For more than ten years, Walgreens has partnered with Midwestern University’s Chicago College of Pharmacy to offer a unique summer program for students interested in a career in pharmacy.

The Careers in Pharmacy Program consists of a short course of organized, hands-on activities in pharmacy-related topics offered on the campus of Midwestern University, as well as an opportunity to shadow a pharmacist at a Walgreens pharmacy near the student’s home. The program provides an overview of pharmacy education and various careers in pharmacy, as well as link students to mentors who will provide career counseling in this health profession career.

During this program, students will spend eight hours per day for four weeks (Monday through Friday only), either on campus or at their respective Walgreens pharmacy, which will be close to home. Students are responsible for their own transportation to campus and their Walgreens site. A limited number of commuting scholarships are also available.

Eligibility Requirements

To enroll in this program, each student must:

- Be 16 years or older (to qualify for a pharmacy technician license)
- Have just completed his/her junior year in high school, high school seniors are not eligible
- Be interested in a career in pharmacy
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or be in the top 30% of his/her class
- Have good verbal communication skills
- Have good performance in high school science courses (biology, chemistry)
- Have good performance in high school math courses (algebra, geometry, trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus)
Q: Is there a cost to participate in this program?
No, there is no cost to participate, aside from the required $40 fee to apply for the pharmacy technician license. This program is funded by Walgreens. Students learn about the importance of patient-centered care in the community pharmacy setting. As such, the time at Walgreens is a shadowing experience. However, to have access behind the counter in the pharmacy department, the pharmacy technician license is required.

Q: What will the students do on campus?
Students will attend various lectures, labs and workshops. They will learn basic information, such as introduction to pharmacy careers, customer service, and some pharmacy law. Students will also experience a sample of classes typical in pharmacy school, such as pharmacy calculations, how drugs work in the body, drug dosage forms, therapeutics, compounding lab, and clinical skills in pharmacy practice workshops.

Q: What will the students do at a pharmacy site?
Students will gain valuable hands-on experiences working at a pharmacy and observing a pharmacist as he/she consults with patients and physicians, oversees the dispensing of medications, and administers patient-centered care. Students may also learn how to be a pharmacy technician, which will be helpful in gaining employment in a pharmacy while studying to become a pharmacist or other healthcare provider.

Q: How are the pharmacy sites chosen?
The Walgreens site will be chosen by the company based on the home address supplied by the student on their Registration Form, which is sent with the acceptance letter in early May. Generally, the site will be no more than 20 minutes from the student’s home to limit the drive for the student.

Q: How does the application process work?
In 2014, more than 70 students applied to this program. Currently, there are 20 seats in this program, so the process is competitive. Final selection of accepted students is determined by a thorough evaluation of the application, official transcript, and a telephone interview. Students will be notified by May 1st via letter. They may be accepted, placed on the alternate list, or denied.

Q: When do I need to obtain the pharmacy technician license?
Students who are selected to participate in the program will be supplied with details about obtaining this license in their notification letter in early May. At the time of application for this license, the student must be 16 years old. It can take up to several weeks to receive the license in the mail. The license must be in the student’s hand on the first day of the program, which is tentatively set for July 6th. The student must have a social security number in order to apply for a pharmacy technician license.

Q: How does the student get to the campus or their site?
Very important: Transportation is the sole responsibility of the student/family. Public transportation is not readily accessible to the campus. Students will spend an entire day at either the University or at their pharmacy site. They will not be required to go to both on the same day. A limited number of commuting scholarships are also available. Details are available on the application, which is posted on the Web page for the upcoming year in early January.

Q: Is there any on-campus housing available for participants in this program?
No, there is not. Participants in this program are minors, and our on-campus housing cannot accommodate minors. Students who are accepted into the program must plan to commute to campus from their own homes or the home of a nearby adult family member who can provide the minor with supervision and guardianship for the duration of the program.