

INTRODUCING MINORITY YOUTH TO THE MEDICAL FIELD

St. Luke's partners with the St. Louis Internship Program

By Andrew Fowler
For The St. Louis American

St. Luke's Hospital has been taking big steps improving the lives of minority students in high schools in the St. Louis area through their work with the St. Louis Internship Program.

The St. Louis Internship Program (SLIP) helps underserved high school students find internships that correlate with their interests. Since 1996, St. Luke's Hospital has been working with the program and interns who have an interest in the medical field.

"With the initial person I talked to about the SLIP program, I could immediately see the benefit to the community," Jan Hess, St. Luke's vice president said. "It's really investing in the future."

Hess was instrumental in the effort to get the SLIP program to St. Luke's Hospital.

"We feel the interns placed at our facility become very prepared for a professional work setting," Hess said. "They come enthusiastic and are excited about their futures. They bring so much youthful exuberance and positivity to our organization."

The mission of the SLIP program is to provide, "inspiration, support, professional development and training to underserved high school students so they can obtain valuable internships in professional settings."

Many students, the vast majority of which are minority students, would not have access to similar internship opportunities with well-established



Jan Hess, St. Luke's Hospital vice president, visit at the hospital with Jonathan Williams, age 17, a St. Louis Internship Program student. Hess leads St. Luke's participation in the St. Louis Internship Program. Williams will be a senior this fall at Soldan International Studies High School. This is his second summer internship with St. Luke's.

organizations like St. Luke's Hospital, otherwise.

"St. Luke's has always been dedicated to improving the quality of life in our community," Hess said. "I can easily see how this program has benefited our community."

The benefits of the SLIP program are far-reaching, giving students experience and making them more attractive to colleges, universities and future employers. St. Luke's has even hired some of its past interns who have come through the SLIP program.

■ "We feel the interns placed at our facility become very prepared for a professional work setting."

— Jan Hess,
St. Luke's vice president

"We think our culture here is open, caring and loving," Hess said. "They feel the love and the support and the genuine interest in them as young people. It situates them uniquely."

One fact that Hess mentioned is seeing how much the interns that come through the SLIP program have had an impact St. Luke's Hospital.

"The surprise is how it has benefited us as an organization," Hess said. "I knew it would be a good fit in terms of our culture. I didn't know how it would be a benefit in terms of the managers who oversee our programs."

SLIP interns working at St. Luke's get a wide range of experience working in many departments including human resources, the pediatric center, health information services, clinical education, the nutritional needs department and many more. Over the 15-year history of SLIP students interning with St. Luke's Hospital, the program has been expanding.

"When we first started I thought we could just take one. Then it became two and now we typically take about 8 every summer."

Local leaders sound off on diversity

Workforce diversity doesn't just happen. It takes a commitment and persistence. And, the commitment starts at the top of the organization. Here's what local leaders have said regarding diversity and inclusion and their importance for the benefit of the entire region:



"We realize that true inclusion requires intentional effort. At Ameren we are committed to being an inclusive employer and member of the community. This diversity in thought and action is what gives us and our region a competitive edge."

Tom Voss
President & CEO
Ameren Corporation



"Diversity is a fairly cool principle in which most business people say they subscribe; however, true inclusion that is measurable

is more elusive in the workplace. Companies and organizations that have a diverse workforce are positioned to offer better services to meet the demands of customers whose characteristics are becoming more diverse."

Adrian E. Bracy
Chief Executive Officer
YWCA



"Every community and region is working to create something better, whether it is an education system, job market or health care system. I am convinced the only way we are going to create systems that are value added and sustainable is through the full appreciation of diversity. Our region is rich in diversity. We must maximize this asset by taking the time to connect and learn from each other."

Becky James-Hatter
President & CEO
Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Eastern Missouri



"Our region's approach to diversity has to move beyond the mere tolerance of differences and toward the true appreciation for the value that each individual's unique experience brings to the innovative and creative talent pool that St. Louis offers to the world."

Anthony (Tony) Thompson
President & CEO
Kwame Building Group



"Diversity and inclusion are critical to the vitality and success of the St. Louis region and St. Louis College of Pharmacy.

Our workforce must reflect the individual differences of all people in our region. For me, that directly applies to the profession of pharmacy. Preparing a diverse group of professionals will have a positive impact on our health care system and better educate people about their overall well-being."

Dr. John A. Pieper
President
St. Louis College of Pharmacy

Diversity At Work



We know that diversity in our neighborhood stores and our corporate office gives us a fresh perspective that makes us stronger. As we continue to grow, we count on that strength to help us serve you and the community.

Whether you work with us, or shop with us, you'll find diversity is essential to our success!

Schnucks

©2011 Schnucks