

RX for Success: A Pharmacy Career

by (NewsUSA)

What would happen if no pharmacists were available to fill your prescription at the local drugstore, or to recognize medication errors in the emergency room?

That could be reality if America doesn't train another 150,000 pharmacists by 2020.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 7,000 to 10,000 pharmacist positions are left unfilled every year.

Pharmacy graduates can expect a variety of possible career directions as well as four or five job offers. Besides earning a mean annual wage of \$77,050, pharmacists can choose from a wide variety of employment settings, from research laboratories to poison control centers to veterinary clinics.

To help teachers encourage students to pursue a career in pharmacy, health and science, the pharmaceutical company Roche created a free teacher's guide in collaboration with the Parenteral Drug Association Foundation for Pharmaceutical Sciences Inc. and WLIW New York public television.

"Encouraging students who already have an interest in health and science may be key to closing the potential shortage gap of pharmacists," said Vivian L. Beetle, director of corporate relations and contributions for Roche. "Roche believes that teachers play a positive and vital role in directing students into a career path."

The guide is designed to help teachers identify students with an interest in science and show them how to engage students in dialogue about career opportunities in pharmacy. It includes profiles of students who have pursued a career in pharmacy, a list of colleges and professional organizations and a student self-assessment tool.

Would your children or students succeed in a pharmacy career? They should consider the following:

* Are they good at math?

* Are they interested in science, especially biology and chemistry?

* Are they detail-oriented and focused?

* Do they care about others and want to make a positive contribution to society?

* Would they be interested in a career that offers the opportunity to work anywhere in the country?

Roche is working with others to distribute the guide, titled "Pharmacists: Unsung Heroes," among educators. It also can be downloaded at www.wliw.org/pharmacists/.