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Investigating the Impact of the Deeper Learning Curriculum on High School Students' Understanding of Drug Discovery

College of Education and Human Services

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Abstract

In the summer of 2014, 23 local high school students participated in a pipeline program on the campus of Cleveland State University. The program, entitled “Careers in Health and Medical Professions” (CHAMPS), serves to prepare college-bound students for careers in the medical field. CHAMPS utilizes a simulated drug discovery curriculum based on “Deeper Learning” (Jensen & NicholSEN, 2008) to provide the high school students with authentic hands-on research experience. There are four main goals in this program: increase awareness of medical careers, introduce knowledge related to drug discovery, build on students’ academic skills, and familiarize the students with 21st century skills. Three undergraduate student researchers were assigned to investigate these goals using a variety of methods, including surveys, individual and group interviews, and laboratory observations. General findings include participants were surprised at the source of drugs; their awareness of health and medical careers increased but their specific career did not change; and nearly all of the students possessed a proficient level of inter-personal skills, communication, and technology prowess.