

## Dare to Dream Career Series: Beyond the White Coat



The Nation's new emphasis on health reform is creating new inquiries about careers including a more comprehensive look at the big picture of *health* and employment opportunities.

On June 2, 2009, Chicago Scholars kicked-off its *Beyond the White Coat* (BWC) health and health care career workshop series at the Robert H. Lurie



Medical Research Center of Northwestern University. Through a partnership with Advocate Health Care and the Lurie Cancer Center of Northwestern University, BWC is a collaborative career advisement and lecture series for Chicago Scholar's students – particularly those interested in health care as a career choice. The series introduces students to the vast and broad career categorizations that contribute to our nation's largest industry. This is great timing for Chicago Scholars students because evidence suggests the health care industry will expand by 3 million jobs between 2006 and 2016.<sup>1</sup>



Through strategic approaches, including mentoring, internships, and career networking opportunities, Chicago Scholars strives to help underserved students graduate from the college of their choice and transition into successful career paths. Over the past 12 years, Chicago Scholars has served more than 1500 of the city's most deserving and economically disadvantaged students. These diverse pools of students<sup>2</sup> attend public and private colleges and universities across the United States with a 95% four-year graduation rate.

The collaboration between Chicago Scholars, Advocate Health Care, and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, is a local effort working to transform student engagement and education in order to develop the new *health professional for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*; more importantly, it addresses health disparities by

<sup>1</sup> US Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved June 22, 2009, from Career Guides to Industries <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Chicago Scholars – Scholar Statistics. Retrieved June 23, 2009, from Scholars [http://www.scholarshipchicago.org/site/epage/15270\\_438.htm](http://www.scholarshipchicago.org/site/epage/15270_438.htm)

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engaging youth from the very communities where health outcomes are the poorest. The intersection of education and health has significant implications on an individual's quality of life. As Nicholas A. Freudenberg, DrPH, Distinguished Professor and DPH Director, Program in Urban Public Health, Hunter College School of Health Sciences/City University of New York states, "Education is perhaps the most powerful antidote to health and social inequalities between the poor and better off. That is improving school achievement is a promising strategy for reducing inequities in health."<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, given the extent of education's benefits to society, gaps in access to a quality education and a school that promotes healthy choices is a matter of great concern to the community and our city as a whole. By engaging health professionals, BWC's longstanding strategy is to create healthier learning environments and encourage school achievement for all participants.

In 2010, during its second year, BWC will continue to provide Chicago Scholars students with opportunities to gain critical exposure to health care professions and access to top health care professionals. These touch points will continue to be anchored in the intellectual capital provided by the Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University and Advocate Health Care. To learn more about the 2010 BWC Health Care Series or to inquire about how you may partner with Chicago Scholars, please contact Alex Gagnon at 312-784-3306.



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<sup>3</sup> The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Program for Ethnicity, Culture, and Health Outcomes (2009) «Breaking the Cycle: Investigating the Intersection of Educational Inequities and Health Disparities» Videoconference on Minority Health: June 9, 2009.