

**Public Testimony  
to the  
Higher Education and Employment Advancement  
Committee Informational Forum on Healthcare Workforce**

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# Office for Workforce Competitiveness

- The Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), was established in 2000 serving as the Governor's principal workforce policy advisor. The legislation establishing OWC recognizes the importance of a well educated pipeline of skilled talent and a well trained workforce for Connecticut's continued economic health and development.
- OWC is dedicated to implementing a Talent-Based Strategy that will keep Connecticut competitive regionally, nationally and globally in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond by integrating economic and workforce development principles into a single construct.

# Career Ladders

- Public Act 03-142, An Act Concerning Career Ladder Programs was enacted in June 2003 establishing a Connecticut Career Ladder Advisory Committee (CCLAC). The Committee was charged with developing a three year plan for the creation or enhancement of career ladder programs for occupations with projected workforce shortages including healthcare, early childhood education and IT.
- Over the last seven years the CCLAC has granted over \$2 million to support pilot activities with youth and adults to expand awareness of career ladder opportunities in these fields. These pilot projects have provided valuable lessons on what academic and personal supports youth and adults need to pursue employment and career advancement. They have developed new courses needed by workers and employers; improved workplace culture in long-term care facilities; and helped entry level workers take their first steps toward college degrees. Lessons learned from these pilot initiatives have led to new efforts and leveraged other funding and partnerships.

# Career Ladders Grant Recipients

- 1199 Training and Upgrading Fund
- B&F Consulting
- Capital Community College
- Capital Region Education Council
- Capital Workforce Partners
- Central CT State University Department of Counseling and Family Therapy
- Charter Oak State College
- The CT Association for the Education of Young Children
- CT Career Choices
- CT Charts-a-Course
- Connecticut League for Nursing
- Connecticut Hospital Association
- Collegiate Health Service Corps
- Department of Economic & Community Development
- Department of Higher Education
- Eastern Connecticut Health Network
- Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board
- The Hartford Child Care Collaborative
- Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce
- The National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Regional Education Service Centers
- Street Smart Ventures and New haven Adult Education

# Allied Health Workforce Policy Board

- The Connecticut Allied Health Workforce Policy Board was established in Public Act 04-220 (*An Act Concerning Allied Health Workforce Needs*) to conduct research and planning activities related to the allied health workforce.
- The responsibilities of this board are broad: from monitoring data and trends in the allied health workforce to developing recommendations for the formation and promotion of an economic cluster for allied health professions from identifying recruitment and retention strategies for institutions of higher education to developing recommendations about recruiting and utilizing retired nursing faculty members to teach or train students to become licensed practical nurses or registered nurses.

# Health and Education Initiatives

- The purpose of the Health and Education Initiatives (HEI) is to fund projects that develop and use innovative approaches or best practices in Nursing, Allied Health and Education Fields designed to help meet Connecticut's workforce demands.
- Major partners currently involved in this initiative are the Office for Workforce Competitiveness, the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Public Health. There has been a number of successful programs funded through the HEI. The flexibility of the funding has allowed institutions to create programs to meet the needs of their communities and target audiences.

# HEI Grant Recipients

- Capital Community College
- Central Connecticut State University
- Collegiate Health Service Corps
- University of Connecticut Health Center
- Connecticut League for Nursing
- University of Connecticut School of Nursing
- Eastern Connecticut Health Network
- Fairfield University
- Gateway Community College
- Goodwin College
- University of Hartford
- Manchester Community College
- Naugatuck Valley Community College
- Northwestern Connecticut Community College
- Sacred Heart University
- Saint Joseph College
- Southern CT State University
- St. Vincent's College
- Three Rivers Community College
- Waterbury Hospital

# Sample Pilot Programs

# Eastern CT Health Network

- The ECHN Summer Internship Program for Student Nurses is designed to allow you to become part of an acute care staff before graduation. Being part of the hospital staff will help you to improve your nursing skills, competency, and confidence. This experience will also help you to choose the type of nursing you want to do after graduation and where you will work.
- The Internship Program has the dual benefit of clinical experience and mentoring by your RN preceptor. The program provides structured training and experience. Areas offered include Medical/Surgical, Critical Care, Emergency, Obstetrics, and Perioperative Nursing. The program provides an opportunity for students to more easily transition into their nursing career.
- **Description:**
  - 10 week summer work-study program during the summer before the senior year.
  - Internship provides a concentrated experience for the student to apply knowledge and skill in a structural clinical environment under the supervision of a Registered Nurse.
  - Designed for the mature, self-motivated student who can adapt to a fast-paced environment

# Eastern CT Health Network

- **Program Components:**

- Summer intern will work at either Rockville General Hospital or Manchester Memorial Hospital in a per diem status for 10 weeks, 32 hours per week.
- Be provided a working relationship with an assigned RN preceptor.
- Follow preceptor on his/her schedule.
- Be designated as an ECHN Summer Intern.
- Be required to attend:
  - Orientation Program
  - Clinical Seminars
  - Closing Session
- Receive an hourly stipend of \$13.00 per hour.
- Receive weekend and shift differentials when applicable.

- **Employment Outcomes:**

- In 2009, 4 interns were employed immediately following the ECHN internship. One at Manchester Hospital, one took a position in an acute medical unit at UCONN Health Center, one took an emergency position at Hartford Hospital and one was offered a position in South Carolina.

# Naugatuck Valley Community College

- **Transition of Hospital Employees to High Demand Health Care Positions:**
  - The overall goal of this program was to recruit current Danbury Hospital (DH) employees interested in pursuing high demand health careers and providing supports to assure their success. The target populations represented a diverse cohort interested in or enrolled in educational programs for needed health careers.
  - Two cohorts of DH employees were targeted:
    - The first cohort consisted of assistive personnel were targeted to increase enrollment in the existing DH designated “Hot Jobs” tuition reimbursement program and represented an opportunity to promote diversification of the licensed workforce.
    - The second cohort was drawn from present “Hot Jobs” Program participants. These employees were currently enrolled in a qualifying educational program and will be provided education in strategies for success, academic advisement and peer mentoring to improve their retention and completion of degrees, licensure or certification.

# Naugatuck Valley Community College

- **Outcomes:**

- 2 cohorts of assistive personnel were provided pre-assessment testing followed by academic advisement. Total 34 participants.
- 44% of the first cohort and 80% of the second cohort successfully completed.
- Follow up advisement for all participants was offered. Of the 40% that took advantage of the second round of advisement, employees were set up with KeyTrain remediation accounts to improve college readiness skills, others were prepared for college placement testing, financial aid form filing assistance and admission applications were completed.
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> round of follow-up advisement was offered and participants were supported in taking the next step in their career plan. Career shadowing with staff mentoring. 9 of the successful completers continued with additional credit courses at NVCC including ESL and other required courses in the Health Careers Pathway Certificate.

# UConn MEIN

- MEIN is a 12 month accelerated program for the non-nurse college graduate. After meeting a series of rigorous science and research prerequisites, students enroll in 45 credits over three consecutive semesters culminating in their eligibility for licensure in the state of Connecticut as a Registered Nurse.
- In 2009, 8 students began study in Stamford for the MEIN program. They completed didactic coursework on the Waterbury campus, but had their clinical experiences in the Stamford area.
- In 2010, another cohort of 8 students began the program with all their classroom and clinical experiences in Stamford. Our program in Stamford includes a state of the art simulation laboratory funded through private donations from the three local hospitals: Greenwich, Norwalk and Stamford.

# UConn MEIN

- **Employment Outcomes:**

- Stamford in 2009 with a cohort of 8 students. These 8 students were all employed immediately upon graduation in one of the three hospitals.
- In 2010, another cohort of 8 students began the program with all their classroom and clinical experiences in Stamford. Of these students, who graduated in December 2010, all but two are employed in CT in local hospitals and the other have moved out of state by design. One is an international student who will work in NYC and the other has also moved to NYC as she is starting a family.

# Connecticut Careers Pathways in Behavioral Health

- **Objective:** improve care by strengthening the state's mental health & addiction workforce
- **Project purpose:**
  - Identify the occupations
  - Identify the pathways:
    - Educational providers / degree & certificate programs
    - Certifications & licenses
  - Determine the number of individuals traversing these pathways
- **Collaborators:**
  - Connecticut Workforce Collaborative on Behavioral Health conceptualized and guided the project
  - Office of Workforce Competitiveness & CWEALF were instrumental in securing funding
  - The CCSU Department of Counseling and Family Therapy conducted the project
  - Information contributed by:
    - 70 behavioral health professionals
    - Many higher education institutions

# Connecticut Careers Pathways in Behavioral Health

## 1. Connecticut Career Pathways in Behavior Health

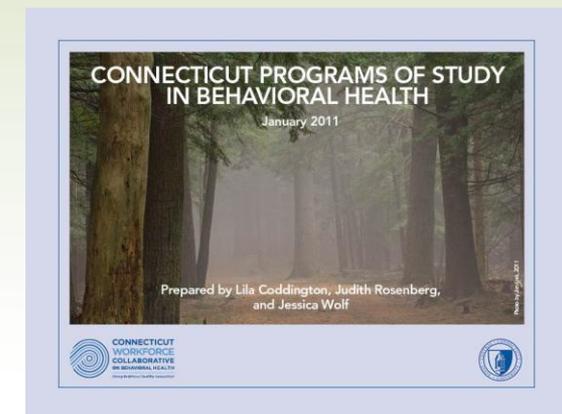
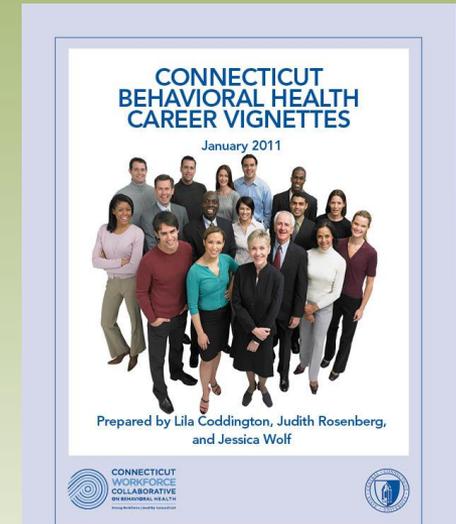
- Occupations and programs identified
- Completion data for programs of study 07-08
- Career pathways map
- Career Blueprints for 16 occupations
- Online and hard copy distribution

## 2. Connecticut Programs of Study in Behavioral Health

- Detailed information on programs of study
- Encompasses 34 colleges and universities
- Hyperlinked to diverse sources of information
- Intended for on-line distribution

## 3. Connecticut Behavioral Health Career Vignettes

- 30 behavioral health professionals and advocates as contributors
- Contents
  - What attracted them to the work
  - What their occupation / job is like
  - Advice to interested students
- Online and hard copy distribution



# Connecticut Careers Pathways in Behavioral Health

- **Current Activity and Future Steps:**
  - Immediate utility
    - Informing the WISH strategic workforce plan
    - Informing planning with Workforce Investment Boards
    - Informing planning within behavioral health field
    - Aid to student education & recruitment
  - Next steps
    - Assessing vacancy & turnover
    - Projecting workforce supply vs. demand