What is HSTA-AL?

Health Sciences & Technology Academy - Alabama

HSTA-AL will build a pipeline for underrepresented students to the field of nursing, teaching them to become change agents in their communities.

HSTA-AL aims to support inclusion in nursing, nurse faculty, and nursing science roles by opening the doors to higher education for underrepresented high school students.

HSTA-AL, a five-year program, is the first full-scale replication of the parent SEPA-funded HSTA program developed in West Virginia.

HSTA-AL will be piloted in Hale and Pickens Counties, with plans to expand throughout the state if effective.

HSTA-AL will encourage students to pursue undergraduate degrees by offering after-school clubs to engage students

in community-based participatory research; hosting summer camps on nursing, citizen science, and rural health disparities; and providing professional development to inservice and pre-service teachers.

HSTA-AL Project Goals:

- 1. Establish local and statewide community-led teams to oversee HSTA-AL
- 2. Provide professional development to in-service and pre-service HSTA-AL teachers
- 3. Host summer camps on nursing, citizen science, and rural health disparities
- 4. Offer after-school clubs to engage students in community-based participatory research
- 5. Compare HSTA-AL to WV HSTA outcomes



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What is HSTA-AL? Health Sciences & Technology Academy – Alabama

The Health Sciences & Technology Academy-Alabama, known as HSTA-AL, is the first-of-its kind SEPA project to replicate West Virginia's SEPA-supported Health Sciences & Technology Academy with important adaptations for rural Alabama. HSTA-AL's goal is to build diversity in Alabama's nursing, nurse-faculty, and nurse-scientist professions by opening the doors to higher education for rural, underserved, economically disadvantaged, primarily African American high school students.

HSTA-AL is innovative in its purpose of building a pipeline of students to STEM health-related fields, including nursing, nurse faculty, nurse scientists, and other biomedical fields from those underrepresented in the nursing workforce and from underserved rural communities in Alabama. Using a citizen science approach, we will mentor and facilitate professional preparedness of high school students from underserved communities for college and careers in STEM fields, and in particular into academic nursing and nursing science by helping them become agents of change in their own communities. HSTA-AL will also provide professional development to teachers to build science content and pedagogical skills for use with HSTA-AL students and in school classrooms.

SEPA-funded West Virginia HSTA:

- Began over 25 years ago
- Nearly 3000 graduates of the program
- 89% graduation rate among those who matriculate to college
- Many graduates go on to pursue advanced degrees
- 84% stay in West Virginia to work

Nurses are in short supply nationwide, particularly nurse scientists, nurse faculty, and registered nurses from underrepresented groups and rural areas. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, people of color represent nearly 40% of the U.S. population, but they comprise only about 20% of the nursing workforce1 and 16% of full-time nursing faculty2. To change this dynamic, we must encourage students to enter the field of nursing before they graduate from high school—especially those from underrepresented populations. Many do not envision themselves attending university, let alone becoming university faculty or nurse researchers.

This project will determine whether the pathways HSTA-AL students choose are similar to those of WV HSTA students and if HSTA-AL outcomes are on a trajectory to reflect the outcomes achieved by WV HSTA over the last 25 years.

1. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Enhancing Diversity in the Workforce. 2019; https://www.aacnnursing.org/ News-Information/Fact-Sheets/Enhancing-Diversity.

2. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Nursing Faculty: A Spotlight on Diversity. 2017; http://www.aacnnursing. org/portals/42/policy/pdf/diversityspotlight.pdf. Accessed April 30, 2020.



Capstone College of Nursing



