



For Immediate Release
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Healthcare Careers in the Forefront

What: Annual Interactive Healthcare Career Fair for Mobile & Baldwin County 10th graders

When: Wednesday, March 8 & Thursday, March 9

Schools: 27 public and private school students arrive every 15 minutes – approximately 650 students total

Where: Mobile Civic Center

Attached: Event Diagram and School Schedule

Healthcare careers remain in high demand and Mobile schools are preparing students with the Mobile Area Chamber's help.

The Chamber's annual Health Occupations Career Fair (HOCF) will host more than 650 10th grade students from Mobile and Baldwin counties, highlighting various career and education options available in the healthcare sector. The event is scheduled Wednesday, March 8 and Thursday, March 9 at the Mobile Civic Center Expo Hall.

Once students arrive, they will float through 16 interactive exhibits, with the most popular returning exhibitors being nursing and surgical technology and the newest – dietary and speech pathology.

According to an April 2016 "State of Mobile County Workforce Report" by the University of Alabama, Registered Nurses top the list of high-demand occupations, and healthcare fields are among the most common in the top 50 highest-earning occupations.

"We are excited to have the opportunity to provide students hands-on exposure to the high-demand, high-wage healthcare jobs in our area," said **Carol Statter**, workforce development coordinator at Infirmity Health and chairman of the Chamber's Bay Area Healthcare Coalition.

"While doctors and nurses immediately come to mind as healthcare careers to pursue, the Coalition does not want to limit students' career aspirations to only those jobs," said **Emily McGrath**, the Chamber's director, education and workforce development. "Pharmacists, diagnostic sonographers and physician assistants are among the other medical careers alongside doctors and nurses on the list of needed occupations through 2022, and those careers are highlighted in this year's HOCF."

Skills and education requirements are rising for the many healthcare jobs available, and the Mobile County Public School System encourages students to plan out and engage in their career pathway as early as possible.

“By working with local healthcare providers we can ensure that our graduates are prepared for post-secondary success,” says **Larry Mouton**, MCPSS assistant superintendent for workforce development. “We cannot put too much emphasis on the importance of professional partnerships which allow our students to have clinical internships, guest speakers, and experts who act as program mentors.”

Last school year, 232 graduating MCPSS seniors earned the Alabama Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential, and more than 1,000 students became CPR, First Aid and AED defibrillator certified.

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