

## **Building Michigan's Workforce in Health Award**

**Category:** Healthcare Workforce Recruitment

**Institution:** Oakwood Healthcare, Inc

**Submitted by:** Carole Stacy, MSN, MA, RN Vice President of Career Services

**Program:** Recruiting Into Healthcare

**Program Goals:** The goals of our recruitment efforts were to attract, inform and encourage students to consider a career in healthcare. Additional goals of Oakwood's recruitment efforts are to:

1. Facilitate mentoring roles for Oakwood staff
2. Promote diversity of the healthcare workforce
3. Connect student interests to learning and career interests
4. Provide real healthcare world experiences

### **Program Abstract:**

Oakwood Healthcare, Inc along with all healthcare systems in Michigan has faced a substantial challenge to recruit not only nurses but all healthcare professionals into the healthcare field. Looking beyond the immediate need to the future shortages predicted in healthcare fields Oakwood embarked upon an outreach program to the middle and high schools in the metro Detroit area. The goal was to educate students, teachers and counselors about health careers with an emphasis on nursing careers. To assist with these efforts the Michigan Health Council selected Oakwood Healthcare, Inc. to participate in the *Strive for Challenging Objectives and Reach Excellence* (SCORE). Oakwood received funding in the amount of \$10,000 for SCORE Camps in the summers of 2003 and 2004. Oakwood sponsored a camp in both of those years and has continued to sponsor a Health Career Explorer's Program each year since the SCORE funding ended. Additional health career recruitment activities are ongoing at Oakwood Healthcare, Inc.

### **Program Description:**

Oakwood Healthcare, Inc has multiple programs that focus on educating teachers, students, counselors and the community about health careers. In addition to the Health Careers Explorer's program which hosts 15 to 20 students for a week each summer, where students visit a variety of departments in the hospital and interact with healthcare professionals, Oakwood sponsors multiple exploration initiatives. These include:

- *Nurse for a Day*. Each acute care site invites high school students to their site for a day. The student follows one nurse in the morning and another nurse in a different area in the afternoon. This activity occurs at least twice a year in each of 4 acute care sites.

- *Nurse Ambassador*: 40 Oakwood staff nurses have volunteered to go out into the community schools (elementary, middle, high school) to present on nursing as a career. The nurses make presentations to individual classes or entire student bodies for career day events. The Nurse Ambassador distributes J&J posters, brochures, coloring books, CDs and videos about nursing. Oakwood has developed an informational booklet titled *Nursing: The Career of Endless Opportunity*.
- *Oakwood representatives serve on the advisory boards for Michael Beery Technical Center (Dearborn), Taylor Career Center, Downriver Technical Career Consortium, Michigan Health Academy (Detroit), Romulus High School, and William D Ford Career Center (Wayne)*.
- *Oakwood provides clinical experiences for students from all of these high school health science programs, in addition to the 900 clinical placements they provide to area nursing programs.*
- *Oakwood education staff does one on one counseling with persons who want to get into nursing. This began as a service to Oakwood employees but has now expanded to the community at large. Contacts come from auto (Ford) workers who have lost their jobs, persons seeking a career change and students not enrolled in a high school health science program.*
- *Oakwood was a participant in the Michigan Health Council Med Pals program,*
- *Providing more than 25 E-mentors from a variety of health careers to local high school students.*

Oakwood has approached the recruitment of students into the healthcare pipeline with fresh ideas and innovative approaches. Their efforts have been sustained over a six year period with minimal funding from outside sources. With the length of time that students spend in the pipeline it is difficult to assess which recruitment efforts are instrumental in directing them into a career in healthcare. Oakwood Healthcare, Inc has been a longstanding supporter of all of the student centered Michigan Health Council programs.