



*Shantel Mercedes,
BWH SSJP student*

Strengthening Our Workforce by Mentoring Young Leaders

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Our ability to fulfill our mission relies on our access to a strong and capable workforce – and a four-year-old Partners program is helping to ensure the success of a new generation of leaders. Through the Partners HealthCare Community Scholarship Foundation, we are working to support 450 Boston-area public school students as they achieve academic and career success, with an emphasis on health-related careers.

Two Partners programs, the Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH) Student Success Jobs Program (SSJP) and the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Youth Scholars Program (YSP), are engaged in focused interventions to improve high school graduation rates, college attendance, and college persistence – ultimately leading to increased numbers of local graduates seeking opportunities within our economy and Partners’ own workforce. The BWH SSJP builds on earlier hospital initiatives, covering elementary through high school, matching students with BWH health care mentors in one of over 60 hospital departments to build their professional skills and career interests. The

MGH YSP provides science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming for students in elementary through high school. Both programs also provide SAT support, college application support, tutoring, and financial help to ease students’ path to college. Both programs have been extremely successful, with 100 percent of BWH SSJP students graduating high school and matriculating into college, most attending four-year degree programs. Additionally, after four classes of college students, the MGH YSP has a four-year college retention rate of 87.5 percent, compared to the 66 percent for similar Boston Public School graduates in 2007.

For 18-year-old Shantel Mercedes, a student at Fenway High in Boston, an SSJP-sponsored internship in BWH’s Watkins Cardiovascular Clinic has provided professional guidance – and led to her career aspirations in nursing. “The wonderful staff treat me like an adult and support me in every way possible,” says Mercedes. “This program has given me a clear view of what I want to do with the rest of my life.”