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PEP: Turning Dreams Into Reality

Duke's PEP Program celebrated its first anniversary this past month.

And heading up the list of well-wishers were some 124 Medical Center employes who are making a better life for themselves and their families because of PEP.

PEP, nickname for Duke's Paths for Employe Progress Program, was designed to help employes move up in the health fields through education.

The program provides a central clearing house for information on paramedical education programs and also offers financial assistance to employes who want to go back to school. Most often, PEP pays tuition and then provides the individual with a stipend to supplement his part-time earnings while he is in school.

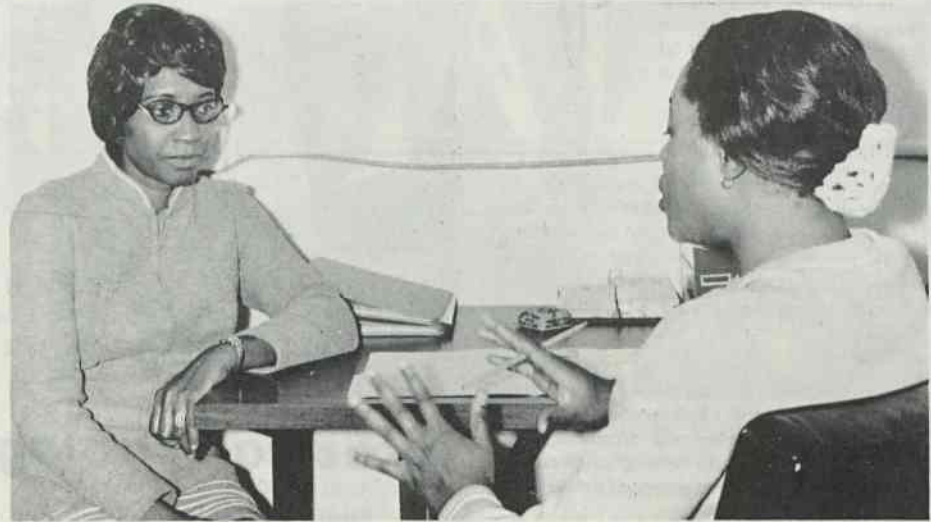
At the end of its first full year of operation, PEP had given financial aid to some 99 students, while 25 more received extensive educational counseling.

These student-employes are enrolled in 10 different paramedical programs ranging from the bachelor of science in nursing offered at North Carolina Central University to Duke's own Physician's Assistant Program.

On its first anniversary, PEP had either spent or committed some \$121,000 to pay tuition and provide employe stipends. The money comes from the Medical Center's general revenues.

PEP Director Howard N. Lee explained that about 80 percent of those applying for the program are members of minority groups. "One of the most significant things about PEP is that it gives the minority employe the key to his future—the key of education," Mr. Lee said. "With education comes a greater freedom for the individual to shape his own life."

Mr. Lee emphasized that PEP is transmitting some of Duke's knowledge and resources to the Durham community by helping these citizens learn more to earn more.



THE FIRST STEP—Mrs. Lether Mangum, left, discusses preliminary plans to attend practical nursing school with Miss Judy McKoy, a counselor in the PEP office. Mrs. Mangum, a PCA on Osler Ward, is one of more than 425 employes who have contacted PEP about returning to school. (staff photo)

Of the 124 employes assisted by PEP thus far, only seven (about 5.6 per cent) have failed to complete their training. In contrast, Mr. Lee noted, the over-all drop-out rate for many of these educational programs ranges as high as 20 to 25 per cent.

He attributes PEP's low drop-out rate to the cooperation between the students and the PEP counselors and to the strong backing the program has received from Duke administrators.

"Our counselors are in close contact with the student," he said, "and we can often help with academic or financial problems before they get so serious the student has to leave school. We should also give credit to the supervisors and administrators at the Medical Center who have done everything they could to schedule convenient working hours for PEP students."

In announcing establishment of the PEP Program in November of 1969, Dr. William G. Anlyan, Duke's vice-president for health affairs, said, "On the national scene, there is much talk and little action

in providing nonacademic employes with upward or lateral mobility with access to the academic areas. It is in this very important national need that Duke Medical Center will lead the way."

Dr. Anlyan added, "Every employe should have the opportunity of pursuing his talents to the fullest at the same time as earning a living wage."

When PEP got organized in February, 1970, action to give employes this opportunity started immediately. By the end of March, four employes were already in school and dozens more had sent in applications.

Added to the total of 124 employes given assistance by February, 1971, are 76 more who have requested PEP financial support for the 1971-72 academic year. All 76 have already been admitted or are seeking admission to one of the paramedical training programs. All together, more than 425 employes at the Medical Center have contacted PEP and/or filled out the application form.

In addition to Director Lee, the PEP

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