships are a key component of the PHCA Pipeline Program, ensuring student participation is essential for maximizing their learning, hands-on experience, and career exposure.

In response to this challenge, CDU Pipeline Programs is actively collaborating with Coachman Moore and Associates Inc. to transition PHCA CBO internships to a summer-based model, allowing students to fully engage with community partners and gain meaningful, real-world experience without the constraints of their academic-year responsibilities.

For Cohort 9 (2026-2027), PHCA plans to implement changes to better align internship opportunities with student availability. Initial discussions with CBO partners indicate support for a summer internship model, with some organizations expressing interest in offering both summer and year-round options. CDU Pipeline Programs is currently working on a possible schedule to determine how best to structure these changes while meeting both student and community partner needs.

This strategic shift in the internship structure is expected to significantly increase completion rates for future PHCA cohorts. By aligning internships with students' availability and capacity to fully engage, this change will enhance student immersion, skill development, career readiness, and exposure to healthcare professions. At the same time, community-based organizations will benefit from having more dedicated student interns who can contribute meaningfully without the competing pressures of school-year commitments. Discussions are ongoing, and CDU remains committed to ensuring the long-term success and accessibility of PHCA internships.



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Following the conclusion of the program, a post-program survey was distributed to Cohort 6 students to capture their reflections and testimonials on their PHCA experience. We received 25 responses that provided valuable insights into the program's impact on their academic growth, personal development, and future career aspirations.

Below is a selection of the survey questions along with some featured responses that highlight the meaningful experiences and outcomes achieved by our students.

What specific skills or knowledge did you gain from the program that have been most beneficial to you?

"I have learned so much from learning about medical things to working and interacting with others around me. I have gained knowledge in the medical field as well as working skills. Like social interaction, communication, etc." – Marcela P.

"The skill of time management. Throughout this program, we were given multiple assignments along with multiple classes which taught me to manage my time."
– Diego C.

"By enhancing my networking skills, which exceeded my expectations, I had the opportunity to engage in valuable discussions with numerous individuals in the healthcare industry during PHCA events, gaining insights into potential career paths and future prospects." – Kevin C.



How did the PHCA pipeline program prepare you for college or post-secondary education?



"The SAT prep helped me know exactly what was occurring on the SAT and what would be on it. I also learned how to properly take notes and listen to lectures and gain information from those." — Serene S.

"I joined the program a little late but from the time that I was able to spend in the summertime helped me be able to come outside my shell and participate in group activities with students I did not know! The internship part as well! With the farmers market I was able to come out of my shell and speak to people and educate them on the proper disposal of drugs." — Jakaleh S.

"By giving me exposure to what I would typically experience in college, like with classes and work including the participation of other students! I got to work together with others in order to complete projects that I'm sure I will have to do in college." — Nayely A.

How did the PHCA pipeline program help you prepare for your career?

"It helped me expand my knowledge on careers so I can have an idea of the career I want to pursue." — Valerie M.

"I was given the opportunity to gain early insight into the various health career options available, I can strategically plan my future within the healthcare industry." — Kevin C.

What were your greatest successes or accomplishments during your time in the program?

"The program enabled me to successfully complete my coursework and establish valuable connections within the healthcare industry. The mentorship I received was instrumental in my professional development, and I am grateful for the ongoing support of my mentor. Without this program and mentorship, I would not have achieved my current level of success." — Kevin C.

"My greatest success or accomplishments was stay committed to the program for the duration of it! I was able to learn life long lessons from it! Also keeping up with the activities from the program!" — Jakaleh S.



LOOKING AHEAD

As PHCA continues to evolve, establishing clear goals and objectives is essential to ensuring the program's long-term success and impact. Historically, the program has operated without a formalized evaluation plan, making it challenging to measure program effectiveness and align initiatives with intended outcomes. Recognizing this gap, PHCA is now implementing concrete metrics to track student progress, evaluate program impact, and make data-driven improvements.

Moving forward, the program will introduce new participant requirements to enhance student engagement and academic success. Future cohorts will be required to maintain a minimum GPA and be entering the 11th or 12th grade at the time of acceptance. These new guidelines align with PHCA's mission to support students from underrepresented backgrounds in higher education by ensuring that those admitted are in a position to fully benefit from the program's resources.

The following section outlines PHCA's future goals and objectives, providing a structured framework to inform programming, assess outcomes, and continuously refine efforts to support students in their journey toward careers in public health, mental health, and behavioral health.

Goals & Objectives | 2025-2026

- **Goal 1: Increase Student Awareness and Interest in Health Careers**
 - Objective 1.1: By the end of the academic year, 80% of students will attend three or more workshops or seminars on different health career pathways (e.g., nursing, medicine, public health), as tracked by attendance logs.
 - Objective 1.2: By the end of the year, 90% of students will complete a health career exploration survey, identifying interest in at least three different healthcare fields.
- **Goal 2: Improve College Readiness for Health Careers**
 - Objective 2.1: By the end of the school year, 75% of seniors will submit completed college applications to at least one health-related program (e.g., nursing, pre-med, public health), as tracked by program records.
 - Objective 2.2: By the end of the year, 80% of students will meet with a mentor to create a personalized college readiness plan, with a focus on health careers.
- **Goal 3: Provide Real-World Health Career Experience Through Internships**
 - Objective 3.1: By the end of the academic year, 50% of students in grades 11-12 will complete internship experience in a health-related setting (e.g., community-based organization, hospital, clinic, research lab), as tracked by students' monthly timesheets.
 - Objective 3.2: By the end of the year, 90% of students who complete internships will report gaining valuable insights into at least two different health career pathways, as measured by a post-experience survey.

-
- **Goal 4: Increase Academic Achievement and Skills for Health Careers**
 - Objective 4.1: By the end of the academic year, 70% of students will show an improvement of at least 5% in their GPA in health-related courses (e.g., biology, health science, anatomy), as tracked by quarterly reports.
 - Objective 4.2: By the end of the academic year, 85% of students will complete at least one health science certification (e.g., CPR, first aid, online health courses) to prepare them for health careers, as tracked by program records.

 - **Goal 5: Support Post-Secondary Success & Alumni Engagement in Health Fields**
 - Objective 5.1: By the end of the academic year, 90% of seniors will have committed to a post-secondary health-related program (e.g., nursing school, medical programs, public health, health sciences), as tracked by program enrollment data.
 - Objective 5.2: Within 12 months of graduation, 80% of program graduates will report either being enrolled in a health-related post-secondary program or employed in a health-related field, as measured by an alumni survey.
 - Objective 5.3: By the end of the year, 50% of alumni will have participated in a post-graduation survey that collects feedback on their current educational and career progress, to be used for program improvement and alumni engagement initiatives.

PROGRAM RECRUITMENT FLYER



Pathways to Health Careers Academy

PHCA is a year-long academic enrichment program for High School Students from SPA (Service Planning Area) 6 and SPA 8, who are interested in improving community health through healthcare professions.

Program Highlights

- Free College level Courses
- Tutoring and Mentorship
- Skill Development
- College Readiness & SAT Prep.
- Paid Internship
- Networking & Events
- Stipend Award

Program Details

- **Who:** Open to high school students (grades 11-12) residing or attending schools in SPA 6 and underserved regions of SPA 8 with GPA (2.0-3.5).
- **When:** July 7th, 2025 - May 31st, 2026.
- **Where:** Hybrid
- **How to Apply:**

➤ **Application Deadline: March 31st, 2025.** ➤



✉ PHCA@cdrewu.edu

📄 https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PHCA_Cohort_8

🌐 <https://www.cdrewu.edu/community/pipeline-programs/>

Thank you!



Empowering the Next Generation of Community Leaders

The Pathways to Health Careers Academy (PHCA) continues to thrive through the dedicated support of our funders, staff, mentors, and healthcare partners. Their contributions enable us to provide career workshops, internships, and mentorship opportunities, offering hands-on experiences that equip 40 students each year with the knowledge and confidence to explore healthcare professions.

By fostering early exposure, skill development, and professional connections, PHCA plays a critical role in expanding diversity in the healthcare workforce and empowering students to pursue and succeed in their chosen careers.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our partners and supporters who make this work possible. Your continued investment in education, mentorship, and healthcare equity ensures that PHCA students will flourish as future healthcare leaders and create lasting impacts in their communities.



Pathways to Health Careers Academy



Contact Us :



Phone Number
(323) 563-4800



Email Address
phca@cdrewu.edu



Office Address
1731 E. 120th St. Los Angeles, CA 90059