

High school biomed program off and running 3

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vocational training program. Rather, it is designed to introduce students to studies in the health field and help prepare them for further training in colleges, professional schools or vocational schools.

Yet, students already have begun to seek vocational experiences.

Harnett Central's BICP class has responded to a cross-county challenge from Western Harnett's bio-med students, as each class tries to collect more donations through the Red Cross Bloodmobiles each is sponsoring.

Richmond BICP students volunteered their time to a glaucoma screening clinic in Rockingham.

One biomedical class would like to sponsor a birth control clinic in the high school.

Instruments demonstrated

The BICP class at Scotland High School in Laurinburg planned a program for parents, teachers, and community leaders demonstrating the health-related laboratory measurements made possible using the Biomedical Instrumentation Package (BIP), a patented electronic device which is part of the curriculum.

The BIP is capable of demonstrating the principles of electrocardiography, light spectrometry, audiometry, electroencephalometry, pulse height analysis, computers and many more technical aspects of health care.

A 'minischool'

BICP is sponsored by Duke, the Fayetteville Health Education Foundation and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

It is under the direction of Dr. Thomas T. Thompson, associate dean for allied health education in the School of Medicine.

Students participating in the program spend four hours of their school day in science, mathematics and social studies classes which are oriented toward health

studies.

"In biomed, they become almost a minischool within a school," according to Jean Bruno, curriculum development specialist in Thompson's office who works closely with the schools.

Teaching team

The program instructors work together as a team.

"If there is a problem that arises in one course and it is specifically related to another course in the program, we work

together and support each other in trying to solve the problem," Dr. Clifford Tremblay explained.

Tremblay is the math teacher and faculty team coordinator for Scotland High's biomed program.

The unifying theme of health studies and the independence in the classes apparently appeals to most of the biomed students.

Self-motivating

"It's self-motivating," one student said.

"It keeps you interested in it."

The Richmond High student, Ervin Henney, hopes to be a physician some day.

Classmate Tommy Alexander said, "In this program, we use what we learn. And I love lab work, and this is centered around lab work."

Stuart Macon, who also plans to become a doctor, added, "We learn more because all the sciences are combined. It's better this way. It's fun, too."

Lisa Poplin agreed about the self-motivation and independence in the lab.

"You get to do more of it yourself," the future pharmacist said.

Practical training

The two-year program will culminate with a five-week practicum late next year.

Students will spend three weeks in general exploration, and two weeks concentrating on individual areas of interest.

For this specialized training they will be assigned to doctors' offices, social service agencies, laboratories, hospitals or a similar place.

On their way

There are a few seniors, however, in the program this year.

Two schools admitted 24 seniors this year, and most have made educational plans for next year. Seventeen have applied to four-year colleges and four intend to go to community colleges or vocational schools near their homes.

Career goals represented in this group include five physicians, six medical technologists, two physical therapists, three nurses, one pharmacist, three basic health sciences personnel, one dentist, one optician and one elementary educator.

Worthwhile experience

And what if students decide not to enter health careers?

Student Lisa Carter said, "Even if you don't go into medicine, it's good for the experience alone."

It also seems more practical to opt out of the field now, rather than later.

"If they're going to faint at the sight of blood, it's good to find out in high school," Ruth Watkins, Richmond social studies teacher and N.C. "Teacher of the Year," said.

(One lab experience involved studying dog lungs, which Bruno made available.)

"And," principal Williams added, "I'd rather somebody spend two years here to find he's not interested, than to take the place in medical school of someone else who would have gone on to become a doctor."



AN INSIDE VIEW—The hyperbaric chamber was one of the stops when biomedical students from Harnett Central High toured the medical center last semester. The school is one of four participating in the Biomedical Interdisciplinary Curriculum Project. In the foreground is Ray Bryant, a member of the biomed teaching team at the school. (Photos by Thad Sparks)

Future health professionals get firsthand look

The Biomedical Interdisciplinary Curriculum Project (BICP, see accompanying article) has included tours of the medical center by each of the four classes.

Students have visited such areas as the hyperbaric chamber, physical therapy, nuclear medicine, respiratory therapy, kidney procurement lab and clinical hematology at Duke, and the pharmacy, heart station, medical technology, medical records and medical media at the VA.

Some students said they wished they could have seen more of the medical center. Others would have liked to have seen less, in order to concentrate on a few areas.

Inside information

Their reactions overall were quite positive.

"The trip was very educational. It really provided some inside information to some things that you never really had thought about," Earl Scriven of Western Harnett said.

This was echoed by his classmates.

"I think the trip was a great success. It really gave us a chance to see what different parts of the medical field are really all about," Daphne McNeil said.

"The overall tour was very educational and it helped me decide my medical career," Donna Damon added.

Learned what they do with it

A student at Scotland High was more specific: "The Blood Bank was very interesting because it seems you are always being asked to donate blood and it's nice to know what they do with it."

Steve Cotton of Harnett Central said, "It's very obvious that the people who worked there were highly trained."

Sherry West, also of Central, said she "felt very welcome. The people in the hospital seemed to be interested in helping us learn."

Want to come back

Comments from Richmond High pupils included:

"I hope to visit Duke again for a more in-depth look at these departments."

"I thought the tour was an excellent idea and I would like to come back again

soon. The sections we reviewed on tour were very informative. I learned a lot."

One final observation was offered by Connie Dempsey, a student at Western Harnett who would like to become a veterinarian.

In response to observing cardiac surgery on dogs, she said, "I still feel that if doctors-to-be can work on animals, veterinarians-to-be can work on humans."

PEDAL AS FAST AS YOU CAN—Another interesting stop for Harnett Central's biomed students was the physical therapy department. John Roebach (partially hidden, center), patient services coordinator, was their guide.

