

MEDIA ADVISORY

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RI High School Students to Observe Fetal Ultrasound in Real Time

Date: Wednesday, February 9, 2005

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Cranston High School East, 3rd Floor Library, 899 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI

Event: The virtual job shadow program aims to encourage young people in Rhode Island to choose and train for a career in the health care field. During these programs students and educators are able to participate in interactive discussions with health care professionals as they perform medical procedures. During another in a series of these events, more than 500 high school students from Warwick, Cranston, Burrillville, North Smithfield, Bristol, Warren and Providence will observe and ask questions of an ultrasound technician while performing a fetal ultrasound at Women & Infants Hospital. Students and educators will participate in an interactive discussion with the technician on the personal skills, education requirements and professional certifications necessary for her career.

The Health Partnership Council (HPC), housed at the Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI), has held five previous virtual job shadow programs including: coronary by-pass surgery, valve replacement surgery, rotator-cuff surgical repair and a fetal ultrasound procedure. To date, more than 1200 students have participated in the program.

The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training predicts that the fastest growing occupations through 2006 will be in the health care industry, with 17,000 new jobs being created.

“In order to meet the workforce needs the health care industry faces, the connection between health care and education must be strengthened,” said Ruth Ricciarelli, Director of Workforce Development, Hospital Association of Rhode Island and creator of the project. “This event gives students the opportunity to see first-hand how the lessons they learn in the classroom relate to the “real” world and assists them in planning for the future by helping them to select appropriate coursework in high school.”

This interactive videoconference is made possible through the Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology (RINET).

“RINET is pleased to deliver technology that supports HARI in achieving its educational goals,” said Sharon Hussey, RINET’s Executive Director. “Rhode Island’s children have a unique opportunity to experience new forms of educational content delivery through RINET’s high speed statewide network and video bridging services. The virtual job shadow program is an exciting example of the curricular use of videoconferencing technology.”

The HPC is a consortium of hospitals, health care organizations, higher education, community-based and professional organizations, legislators, insurers and labor. The HPC strives to provide career preparation and educational opportunities as well as a data collection system that stimulates and guides workforce initiatives. The virtual job shadow program designed and implemented by the HPC has achieved national recognition as a long-term workforce development tool.