

Today's Date

Aug. 25, 2022

Earmark Sponsor

Rep. Chandra Dillard

Project/Event Name

Medical Experience Academy

Amount

\$100,000

Recipient Type (*Local Government, Non-Profit, Private Organization, etc.*)

Not-for-profit

W-9 Form (*Federal Tax ID Number*)

81-1723202 (form attached)

Point of Contact

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Title

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Please provide a written summary and description for:**1. The activity, function or project for which earmark is intended**

For 12 years, the Health Sciences Center at Prisma Health has collaborated with academic partners throughout South Carolina to offer the Medical Experience (MedEx) Academy – a one-of-a-kind program developed to help high school and college students explore and experience various healthcare careers. By engaging students early, we can increase the number of healthcare providers in South Carolina and make employment opportunities more accessible to a diverse group of students.

Legislative funding will be used to provide needs-based support for MedEx Academy students.

2. Public purpose served by the project

Quality healthcare and a vibrant workforce are vital assets that allow our state and South Carolinians to thrive. South Carolina ranks 43rd in the nation for primary care physicians per 100,000 residents and has the highest per capita nursing shortage in the nation. Additionally, our state faces shortages in many other healthcare areas such as pharmacists, EMTs, radiology technicians, paramedics, etc. We need to have a strong and nimble pipeline that can respond to ever-changing healthcare industry needs and prepare our future healthcare workforce. The MedEx Academy program is a key statewide component in making that happen.

We are falling behind the nation and our Southeastern state neighbors. Legislative support will help create a “win-win” partnership among MedEx Academy, medical schools in South Carolina, nursing schools in South Carolina and other strategic partners (public and private). This partnership is critical in training and retaining a well-prepared diverse workforce for the future. Key are continuous efforts to identify, train, and retain underrepresented minority students in South Carolina and its medically underserved areas.

Participation in MedEx Academy requires a time commitment from students, which often leads accepted participants with financial need to choose between this career-focused program and a summer job to support their cost of living. State funding in 2021-2022 to-date has allowed MedEx Academy to offset this cost for 34 students, providing increased access to the program for diverse students, particularly from underrepresented backgrounds and areas. Additional funding in 2022-2023 would allow MedEx Academy to grow that student support to reach 63 students next cycle, while also expanding the pathway to nursing.

The MedEx Academy Nursing Pipeline expansion project will accelerate the recruitment and development of a nursing workforce reflective of the populations they serve to positively impact the healthcare disparities and the nursing shortage in SC, currently exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is uniquely positioned and qualified to create a school-to-employment health careers pipeline.

3. Project budget

Description	Budget	Additional details
MCAT/GRE Test Prep, Health Screening, and Certifications	\$15,720	Anticipated cost for 24 students at \$655.00 per student
Student Housing (academic site)	\$20,160	Average of \$20 per day for 24 undergraduate students/8 per a tier (Tiers 2, 3, and 4); housing provided through partnership with Greenville Technical College
Student Scholarships	\$24,000	Anticipated average of \$1,000 per student
Student Meals and Transportation	\$15,120	Average \$15 per day for 24 students over 6 weeks
Other Support for MedEx Nursing Students	\$25,000	Anticipated average of \$1,125 per student to participate in the summer program (i.e., uniforms, clearances, transportation, etc.) and test materials for passing the NCLEX required for nursing licensure.
Total	\$100,000	

4. Demonstrated community support and need

MedEx Academy is supported and guided by the MedEx Academy Advisory Board, led by Greenville Drive Owner & President Craig Brown and comprised of partners from academics, businesses, and community groups. These leaders represent diverse backgrounds and areas of interest both professionally and personally to ensure a strong and inclusive MedEx Academy. Additionally, the MedEx Academy Advancement Council works to secure and leverage needed philanthropic support for the program to ensure sustainability.

Nearly half of MedEx Academy students cite the scholarships and educational materials they receive through philanthropic support as their reason for being able to participate. That investment has launched about 84% of surveyed MedEx Academy alumni either into a healthcare career path or into the continued pursuit of an aligned health sciences degree.

By providing needed support for students who would not otherwise be able to participate in the program, the state legislature is ensuring that education and support for the future healthcare workforce is open to all and is removing barriers for those interested students.