



# VSBA Excellence in Workforce Readiness Award Entry Form

Alexandria

School Division

Please select one:

- Under 5,000 student population
- 5,001- 10,000 student population
- 10,001+ student population

Governor's Health Sciences Academy @ TC Williams H.S.

Name of Program/Initiative

The George Washington University

Program Partners (outside of the school division)

Helen Lloyd, Director, Communications

Contact Person and Title

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provided after may 9, 2019 vote

School Board Chairman Signature

Superintendent Signature



**Program Description**  
**(please attach each answer on a separate piece of paper)**

1. What were the processes employed and the desired outcomes and strategies of this program/project in your division? (500 words or less)
2. In what specific ways does the program/project help to prepare students to be workforce ready? (500 words or less)
3. How was your school board engaged in this program/project and what other entities collaborated with this effort? (500 words or less)
4. How has the division demonstrated the effectiveness of meeting the desired outcomes of your program/project? (500 words or less)
5. Why does this program/project deserve recognition? (500 words or less)

**Acknowledgement and Disclaimer**

- I certify that this nomination is being made with approval of the school board through an official vote at a school board meeting. *Vote will take place on May 9, 2019.*
- All nomination materials become the property of the Virginia School Boards Association and cannot be returned. The Virginia School Boards Association has the right to reprint/republish these materials at any time in any format and in any media.

Submitted by:

Helen Lloyd, Director Communications  
Name and Title

Alexandria

School Division

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Email Address and Phone Number

**1. What were the processes employed and the desired outcomes and strategies of this program/project in your division?**

The Governor's Health Sciences Academy is a strategic partnership between Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences (GW). The Academy is located at T. C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia. Two years of planning went into the development of this project. Initial discussions began with the idea of dual enrolling one health science course with GW. However, with surgical technology and nursing already in place at T.C. Williams High School and the known critical workforce shortage in the healthcare field, it was decided to create an academy where students could choose specific plans of study. The seven plans of study for the Academy are surgical technology, nursing, biomedical informatics, sports medicine, emergency medical services, pharmacy, and medical laboratory sciences. These plans of study were selected with consideration of national workforce growth trends, regional workforce shortages, student interest survey results, existing high school resources, and addressing nontraditional student populations in high-demand health professional careers. Each of the five pathways within the Health Science Career Cluster—Therapeutic Services, Diagnostic Services, Health Informatics, Support Services, and Biotechnology Research and Development—are addressed through these plans of study. Through collaboration with the George Washington University, students have the unique ability to receive more than 18 college credits from the School of Medicine and Health Sciences at no charge. Students who complete the program with an overall GPA of 2.75 and meet admission requirements will be guaranteed admission to the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. The proposed plans of study lead to industry certifications and transfer pathway credits to associate and/or bachelor's degrees. This is accomplished through a combination of existing dual-enrollment courses through Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), advanced placement (AP) courses at T. C. Williams High School, and the new dual-enrolled health science courses offered by the George Washington University. Specific strategies including weekly meetings between the partners; collaborative press releases by ACPS and GW communications departments; community presentation to business and industry, Senators, Delegates, school administrators, central office administrators, GW staff, CTE Advisory Committee, Northern Virginia Community College, Inova Hospital, VDOE staff, and Virginia Board of Education member. Informational meetings were held with central office staff, teachers, parents, students, counselors, and administrators. Promotional materials, logos, t-shirts, and website were created. Informational sessions were also held at every middle school to recruit students.

**2. In what specific ways does the program/project help to prepare students to be workforce ready?**

The intent of the Governor's Health Sciences Academy at T.C. Williams is to prepare the next generation of healthcare career-seekers for high-demand, high-wage, and high-skills health careers locally in Alexandria, regionally within the Commonwealth, and nationally. The Academy partners and will maintain strong connections within the school division, postsecondary institutions, healthcare institutions, local and regional governments, economic development agencies, and business and industry. The curriculum model has been built with best practices and collaboration with academic institutions, subject matter experts, employers, and industry partners. The purpose is to provide high-quality, dynamic health science plans of study which offer work-based instruction in collaboration with industry partners, and include a combination of clinical experiences, internships, service learning, mentorships, and job shadowing. Earning college credits in the field of health and medical sciences during high school will enable students to graduate college and enter the regional workforce sooner. This will significantly reduce the time and money needed to graduate from college and lead to careers that are critically needed in the region and the nation.

**3. How was your school board engaged in this program/project and what other entities collaborated with this effort?**

The CTE Advisory Committee includes a school board liaison who was instrumental in meeting several times during the planning of this Academy program. The school board liaison communicated with the Superintendent and other school board members on a regular basis to keep information current on the progress of the partnership. In addition, the Chief Academic Officer and the Executive Director of Secondary Instruction provided briefs to the school board. The Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Council, which includes members from business, industry, and education, was also part of the collaboration. The Executive Director of this council now serves as the Academy Vice Chair providing a connection with business and industry. Inova Health Systems, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, McGuire Woods Consulting LLC, Northern Virginia Community College, Physician Assistant Foundation, Alexandria City Fire Department, Mount Vernon Physical Therapy, CVS Pharmacy, Virginia Board of Education, Virginia Department of Education, parents, and students also were instrumental in initial communications and collaboration to help create this Academy. School board members have been present at our community roll-out as well as the ribbon-cutting ceremony with the Governor of Virginia.

**4. How has the division demonstrated the effectiveness of meeting the desired outcomes of your program/project?**

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) has been an advocate of this Academy and the outcomes from the inception of the concept. Members from all departments in the school division have been a part of the success. Our communication department worked collaboratively with the communication department at the George Washington University to ensure fidelity of press releases, logos, photo permissions, and event planning. Our communications department also worked to create the Academy website, and promote our Academy through newsletters, tweets, and facebook posts. Our grants, budget, finance, procurement, and partnership offices has been instrumental in ensuring finances, MOUs with hospitals, universities and community colleges, grants, and budgets were completed on time. Our Family and Community Engagement center (FACE), part of the School, Community, and Partnership office, has worked very closely with the Academy steering committee to ensure materials, applications, and information is disseminated to families in multiple languages. The application committee is made up of teachers, administrators, counselors, and representatives from the English Language and Specialized Instruction offices. The Academy steering committee works closely with the ACPS Accountability office on continuous data and updated research on students and programs, as well as tracking longitudinal data. The leadership team at ACPS has been supportive from the very beginning, including attending the Virginia Board of Education meeting in Richmond in June 2018 to ensure the approval of a Governor's Academy. The ACPS school board continues to support and approve every request to help make this program successful for the students.

## 5. Why does this program/project deserve recognition?

This academy is the first of the nine Governor's Health Sciences Academies across the Commonwealth to operate as a public-private model offering specialized health and medical sciences career plans of study. T. C. Williams High School, the largest high school in the Commonwealth, has a diverse student population which supports enrollment in this academy providing an ideal setting for a public-private partnership and a unique opportunity to successfully track longitudinal outcomes. The Academy has continued to receive recognition including the official ribbon-cutting ceremony with Governor Northam at T.C. Williams High School in October. The first ninth grade cohort of 99 students sat on the stage with the Governor, ACPS Superintendent Hutchings, T.C. Williams Principal Balas, GW University President LeBlanc, and GW University School of Medicine and Health Sciences Dean Akman. Audience members included business and industry, healthcare professionals, educators, dignitaries from the community and the state, as well as community members, and parents of Academy students. Virginia Secretary of Education, Atif Qarni, also visited the Academy in February participating in a mock surgery and student/faculty discussion panel. The Academy recently was awarded a \$37,500 Competitive Innovative Equipment Grant from Governor Northam for specialty equipment such as a hemocytometer and microcentrifuge equipment for processing DNA protein electrophoresis. This unique partnership has also been nominated for the Governor's Creating Excellence Award which will be announced in May.

There is an Academy advisory committee with representatives from NOVA community college, the GW University, ACPS, Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Council, Inova Hospital, local government, parents, doctors, emergency medical technicians, partnership directors, former Virginia Secretary of Education, and students. There are also 14 planning committees which represent the seven plans of study and important groups such as publicity, steering committee, student success, and research and accountability. The planning committee meetings have already proved successful with business and industry offering mentorship and internship opportunities for students. With numerous newspaper articles and television reporting, it is likely that student graduates from this Academy will be sought after for entry-level jobs right out of high school. Partnership steering committee members will be presenting at the Southern Region Education Board (SREB) conference in July, and present on a national level at the 2019 National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) Conference in Utah in October. We will continue to promote and share our program successes as the Academy continues with each new freshman cohort and follow student success beyond graduation.