

# Health Center Spotlight

Health Center Innovation: Building Workforce Pipelines with Youth Engagement

## Future Health Care Leaders Program by Open Door Family Medical Center



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Future Health Care Leaders (FHCL) Program is a collaboration between the Open Door Family Medical Center's School Based Health Centers (SBHC) (now called the Nita M. Lowey Center for Health in Schools), and the Ossining Union Free School District (NY). The goal of FHCL has been to introduce high school juniors and seniors to the broad world of health care careers.

Having a school clinic, enabled Open Door to develop a strong relationship with the local school district. This led to the creation of their summer program to help students gain practical skills and knowledge about health, in general, and encourage them to pursue successful health care careers. The FHCL program grew from there.

Since 2016, FHCL has become a full-year elective class open to all seniors at Ossining High School. It's a competitive program with a half-year of in-class training once per week and a half-year of hands-on training once per week at the clinic, including CPR training with the local ambulance department.

Medical staff from Open Door Medical Center are strongly encouraged to serve as weekly guest presenters for students. In turn, Ossining High School has committed two teachers to run the FHCL class of 21 seniors each year. Open Door has also partnered with Henry Schein, Inc., a medical supplies and equipment vendor, and NACHC partner, that donates materials such as first aid kits and blood pressure monitors to be used by each student.

The program is specifically designed to help students think about medical and health care professions before investing the resources to pursue a specific degree. This program helps them make truly educated decisions about their future.

So far, 125 students have completed the FHCL program, gaining experience and connections that bolster their passion for the health care field. As one former participant said, *"I was given the opportunity to learn about many career options and see real possibilities, which has led me to pursue a major in Allied Health."* Ultimately, Open Door Family Medical Center hopes they can hire some of these amazing students as they graduate into fully trained health care professionals.

Thanks to the strong relationships created between Open Door and the local school district, 85% of the students who have participated in the FHCL program say they are now interested in pursuing a career in health care.

