HEALTHCARE LEADERS TO HOST FUTUREREADY EXPERIENCE FOR LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

WICHITA, Kan. Oct. 15, 2024 – The Greater Wichita Partnership, in collaboration with the HCA Healthcare Foundation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, Wichita State University Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology (WSU Tech) and Wichita Public Schools, will host the "FutureReady Experience: Healthcare" event on Oct. 16, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Healthcare FutureReady Center (FRC), located at 3821 E. Harry Street.

The hands-on event will introduce approximately 200 seventh graders from Wichita Public Schools to a wide array of healthcare careers. Students will rotate through a series of Mobile Health Career Stations and explore professions such as Certified Nurse Aids (CNA), EKG technicians, EMTs, phlebotomists, surgical technicians and athletic trainers.

Each station is designed to debunk myths and demonstrate that careers in healthcare are accessible and exciting, even for those who might shy away from the notion of "guts and gore."

"The "FutureReady Experience: Healthcare" event offers a unique opportunity to ignite young students' interest in healthcare and showcase the FutureReady Center," said Wichita Public Schools FRC Principal Eric Shipman. "The hope is the hands-on activities will spark the students' curiosity and provide them with a clearer understanding of how they can contribute to the healthcare sector."

"Through our partnerships and collaboration with the region's healthcare employers, we understand the critical need for a highly skilled and trained workforce in the healthcare industry. This event allows students to explore the FRC and gain valuable insights into the diverse and rewarding career paths within the healthcare sector," said Lynn Loveland, WSU Tech Dean of Health Sciences.

The "FutureReady Experience: Healthcare" event is made possible by a $25,000 grant from the Healthier Tomorrow Fund at the HCA Healthcare Foundation. HCA Healthcare is the parent company of Wesley Healthcare, one of Kansas' largest healthcare organizations.

Opportunity Wichita, an affiliate organization of the Partnership, was awarded the grant to advance the community's talent and workforce development strategy and strengthen the Wichita region's healthcare workforce.

"Middle school students are at a critical age of career exploration. The "FutureReady Experience: Healthcare" event is designed to engage students at this crucial stage, helping them discover their interests and make more informed career choices in high school," said Partnership Senior Strategic Advisor for Talent Roadmap and Workforce Development Tami Bradley. "The event aligns with the Partnership's Talent Roadmap and strategic goals of inspiring the next generation of professionals and addressing the growing need for a skilled workforce."

Students will take home healthcare-themed promotional items and marketing materials to continue the career discussion with their parents or guardians. Following the event, the Mobile Health Career Stations will travel to middle schools throughout Wichita Public Schools, allowing an additional 3,000 students to explore healthcare careers. These students will participate in hands-on activities similar to those on Oct. 16 and will also receive promotional materials to further their career exploration.

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About the Greater Wichita Partnership
The Greater Wichita Partnership is dedicated to fast-forwarding regional economic growth in Wichita and South-Central

Kansas. The organization works within three key priorities – jobs, talent and quality of place – to accelerate this objective. For more information, visit https://greaterwichitapartnership.org/home.

About Wichita Public Schools
Wichita Public Schools is the largest school district in Kansas, educating and providing unparalleled opportunities to approximately 11 percent of all public school students in the state, and more than half of all school-aged children in Sedgwick County. WPS serves students in 94 schools and special program locations, employing nearly 10,000 dedicated professionals. For more information, visit https://www.usd259.org/Wichita.

About WSU Tech
As Wichita State University's Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology, WSU Tech stands at the forefront of modern technical education in Kansas, offering over 100 degree and certificate options. These programs cover critical fields such as aviation, health care, manufacturing, design, information technology, police science, culinary arts, business, and more. WSU Tech operates four campuses and serves as the managing partner of the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) in Wichita, KS—a city known for its high concentration of STEM jobs.

In 2018, Wichita State University, Kansas' urban public research hub, affiliated with WSU Tech, enhancing the institution's student-centered focus and aligning with Wichita State's dedication to innovation and applied learning. This partnership has created a comprehensive educational environment that supports student achievement and meets the evolving needs of industries in the urban heart of Kansas and beyond.

Accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and as a Kansas Board of Regents institution, WSU Tech upholds high academic standards and equips students with the skills necessary for lifelong success and career readiness.

For more information on how WSU Tech shapes the future of technical education and contributes to the workforce in Kansas and beyond, please visit www.WSUTECH.edu.

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About the FutureReady Centers
The FutureReady Centers are a Wichita Public School and WSU Tech partnership that provides students with hands-on training, learning opportunities and mentoring from industry experts while still attending their base high schools. For more information, visit https://www.usd259.org/Page/21952.