



TCMC Agency Brief

Information for Regional Agencies About the Community Immersion Experience

Summer 2014

Community Immersion Experience Exceeds Expectations: TCMC Students Visit Heights Elementary Kids Cafe

As part of TCMC's Community Weeks curriculum, known as Community Immersion, several per-clinical students from the South campus visited with young students from the Heights Kids Cafe Program at Heights Elementary School in Wilkes-Barre. Kids Cafe is sponsored by the Commission on Economic Opportunity. Every day nearly 180 children attend the free program where they receive homework assistance, a nutritious evening meal and educational and physical activities. Students from the West campus volunteered at agencies such as Hope Enterprises, Inc., a non-profit organization based in Williamsport that offers a variety of services to enhance the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities. In the North campus, student volunteered at agencies such as the Center for Independent Living in Scranton, that offers support for living options to people with disabilities.

"The biggest thing I took away from the experience at the Kids Cafe was how many different avenues were impacted in a positive way for these kids. The program ensures that the child gets a nutritious meal, learns about nutrition and how to make healthy meals at home, gets help with homework, learns about different physical activities, and most importantly gives them somewhere to be every afternoon. For me, these agency experiences have been about learning what I, as a physician, can offer my patient when they come in with problems that can't be solved by a prescription," says TCMC student Trevor Staub, pictured above with Kids Cafe students.

According to Jennifer Joyce, MD, one of TCMC's professor of Family Medicine, "TCMC's Community Immersion program connects our students with regional communities through partnerships with local service agencies. These partnerships introduce 'Community as Teacher' in our community based approach to health. Our goal for the program is for students to learn the power of collaboration in eliminating health disparities. Through the program, students reflect on the dominant and complex relationships between health and biology, genetics, environment and individual health behaviors. TCMC students see firsthand how socioeconomic status, the physical environment, discrimination, racism and literacy levels impact the health of individuals and communities. This is done through the lens of service as students participate in visits to dedicated local community agencies and structured interviews. Group discussions and guided reflective exercises complete the cycle. It is a great partnership for all."



"The energy at the Kids Cafe in Wilkes Barre is incredible. The after school program is a true testament to a community addressing local needs. I was thoroughly impressed with the emphasis on nutrition and providing children with a safe outlet to learn and grow," said TCMC student, Mary Elyse Lynch, left, pictured with young learners at the Kids Cafe.

Community Immersion Goals & Objectives

The Community Immersion Experience expands an understanding of health care needs by providing opportunities for students in teams to visit with various agencies that provide for family and community health.

Goal:

Develop Clinician-Community Relationships

Learning Objectives:

- Discover diverse constructs/models of community
- Interpret community perceptions of health care (including myths and misconceptions)
- Relate to local community dynamics:
 - Demographic
 - Economic
 - Political
 - History of land use
 - Migration
 - Occupation
- Discover local environments and their impact on health
- Interpret the isolation of the health care community from the community at large
- Demonstrate respect for community integrity, cultural diversity, and multiple determinants of health
- Understand health-relevant policy
- Operate from an open-minded position
- Distinguish honest limits of medical care
- Illustrate the responsibility to contribute health expertise to public dialogue
- Demonstrate respect of community leadership
- Relate to the responsibility to work for health of the public:
 - Connect Community Health Research Project (CHRP) work with other community visits

TCMC is committed to non-discrimination in all employment and educational opportunities.

TCMC's Agency Partners

NORTH REGION

Advocacy Alliance
ARC
Bayada Nursing
Center for Independent Living
Clearbrook Manor
EOTC
Friends of the Poor
Friendship House
McCauley Center
Meals on Wheels
NHS Human Services
NEPA Center for Independent Living
Penn State Extension-Growing Stronger Program
Penn State Extension-Strengthening Families Program
Scranton School for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Children
St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen
St. Joseph's Center
Telespond
United Cerebral Palsy
United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA
Wayne County Agency on Aging
Women's Resource Center

Thank You!

North Student Perspective

Appreciating the Time Spent with Agencies

Clearbrook Manor---Ashley Jeanlus

"I went to a drug rehabilitation center which really changed my perception on life! The clients at the center were in charge of their health treatment. They took charge on dialogues, therapy sessions and workshops while the healthcare system supported members in the background. It was great to see how these individuals felt encouraged and empowered in changing their destinies...I hope that I can promote the same self-reliance in my future patients!"

The Arc---Viktoriya Wolfe

"In all of my agency experiences, I felt more knowledgeable after my visit. I always learned something new that I could take away with me and apply to my future practice as a physician."

Headstart---Laurel Macy

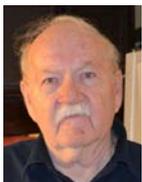
"I learned a lot because I had the privilege of going on a home visit to see how a two- year-old girl was progressing. As someone with an interest in Peds, it was very eye-opening to learn about child development and how Headstart works to promote healthy development in underserved populations."

Lackawanna County Drug Court---Kevin Norman

"I never thought about the options for how to handle drug-related arrests. It was very enlightening to think about how best to rehabilitate these people, offering treatment and support as opposed to a prison sentence. It displayed a more holistic and compassionate response. I was also quite impressed with the inter-professional nature and team-based approach toward treating offenders. There were representatives from at least a half-dozen agencies and disciplines involved in each case, coordinating services and working hard toward a common goal of effective treatment."

North Family Perspective

The Family Centered Experience (FCE) program is an important part of TCMC's patient-centered, community-based curriculum. Each year during the Community Week Experience, first year students are paired with a patient. They visit the patient three times a year for two years to learn the human aspect and personal family experiences that arise from managing a chronic or serious illness. Sam Wallace is a caregiver for John Shaw in Carbondale:



"John suffers from a debilitating neuro-muscular condition but wants to live independently in the community. Through the Center for Independent Living, we are able to care for John at home. I'm happy to think the young medical students will be helped by some practical experience and contact with people with special needs."

-Sam Wallace, caregiver



"The family centered experience will help us to become more caring and compassionate doctors. Through our experience with Mr. Shaw, we have learned the various health challenges that patients with his condition face. Mr. Shaw also showed us that health can mean more to patients than just treating an illness or symptoms. Through the Center for Independent Living, Mr. Shaw can remain independent and out of a nursing home which is something he values highly as a person. Keeping his independence is an important part of his definition of health. We have appreciated the time Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wallace have taken to provide us with this important insight into the lives of our future patients."

-Michelle Fuentes, TCMC student