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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mark Gunderman, Communications Specialist
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Desk: 715-831-7288
Cell: 715-210-4714
mgunderman1@cvtc.edu

Local Students Eyeing Health Careers Compete at CVTC *First-ever regional competition held at Health Education Center*

Eau Claire, WI – The pace can get hectic when healthcare professionals are responding to a crisis situation. A group of Ladysmith High School students saw an example of that Thursday, Feb. 21, when Chippewa Valley Technical College students put on a demonstration of emergency response when a patient goes into cardiac arrest.

But getting a glimpse of what a healthcare career could entail is why the students joined HOSA – Health Occupations Students of America – and why they were at CVTC for a regional healthcare skills competition.

The regional format for the HOSA competitions is new this year; previously there had been only a state competition. Shelly Olson, CVTC’s dean of health and emergency services, said the HOSA competition is a good event for CVTC to be involved in.

“We are proud to be the host for the region one competition,” Olson said. “Hosting gives us the opportunity to expose our state-of-the-art facilities to potential CVTC health program students. As part of the event, we held breakout sessions involving multi-disciplinary scenarios, and our Diagnostic Medical Sonography students held an open scanning lab.”

“We have been competing since 2009,” said Matt Bunton, life sciences teacher and chapter advisor at Ladysmith High School. “We have 29 students competing this year, but only six needed to be at CVTC for their events. The academic competitions give students the opportunity to go into greater depth in a subject they are interested in.”

But there is more to HOSA than competition, Bunton added. “It gives them the opportunity to learn about health careers and to perform community service activities.”

Students compete in categories like CPR/First Aid, Emergency Medical Technician, Life Support Skills, Medical Assisting and Nursing Assisting. While some of the events demonstrate hands-on skills, others involve testing, or are public speaking and demonstration events.

Ladysmith sophomore Lauren Wilson chose the Prepared Speaking category, with a topic of “Define Your Purpose.” She’s still contemplating her career path.

“I’m thinking about nursing, but nothing is for certain at this point,” Wilson said. “This is my first year doing this. It’s showing me the different jobs that are offered in healthcare.”

Fellow sophomore Kitara Fye is a bit more focused on her plans. She wants to be a physician, but which type she is still exploring.

“At the moment, two really interesting areas to me are neuroscience and anesthesiology,” Fye said. “With HOSA, I’m getting a closer look at the kinds of jobs there are to see which ones I would enjoy doing.”

Fye apparently has the study habits for medical school. She competed in the Medical Reading category, in which she had to read five books before coming to the competition.

Students from Flambeau High School were also involved in the completion. Others came from as far south as the La Crosse area and west to Hudson.

With over 95 programs and both online and on-campus classes, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today’s jobs, with 94 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$44,000.

Cutline: Ladysmith High School students, from left, Alycia Ewer, Jade Hengst, Hailey Squires and Emily Sather, watch a CVTC student perform an ultrasound on a fellow student during a demonstration at the Region 1 HOSA competition event at CVTC Thursday, Feb. 21.

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