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Five Spencerville Adventist Academy valedictorians choose Andrews

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Adventist medical centers teach CREATION health to local teens



▲ Students participated in hands-on activities to learn more about the principles of CREATION Health.

Teaching teenagers in the community how to live healthy and happy lives, helping them to reach their full potential in mind, body and spirit are goals of a new pilot program between two hospitals (AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale and AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center La Grange) and Hinsdale Adventist Academy, a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 school in Hinsdale, Ill.

In September, seven registered nurses trained in CREATION Health began teaching the curriculum to 60 academy students. The nurses will meet with students monthly for 45 minutes through May 2019. Four of the 60 students have been selected as champions for this program.

CREATION Health is a faith-based lifestyle transformation program that is part of the Seventh-day Adventist mission. Based on biblical principles and supported by science, this wellness program is designed to help people live a full life through the eight precepts of whole person health. These principles are based on God's plan for living as seen in the Bible's creation story.

"This is an exciting opportunity to share CREATION Health with the youth at the academy," said Mary Murphy, vice president and chief nursing officer. "We are committed to the mission of Adventist Health System and view this as an opportunity to reach young adults outside the walls of our hospital."

The curriculum, developed by Adventist Health System, includes topics covering: choice, rest, environment, activity, trust, interpersonal relationships, outlook and nutrition. Each session also includes prayers, song and a reflection from the Hinsdale Adventist Academy pastor.

Wellness is much more than the absence of disease. Wellness is the fulfillment of our God-given potential and can be enhanced regardless of our challenges, stage of life or health status. The nursing teams at the hospitals believe in their responsibility to be part of the community and promote health and wellness.

"We often think of nursing as only caring for those who are ill," said Susan Herrmann, Magnet Nursing director. "It's part of our mission to care for the whole person — mentally, physically and spiritually, and this program allows us to do that in the community."

Herrmann said the program will benefit young adults because high school is a prime time for making choices that influence life outcomes. The seven nurses, under the direction of Herrmann, volunteered for the program as part of the hospitals' clinical ladder program for professional development and outreach to its community.

"The academy partners with the hospital on other initiatives," Murphy said, so it was a natural next step to pilot the CREATION Health community training there. "The chance to help younger people understand and incorporate this program into their lives is an investment in their future," Murphy said.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to fulfill our mission by reaching young adults and helping them to make good choices to stay healthy and live life to the fullest," said Ismael Gama, senior vice president and chief mission officer. ■

Written by Julie Busch, associate vice president, Communications

Five Spencerville Adventist Academy valedictorians choose Andrews

In spring 2018, five seniors at Spencerville Adventist Academy in Spencerville, Md., were all candidates for the title of class valedictorian. Lauren Butler, Hannah Castillo, Owen Faehner, Eric Inae and Andrew Remmers had all performed at extremely high levels academically, achieving 4.0 GPAs in addition to their involvement in extracurricular activities.

When it became apparent that the school's decision to choose just one valedictorian would be quite difficult, the five candidates talked among themselves. According to Andrew, "We unanimously decided [to share the position]. We were just extremely happy and honored to share this memory with each other. The administration later told us that this would be the last year they would have so many valedictorians so we felt extremely blessed."

All five marched as valedictorians on graduation day. And then, through individual decision-making processes, all five chose to attend Andrews University.

Eric, who is double majoring in Computer Science and Music, made it a matter of prayer and consulted with trusted mentors while considering Andrews. He feels he made the right decision. "I really enjoy life here . . . all the faculty and other students have made me feel at home, and I'm thankful for all the new friends I have made."

Lauren, a freshman Biology major, chose Andrews because of its strong pre-med program, the chance to go to school with her sister, and the overall atmosphere. She says, "The school as a whole is a great community. I like that there are so many clubs and other functions that are great ways to get to know other people."



▲ Spencerville Adventist Academy 2018 valedictorians, L-R: Hannah Castillo, Eric Inae, Owen Faehner, Andrew Remmers, Lauren Butler

Owen, also a Biology major, was attracted to Andrews because of the challenging courses in preparation for medical school, the community and spirituality. "I like how it isn't hard to maintain a good relationship with God here, and I think that will really benefit me in the long run. I hope that some of the connections I make here can benefit me once I get into the real world, as well."

Andrew, majoring in Accounting, believes Andrews will prepare him for a career in management. "I want companies and businesses to look at me as a potential benefit . . . Andrews can help me strive for these goals by improving my networking skills and training me to be the best, godly businessman that I can possibly be."

Hannah, a freshman Chemistry major who was drawn to the Andrews science

programs and the available emphasis on forensics, emphasizes her desire to stay in an Adventist school. "I think it's important that you're surrounded by people of the same faith who are going to support you if you go through rough patches — especially during this time of our lives, I believe it's important to stay connected to God."

As they enter their university careers, all five of these individuals seek to find ways to grow their faith and to advance themselves personally and academically — opportunities that Andrews strives to provide. ■

Brandon Shin, University Communication student writer, Andrews University.