

# ROME MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **17 students explore healthcare careers at Rome Memorial Hospital**

ROME -- Rome Memorial Hospital along with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield and the Central New York Area Health Education Center (CNYAHEC) sponsored a Medical Academy of Science and Health (M.A.S.H.) Camp at the hospital on Aug. 17, 18 and 19.



Michael Kwas, a pilot for LifeNet of New York, explains the workings of his AS 350 American Eurocopter to students from the Medical Academy of Science and Health (M.A.S.H.) Camp at Rome Memorial Hospital Thursday, Aug. 18. A total of 17 students spent three days at the hospital, touring various departments and learning about the broad array of healthcare careers available at the facility.

Area students, entering eighth or ninth grade in September with an interest in exploring a healthcare career, attended the interactive summer camp. “The students had an opportunity to meet with healthcare workers, talk about their jobs and see them in action in addition to participating in hands-on activities,” said Rome Memorial Hospital Community Educator Julie Chrysler. “We are eager to help young people become familiar with the broad range of opportunities that healthcare offers because there is a tremendous need for more people to choose these challenging and rewarding career fields.”

“When exploring careers, today’s young people are often faced with choosing between a high tech environment and working with people,” Chrysler said. “Healthcare is unique because it offers the best of both worlds.”

Rome Memorial Hospital’s three-day M.A.S.H. Camp program introduced 17 campers to a broad array of healthcare careers. Participants included, Michaela Kozenewski, Holland Patent High School; Taylor Bennett, Lindsey Hurlbut, Christopher Peters and John Balog, Strough Middle School; Sabrina Seaton, Kayleigh Wilcox and Jessica Norrs, Adirondack Central School; Anias Western-Womack and Dana Glantz, Rome Free Academy; Maci Harrington, Camden Middle School; Melody McCoy-Cole, Vernon-Verona Sherrill High School; Hannah Keil, Camden High School; David Jeselson, Rome Catholic School; Lindsay Payne, Town of Webb Union Free School; Paige Rivers, South Lewis Middle School; and Anders Hansson, Utica Notre Dame School.

The students, dressed in their scrubs, interacted with professionals in pharmacy, nursing, respiratory, speech and recreation therapy, medical imaging, the operating room, laboratory, maternity and the emergency department. Campers toured a Life Net Air Medical Transport helicopter, an Amcare ambulance and participated in a “Moving & Grooving” physical therapy session. They also learned how to use a stethoscope. In addition to their hospital scrubs, each camper was given their own stethoscope, a first aid kit, breakfast, lunch and snacks, and was awarded a certificate of completion.

Melody McCoy-Cole, a Vernon Verona Sherrill ninth grader gained a lot of insight into the inner-workings of the hospital. “I learned about the different health careers here and different things you can do at the hospital,” she said. “At first I thought hospitals were just for doctors and nurses, but I learned that there are many other jobs available such as pharmacists, lab technicians and therapists.

McCoy-Cole plans to pursue a career in healthcare, something that her tour of the operating room helped confirm. “I want to be an ophthalmologist when I get older,” she said. “I want to be able to go into the operating room and perform eye surgery.”

“I was really surprised with how many instruments there are in the operating room,” she continued. “I learned how doctors can perform laparoscopic surgery and operate without actually cutting people open, using little cameras to see inside.”

Other highlights for McCoy-Cole included her visits to the hospital’s pharmacy where she learned how an IV is made and laboratory where she learned how blood tests are performed. “I’ve had a lot of fun and the program was really interesting,” she concluded.

Christopher Peters, an eighth grader at Strough Middle School was equally impressed with his MASH Camp experience. “I thought the lab was fun and I learned a lot,” he said. “I enjoyed seeing the blood and learning about the organs.”

Getting a chance to tour a medical-helicopter also left an impression on Peters. “I want to be a doctor, a flight nurse or a flight paramedic when I get older,” he said. “I was surprised at how they could fit all of the necessary medical equipment into such a small space.”

“Many of the 2011 graduates have expressed an interest in returning as a volunteer or to shadow an employee in a specific department,” Chrysler noted.

M.A.S.H. Camp is only one of many educational outreach programs at Rome Memorial Hospital. “Career exploration and education is an ongoing initiative at Rome Memorial Hospital,” explained Chrysler. “We partner with business, education and the community to support workforce development in our area and increase awareness of healthcare careers. We have even developed a coloring book for pre-school age children.”

Rome Memorial Hospital’s career education programming includes:

- Madison-Oneida BOCES Professional Horizons;
- Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES Program for Excellence;
- Work-study programs with BOCES and the New York State School for the Deaf;

- Career fairs for middle and high school students;
- Mentoring and shadowing opportunities; and
- Volunteer opportunities that provide hands-on career exploration.

Students that attended M.A.S.H. Camp were required to complete an application that included a short essay that explained why they were interested in attending. Student selections were based on interest in science, math or the health professions.

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