

Meet Amanda Al-Feghali . . .

Amanda Al-Feghali knew she wanted to pursue a career in the health professions - how she would go about doing it was another story. When she turned to her high school guidance counselors, she felt more confused about which courses to take to be adequately prepared for college. Then, the summer before her freshman year of college, Amanda found the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) offered through the CNYAHEC organization in central New York. With twice as many applicants as there were slots, Amanda endured a competitive application process and was admitted to the six-week summer program. HCOP helped her by allowing her the opportunity to speak directly with professionals in her desired field, professionals who gave valuable insights as to the most beneficial courses she should take now to enhance her success in medical school. Today, this 18-year-old tri-lingual, Vestal, NY native is a freshman at Binghamton University, studying biochemistry with plans to go into the high-risk field of obstetrics. And with the help of HCOP, she now knows how to prepare.



“The HCOP Summer Academy has opened my eyes to the patient-physician interaction . . . Not only are you able to work with a physician in your desired field of medicine, you can also learn about all the work that goes into making sure that the patient is healthy.”

About the Program

- HCOP is authorized under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. Together with the Centers of Excellence (COE), HCOPs function to increase the representation of minority and disadvantaged students in the health professions.
- In addition to eligibility criteria used for other HCOP programs, participants in the HCOP Summer Academy must also meet other requirements, including a high school GPA of 3.0 or better and two letters of recommendation from a math/science teacher or guidance counselor.
- The program has both an experiential/mentoring and academic component, running Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 4:30 pm for a total of 35 hours per week of instruction.
- For the experiential/mentoring component, students work in a hospital department related to their future field of study Tuesday through Friday. Students were placed at facilities affiliated with Lourdes Hospital in Binghamton or United Health Services Hospitals in Johnson City. Students have the opportunity to work directly with patients and to observe what health professionals in the hospital setting do from day to day.
- For the academic component, students spend time in a classroom on Mondays. The colloquium experience provides students a significant advantage over their freshman counterparts when it comes to discussing or researching topics as part of their college curriculum.
- More information on the HCOP program activities is available on the program website: <http://www.cnyahec.org/hcop.asp>



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