

National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine and Camp Med convene at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center

One hundred twenty –one students from across the nation, as well as Forsyth County and the surrounding 17 counties of the Northwest NC Area Health Education Center (AHEC) convened at Wake Forest School of Medicine as part of the National Youth Leadership Forum (Medicine) and Camp Med. Coordinated by Diversity Development Initiatives, faculty, staff and students spent the day highlighting Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

The academically talented high school students, all interested in healthcare, learned the history of Wake Forest School of Medicine and the Bowman Gray Campus, and spent the day engaged in activities highlighting the education, research and patient care provided at Wake Forest. Nathan Smith, MS IV gave a dynamic and interactive lecture – “Three Billion: The Anatomy and Physiology of the Human Heart”. One student’s response to the lecture was, “I enjoyed the lecture because I learned so many additional things about the human heart. One thing I liked about the lecture is that it gave us statistics to show the severity of heart disease and why your heart is important, it was an opportunity for me to learn all of the functions and vocabulary terms related to the heart; I also enjoyed this part of the program because we had the opportunity to examine real human hearts, (real pig hearts) I thought this was very interesting because it allowed everyone to physically see and identify the parts of the heart, it showed everyone what the heart really looked like”. The lecture was followed by lunch with 12 other medical students who answered questions and shared their experiences in medical school, and then a tour at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine. “This was a unique experience because we actually got the chance to see the labs where they perform their procedures. I thought it was interesting that they used an inkjet printer to print cells to create organs. I thought this was revolutionary because if knowledge in this part of technology expands we can completely eradicate the need for organ donations.”

In addition to a tour of the medical center, students had lots of hands-on experience – they had the responsibility of caring for a mock patient during surgery in the patient simulation lab and gained an appreciation for the many systems and teams required to provide care for a real patient. “This amazed me, because the mannequin could breathe and blink”! – declared one high school student. As a follow up to the anatomy and physiology of the heart lecture, students were introduced to a physical examination of the heart and were able to practice the physical exam skills.

Concluding the day, the students attended a information fair and were able to see exhibits from the medical, graduate and the Physician Assistant Studies educational programs.

A pre-test given at the beginning of the day yielded a maximum of 2 out of 10 correct answers. A post test however landed prizes for more than 30 students who correctly answered 9-10 of the 10 questions! The success of the program was summed up by one student: “There were so many amazing experiences I had here that I will never forget”.