ASU, Phoenix College collaborate on innovative medical lab program

Arizona State University

A unique partnership between the Arizona State University College of Nursing & Health Innovation and Phoenix College has made earning a bachelor's degree easier and more affordable. Students can now complete a bachelors degree in the Medical Laboratory Science program earning 90 college credits from Phoenix College and 30 through ASU. Except for nine upper division general education credits, which can be completed online, the 30 ASU credits will be taught at Phoenix College and affiliated clinical sites throughout the Phoenix area.

Graduates of this program – medical technicians at the AAS level and medical laboratory scientists at the BAS level – typically perform the laboratory analyses that healthcare providers use to diagnose and treat disease, as well as to evaluate a patient's health.

Vice Provost for Transfer Partnerships at Arizona State University Dr. Maria Hesse said, "This unique partnership will provide a seamless, convenient and cost-effective transfer program for students seeking to earn a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Medical Laboratory Science."

Faculty from Phoenix College and ASU will teach the professional courses on the Phoenix College campus near downtown Phoenix. Julie Stiak heads the AAS program at Phoenix College and Jeff Wolz will direct the ASU BAS program. Both directors are located at the Phoenix College campus as are the state-of-the-art lab facilities that will be used to prepare students.

"This collaborative program is an ideal opportunity for those seeking a meaningful career in the fast-growing medical arena to learn from ASU and Phoenix College faculty while enjoying the advantages of the smaller college environment," Wolz said.

Program Co-director Stiak added, "ASU and Phoenix College have long been preparing medical laboratory scientists and technicians to provide vital services to the community. This new partnership will strengthen the program and help students further their education in this field."

The vital relationships that Phoenix College and ASU have established with healthcare organizations afford a wealth of opportunities for students to achieve their required clinical experience while displaying their skills to some of the state's top employers. Healthcare partners include Banner Healthcare-Laboratory Sciences of Arizona/Sonora Quest Laboratories, Scottsdale Healthcare, Veterans Administration Medical Center, John C. Lincoln Hospitals, Mayo Medical Laboratories, Maricopa Medical Center, Abrazo Healthcare, Casa Grande Regional Medical Center,

IASIS Healthcare and Flagstaff Medical Center.

Job opportunities for medical laboratory scientists and medical laboratory technicians are "excellent," according to U.S. Department of Labor projections. A growth rate of 14 percent is predicted for 2008 - 2018 as the volume of lab tests increases due to population growth, as well as the development of powerful diagnostic tests and advances in genomics. The need for medical laboratory technicians and medical laboratory scientists in Arizona is projected to increase by 34 and 25 percent respectively, according to the Department of Labor.

Careers range from public health disease tracking to managing a hospital lab to helping run a third-world clinic with the Peace Corps. Median annual wages in 2008 for medical laboratory scientists were $53,500 with the mid range from $45,000 to $63,000.

Deadline for applications to enroll in the new program is September 30.

For further information about the new medical laboratory science degree program, contact: Julie Stiak, 602-285-7735, Julie.Stiak@pcmail.maricopa.edu [1] on the AAS offering or Jeff Wolz, (602) 285-7865, jwolz@asu.edu [2] regarding the BAS program or go to: http://nursingandhealth.asu.edu/programs/healthsciences/bas-mdl.htm [3] or http://www.phoenixcollege.edu/he/mlt [4].

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