

# Emerging Health Professionals: A Collaborative Strategy for Addressing Health Care Workforce Needs

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# Emerging Health Professionals: A Collaborative Strategy for Addressing Health Care Workforce Needs

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## PURPOSE

Demographic and Labor and Industry data define the long-term need for talented health care professionals in the Lehigh Valley as well as across the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). In response, Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) has created a variety of youth programs.

1. The main objective of LVHN's youth programming is to provide opportunities to regional youth to obtain experiential and problem-based learning contextualized in the broad area of health care.
2. The secondary objective of each youth program is the recruitment and longitudinal tracking of Lehigh Valley youth into health care careers, and specifically, careers at LVHN.

One of these programs, the Emerging Health Professionals program, was designed to meet those objectives.

## APPROACH/METHODS

Initiated in 2005, the Emerging Health Professionals (EHP) program is a collaborative dual-enrollment program offered in partnership by:

1. **Lehigh Valley Health Network**
2. **Lehigh Career & Technical Institute**
3. **Penn State Lehigh Valley**
4. **Lehigh Carbon Community College**

Designed for high school students, the program combines interactive, college-level learning and observation in a health care setting. Participating students earn college credits and gain invaluable first-hand clinical observation experience and have the opportunity to compete in HOSA-Future Health Professionals events.

## RESULTS/OUTCOMES

- To date, the EHP program has graduated 650+ participants
- 76 program alumni have been hired by LVHN
- EHP was named the 2018 "Program of the Year" by the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Education
- Since 2012, EHP students have won \$130,500 in college scholarship money from HOSA

## DISCUSSION

EHP is a flagship youth program offered by LVHN and partners for the benefit of our region, community, and our own recruitment pipeline.

Challenges exist in eliminating barriers to participation such as accessibility to transportation and ensuring sufficient funds for college courses.

In addition, as with any program founded on partnerships that cross sectors, program partners strive to maintain the original intent, culture, and communications on which the program was funded, over what is now two decades of partner commitment and concomitant staffing changes.

## NEXT STEPS

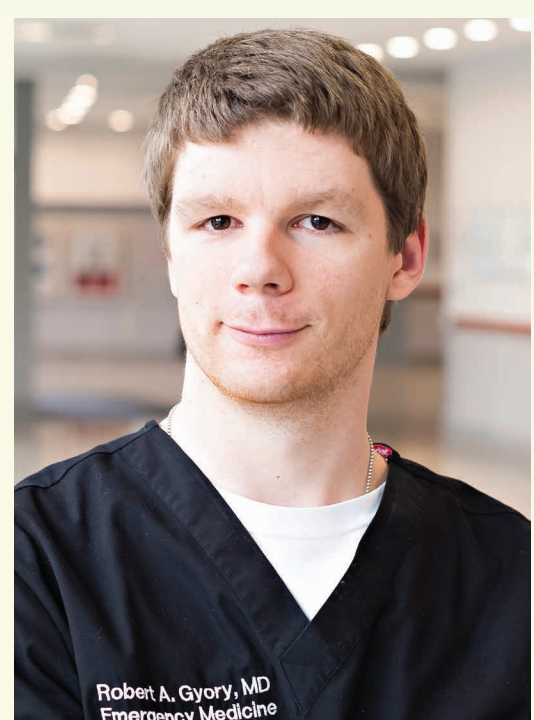
LVHN's Department of Education is in the process of creating an archival data-based impact survey to evaluate the effectiveness of youth programming as a possible recruitment tool for building future workforce.

An additional purpose of collecting impact information is to provide potential funders of youth programming a clearly defined set of positive youth program developmental and career outcomes.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Emerging Health Professionals program exemplifies a dual-enrollment model that could be transferable to similar hospitals or health networks. The model has been replicated in other communities, including State College, Pa., and Schuylkill County, Pa.

Scan here for interviews with EHP alumni who discuss the impact the program has had on their lives academically and professionally.



### ROB GYORY, MD

Emerging Health Professionals Class of 2009  
Current LVHN PGY III Resident in Emergency Medicine



### ROSALIE MATTIOLA

Emerging Health Professionals Class of 2014  
Current USF/LVHN SELECT Medical Student Class of 2023



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