

Education

Non-Profit Receives \$2.1 Million To 'Grow Our Own' Health Professionals

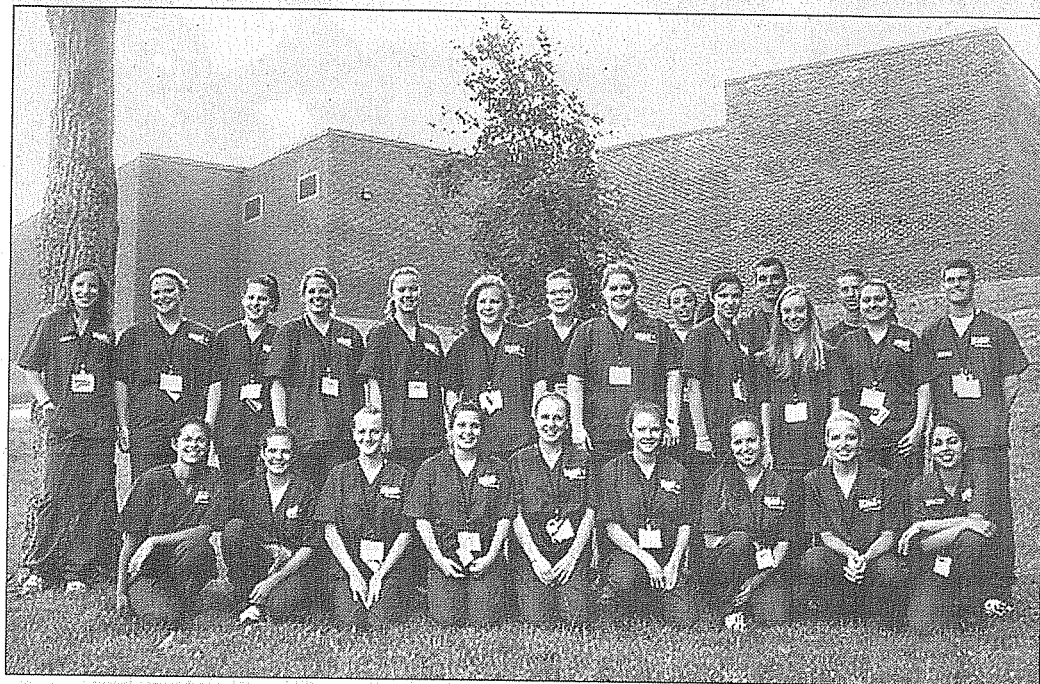
Statewide jobs preparation project supports Vermont students to meet Vermont workforce needs in health care.

ST. JOHNSBURY — The Northeastern Vermont Area Health Education Center (NEVAHEC) recently received a grant for more than \$2.1 million over three years on behalf of the Vermont AHEC network to provide academic enrichment and college preparation to Vermont students interested in a health care career.

The Vermont HCOP project will lengthen and strengthen the health care workforce "pipeline" in Vermont, by reaching younger students in grades K through 5, for health career exploration and by introducing new programming to students in secondary and post-secondary grades.

"By starting with our youngest students, and supporting them throughout their education with information and opportunities, we hope that VT HCOP will inspire young people to be healthy, to participate in the health of their community, and to excel in science, technology, and math," says Laura Remick, VT HCOP's project manager.

"This partnership is a great example of educators working with community partners and employ-



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ers to educate more students in ways that support the health care sector," says Bob Whittaker, dean of Institutional Advancement at Lyndon State College, a partner in the VT HCOP project. "Health care is one of Vermont's key industry clusters best positioned to keep and create jobs."

"Fourteen of the twenty fastest-growing occupations in Vermont are in health care," says Nicole LaPointe, executive director of the Northeastern Vermont AHEC. "It is important to prepare Vermont students to fill those positions. VT HCOP will strengthen an existing

'grow our own' approach to meeting Vermont's health care workforce needs."

"This project has an ambitious scope, and among the organizations involved a tremendous amount of collective expertise. Program implementation will begin initially with students of River Valley Technical Center, Lyndon Institute, and Lyndon Town School, and expand statewide by year three," said LaPointe.

The Vermont Area Health Education Center

The Vermont AHEC is a net-

work of academic and community partners working together to improve the distribution, supply and quality of the health care workforce in Vermont. The network consists of a Program Office at the University of Vermont College of Medicine and three Regional Centers. Vermont AHEC brings more than 15 years of experience in health care workforce development to this project.

For more information about projects and programs of the Northeastern Vermont AHEC, visit the website: nevahec.org.