

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Georgia Department of Education Launches HOSA Foundation to Promote Careers in Healthcare

ATLANTA, Ga., Sept. 2, 2008 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) -- Georgia's supply of healthcare workers is in a "critical condition" according to an article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. There are severe shortages in nursing, in the number of physicians per capita, psychologist, social workers, and other health related fields. Georgia now ranks 9th in total populations and still lags behind its sisters states with the number of healthcare professionals. Georgia Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) is a student-lead organization promoting interest in healthcare occupations among high school and college students.

HOSA's defined purposes are to promote career opportunities in the health care industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. In its eight year history the Georgia HOSA organization has grown from an initial membership of 300 members to over 5,800 members.

This phenomenal growth can be attributed to the enthusiastic HOSA Advisors at the local High Schools and Colleges, support from Georgia Department of Education and partnerships with the health care industry. Georgia is benefiting from strong local programs in health care fields such as dental, biomedical, CNA, EMT, imaging science and others.

One of the methods that demonstrate Georgia's proficiency in health care instruction is through the State and National competitions held on an annual basis. In order to compete at the state level the students have to demonstrate to their local advisors proficiency in the competitive event area. These students then compete against their peers across the state of Georgia where they are judged by a group of healthcare professionals who volunteer to serve as judges.

Students may compete as an individual or as a member of a team in the events. The winners are selected and announced at the awards session which is held at the annual HOSA State Leadership Conference. The top three winners, both individual and teams, are eligible to compete at the National HOSA Leadership conference held annually in June.

At the recent GA HOSA State Leadership Conference held in Atlanta over 300 students were eligible to compete at the HOSA National Leadership Conference level. The cost for the students has increased significantly over the last several years. Because of this over 15% of the students could not afford to participate in this once in a lifetime opportunity. To prevent this from happening to more students in the future, Georgia HOSA established the Georgia HOSA Foundation which is an established 501(c) 3 organization whose guiding purpose is to help students fulfill their dream of attending and competing at the HOSA National Leadership Conference.

According to Allen Seigler, III, Executive Director of GA HOSA: "Establishing the HOSA Foundation was a logical step in supporting the students as they work to represent Georgia at the National State Leadership Conference. Our HOSA Board of Directors unanimously supported and endorsed the idea of launching the Foundation."

The primary purposes is to encourage interest in health care but also to raise students' self-esteem, build character, develop leadership skills and promote social interaction.

More information: <http://www.georgiahosa.org>.

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