

Meet Matiya McCants, DPT . . .

A resident of southeastern Wisconsin, Matiya graduated from Vincent High School, a school in the Milwaukee Public School System. As a National Honor Society inductee, her grades were solid; moreover, as an athlete – basketball, volleyball, soccer, and cheerleading, to be exact – she observed many sprains and injuries among her teammates, as well as the subsequent healing process. It was then that her interest in physical therapy was piqued. When she enrolled at Marquette University in 2000, she discovered the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), which, with the help of mentors Dr. Lawrence Pan and Manuel Santiago, helped ease her transition into college life and into her field of study. She continued her involvement in the program throughout her college career and well into graduate school, trying to serve fellow students with dreams like hers. In 2006, Matiya graduated with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy. Today, she works in acute care at St. Joseph’s Hospital; there, she has the opportunity to serve her community as she had always hoped.



“I felt it was my duty as an African American to work in a hospital where I would get the opportunity to serve my community and my people in a profession where I am the minority.”

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.
- The Marquette University HCOP programs range from recruitment efforts at local middle schools to retention of students enrolled in professional programs at Marquette.
- Students accepted into the program can receive a wide range of services, including tutorial assistance, personal counseling, and academic advising.
- Many HCOP students also give back by coordinating programs, working as peer advisers, and serving as mentors in the high school programs.
- More information on the Marquette program activities is available on the program website:

<http://www.marquette.edu/programs/special/hcop/index.shtml/>

According to Matiya . . .

I am proud to say that it was my involvement in HCOP and my use of HCOP services which made my experience at Marquette fulfilling. I first became involved in HCOP during my freshman year at Marquette University in 2000. The bi-weekly advisement meetings really helped me stay on track with studying and reassured me that my success in school was the priority of the HCOP program.

I was a mentor/resident assistant in 2001 for the Summer Science program in which I helped high school students study for their classes, and I also personally used HCOP’s tutoring service for help in my physics course during my junior year. Once I began graduate school in the physical therapy program, I became a pre-college mentor. Those students, like me, also came from the Milwaukee Public School System, and I felt it was my duty to give guidance to them as it was given to me. The experience I had with HCOP was a positive and fulfilling period in which I was getting my educational and personal needs met, as well as giving back to the program that gave so much to me.



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