

SOAHS Summer Camp Empowers Next Generation of Health Leaders”

June 30, 2025 | Darryl Lewis II

About the AHCOP Summer Experience

From June 9 to June 27, 2025, the School of Allied Health Sciences hosted the **Advancing Health Careers Opportunities Program (AHCOP)**, a three-week summer experience for high school juniors and seniors interested in health care careers. Students came from across the state, with participants traveling from cities as far north as Atlanta, Georgia, and as far south as Miami. The program gave students an authentic taste of college life at Florida A&M University. They stayed in FAMU Village, ate in the campus dining hall, and experienced life atop the highest of the seven hills. Throughout the camp, students were introduced to various career paths and academic programs offered at FAMU in areas such as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Pharmacy, Nursing, Health Informatics, and Health Care Management. This opportunity was made possible thanks to generous support from **The Lilly and Company Foundation** and the **FAMU Office of Title III**. Students were given everything they needed for the experience, including pens, pencils, binders, lab coats, safety goggles, and more. The weeks were packed with activities to inspire the next generation of health care professionals, from labs to site visits and hands-on simulations.

Highlights & Activities Recap

Health Sciences & Career Exploration

Students participated in hands-on learning experiences, introducing them to various health care professions. In the cadaver lab, they had the rare opportunity to get up close and handle real human organs, including the brain and the heart. During chemistry sessions, students were supervised while conducting experiments like making their scented lotions and learning about the foundational science behind medical care. Campers also attended mini courses for the six programs offered by the School of Allied Health Science, which faculty members of each program led. These mini courses gave students insight into health care's administrative and data-driven side. They also visited the FAMU School of Nursing and the College of Pharmacy, where they learned what it takes academically and professionally to become a nurse and a pharmacist, and attended a virtual session with FAMU Alum Adrian Dixon, an Physical Therapist for the Baltimore Ravens, who offered a real-world perspective on how he got started in his career and how sports and rehabilitation intersect.



Academic & Professional Development.

Besides exploring careers, students spent time preparing for the next steps in their educational careers. Daily SAT prep sessions helped students improve their test-taking skills and build their confidence and readiness for college entrance exams. They also met with academic success coaches who shared strategies for time management, study habits, and setting goals. These sessions were designed to help students think critically about their academic and professional future.

Creative, Cultural & Community Engagement

To balance their academic schedule, students participated in activities celebrating creativity, culture, and community. During Creative Expressions class, students used art as a way of self-expression and reflection. Students participated in several projects, including a self-portrait and a collage challenge, where each student was given the same images to see what they could create. Off campus, they visited Hearts & Hands for Horses in Thomasville, Georgia, where the students learned about therapeutic services for individuals with special needs and mobility issues. They also enjoyed a fun night of bowling, laser tag, and arcade games at District 850, where the students could bond and get to know each other better. In addition to these activities, the students also took a FAMU's Black Archives tour, attended a weekly Zumba and workout class, and completed a CPR and Heimlich maneuver course led by Leon County EMS.



Student Reflections & Program Impact

Throughout the three-week experience, students shared how much they had grown academically and personally. Many said they now feel more confident in how they carry themselves and speak in front of others. Some expressed a stronger sense of direction about their future, while others felt more prepared for college and living independently. By the end of the program, students who were soft spoken and reserved had come out of their shells, forming genuine friendships and stepping into their voices.



"My biggest takeaway was confidence. The AHCOP program teaches you how to be confident in yourself and confident in your speech."— Cleavland Green, Senior, Tallahassee, FL.



"My biggest takeaway is that college will be okay. Don't stress, everything will work out."— Kennedy Davis, Senior, Tallahassee, FL



"I learned about new health care careers and gained a better understanding of anatomy and how the body works."— Kori Johnson, Senior, Atlanta, GA.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

The Advancing Health Care Opportunities Program would not have been possible without the generous support of The Lilly and Company Foundation and the FAMU Office of Title III. Their contributions gave students housing, educational materials, lab supplies, and meaningful experiences that brought healthcare careers to life. We are grateful for their investment in the next generation of health care professionals.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's AHCOP Summer Institute a success. Our students' energy, growth, and enthusiasm made it truly special. To see the program in action, watch our official recap video on the SOAHS YouTube channel. While there, explore the full AHCOP 2025 playlist for more highlights and behind-the-scenes moments from this year's Summer Institute.

[AHCOP Summer Institute 2025](#)

If you would like to look closer into the AHCOP Summer Institute, the School of Allied Health Sciences has a playlist of recaps from the program.