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An Assessment of the 2020 Health Care Summer College and Workforce Development Institute

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Abstract

The preparation for college or workforce entry is vital for Baltimore City public high schoolers. Students growing up in impoverished communities face challenging tasks in graduating high school and navigating their way to becoming mature, productive college students and employees.

Many of Baltimore City's young people do not believe college is possible and therefore often do not attend college after high school graduation. Others do not expect employment at "good paying" jobs and have restricted opportunities to develop a valuable skillset needed for college or employment. This introduction to the health care professions' world provided during the summer program serves as a lens to career possibilities and a gateway to fulfilling dreams.

The objectives of this poster are to 1) describe the recruitment process for high school graduates (mentees) and college students (mentors) attending a Summer College and Workforce Development Institute, 2) identify the significant components of the Summer College and Workforce Development Institute or detail the Summer College and Workforce Development Institute curriculum, and 3) evaluate the effectiveness of the Summer College and Workforce Development Institute. The curriculum included math, English/Language Arts, and soft skills development as well as CPR certification required for health care positions.

Recruiting participants presented many challenges as direct contact with students was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaborative relationships with high school guidance counselors and administrators were instrumental in identifying potential participants and ensuring the submission of completed applications.

Upon reflection and evaluation, the virtual summer program was successful. Participants that completed the program were successful in acquiring employment, enrolling and attending college, or creating plans to obtain the coveted high school diploma.

The summer program staff recommendation is that the Summer College and Workforce Development Institute continue its current mission and set goals of cultivating new partnerships, surpassing the present number of participant success stories, and developing a short-term and long-term feedback tool to fully capture the effectiveness of the program.