The Office of Human Resources–Multicultural Affairs and Inclusion has collaborated since September 2007 with the Science and Technology Entry Program in the School of Medicine and Dentistry and the Rochester City School District to offer the Healthcare and Technology Youth Apprenticeship Program. This two-year apprenticeship program provides work experiences for underrepresented junior and senior high school students interested in medicine, healthcare, and associated technological professions.

Student apprentices rotate through several departments at the Medical Center during their first year and a half in the program. The goal is for each student to be placed in a position in one department at the beginning of the second semester of his or her senior year. Students receive stipends provided by the Office of Human Resources–Multicultural Affairs and Inclusion for the entire two-year program.

To be eligible to participate in the program, students must achieve at least a 3.0 GPA. During the school year, juniors work 9–12 hours per week while seniors work 9–15 hours per week. During the summer, they participate in volunteer community engagement activities to gain awareness of the needs of the community and to increase their understanding of the importance of giving back to the community.

In June 2009, nine students completed apprenticeships at the Medical Center. Supervisors described them as exceptional, motivated, creative, thoughtful, responsible, hard working, and mature. Of that group, seven are now attending college with majors in science, biology, and premed. One student has been hired as a part-time staff member in the Department of Pharmacy.

Parent involvement is a key component of the success of the apprenticeship program. Evening workshops—well attended by both students and parents—are offered on college selection, financial aid, and professional development. The eight high school juniors who started the program in September 2009 have all applied for early decision in premed at the University of Rochester.

Through this program, the University of Rochester is developing a skilled workforce for the future while fulfilling our responsibility to support high school students in the greater Rochester community.