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PRESS RELEASE

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Lipscomb University College of Pharmacy helps John Overton high schoolers get prepped for national pharmacy technician exam

Web story with student quotes and photos
<http://www.lipscomb.edu/news/archive/detail/105/28648>

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Sept. 30, 2014) – Twenty-two students at Nashville’s John Overton High School will end this school year not only with advanced health care knowledge but also with the ability to sit for a national health care exam, thanks to the efforts of Lipscomb University’s doctor of pharmacy students.

Several fourth-year students at Lipscomb’s College of Pharmacy are spending a portion of their month-long advanced pharmacy practice experiences developing curriculum and co-teaching a pharmacy profession, practice and science class held at Overton’s Academy of Health Sciences, where students gain real-world experience through project-based learning.

While the partnership is providing Lipscomb student pharmacists some teaching experience, it’s giving Overton’s high school students an even more valuable benefit: possible employment upon graduation.

Students in the pharmacological sciences course will graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to sit for the national pharmacy technician certification exam, a credential that could earn them a full-time job or part-time work in the health care field as they pursue higher degrees.

Overton is the only school in the Metro Nashville school system and one of a few in the state offering this course material to high schoolers, said Mary York, academy coach at Overton High School.

“Statistics show that pharmacy technician jobs are in demand. With this certification, students can graduate high school with skills that allow them to go immediately into the workforce and, if they desire, further their education in the field of pharmacy science,” York said.

Overton teacher Denise Wigginton is overseeing the course, developing grading metrics and designing tests, while Lipscomb's student pharmacists are working with her to develop content, presentations, study guides and lab exercises. All lessons are designed to meet the required standards to prepare for the pharmacy technician certification exam, which generally requires a year of study.

The high school students were wowed in September when student pharmacists Isaiah Keller and Trent Barrett developed four lab stations using common items such as icing and Smartees, Altoids, hot dogs and oranges to give students hands-on experiences illustrating specialized skills for pharmacy technicians in the areas of medication compounding, counting and liquid measurements with various instruments.

Other topics discussed during the first month of class were various and unique medication dosage forms, different ways to administer medication, medication interactions and how different medications affect the metabolism. A special focus was given to the emerging field of personalized medicine and the impact it can have for improved health outcomes for patients.

Lipscomb's involvement with Overton is through the PENCIL Partners program, coordinated by the PENCIL Foundation. The College of Pharmacy has been a PENCIL Partner with Overton and worked with teachers on curriculum ideas and other projects since 2011.

College of Pharmacy faculty members, Dr. Ronda Bryant and Dr. Susan Morley are coordinating the academic portion of this initiative for the Lipscomb University College of Pharmacy. Lipscomb officials believe the program is mutually beneficial for each institution raising the overall learning experience for students at each school.

If you are interested in covering the pharmacological sciences course at Overton High School, contact Janel Shoun-Smith at 615-335-6273 or at janel.shoun-smith@lipscomb.edu.