



### *Pathways to Health Careers*

Because the growing need for healthcare providers in the United States has created an increase in the demand for professionals in this field, many schools and youth organizations are in search of engaging, turnkey programs that will familiarize their students with various healthcare careers.

In response to this need, Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center (AHEC) created Scrubs Club to enhance high school student knowledge of a broad array of health occupations and encourage them to consider a health career as a future career choice. Scrubs Club was designed to maintain student engagement as they learn, first-hand, the real-life roles, responsibilities, and rewards of serving in the healthcare field by “test driving” various health occupations through the program’s relatable lesson plans, hands-on activities, thoughtful exercises, and meaningful field trips. Students also learn how to prepare for the job market through personal skills development, documentation preparation, and personal finance review.

Scrubs Club is a complete program. The curriculum binder and accompanying toolkit contain all lesson plans and materials needed and the instructors do **not** have to have clinical experience to facilitate this program. The easy-to-follow lesson plans and the flexibility of the Scrubs Club program accommodates each individual instructor’s needs and allows the lesson plans to be utilized, as the instructor is able to integrate it. To date, the Scrubs Club curriculum has been utilized as a longitudinal program, as well as integrated into daily class curriculum, as an afterschool activity, and as a multi-school collaboration.

Early evaluations of the Scrubs Club impact on high school students who utilized the program as a three-year longitudinal club show that, upon graduation, 90% plan to continue their education. Of these students, 85% plan to pursue a health career and 85% of these students stated that participating in Scrubs Club influenced their decision to pursue a health career.

Additionally, the Scrubs Club lesson plans are continually reviewed and updated as needed to ensure the program’s relevance. And, since Scrubs Club has a one-time purchase price, organizations that previously purchased the program will automatically receive all updates, free of charge, provided the CHAHEC staff has updated contact information.

Since Scrubs Club’s release in 2012, this breakthrough program has been awarded the **2016 National AHEC Organization (NAO) Center Award for Excellence in Health Careers Recruitment** and the **2016 AHEC Center Award for Excellence in Health Careers Recruitment** and is being utilized by high schools, at-risk youth programs, afterschool programs, community-based career workshops, BOCES, Science & Technology Entry Programs (STEP), and other Area Health Education Centers throughout the United States.

