

Expanding Opportunities-A Healthcare Immersion Program for High School Students

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Introduction

- Racial and ethnic minorities remain underrepresented in healthcare.
- Bachelor’s degree attainment: Latinos 20.9%, African Americans 27.6%, vs. 41.8% of non-Hispanic Whites.
- African Americans + Latinos = ~33% of U.S. population but only 20% of healthcare professionals and 15% of physicians.
- Nursing workforce: 76.6% White, 8.6% Black, 7.6% Asian, 7.2% Hispanic/Latino.
- 73–79% of medical school matriculants come from families earning >\$121,000.
- Only 5% come from the lowest income quintile.
- Pipeline programs can reduce disparities.
- Increase early exposure to healthcare careers for underrepresented students.
- Healthcare jobs projected to grow 13% (2021–2031), adding ~2 million positions.

Program Overview

- Healthcare Immersion Program at HSS (HIP at HSS): Designed to expose socioeconomically disadvantaged high school students to diverse healthcare careers.
- This report summarizes program structure and outcomes (2023–2025) to guide other institutions in developing similar community engagement initiatives.

Program Impact/survey response:

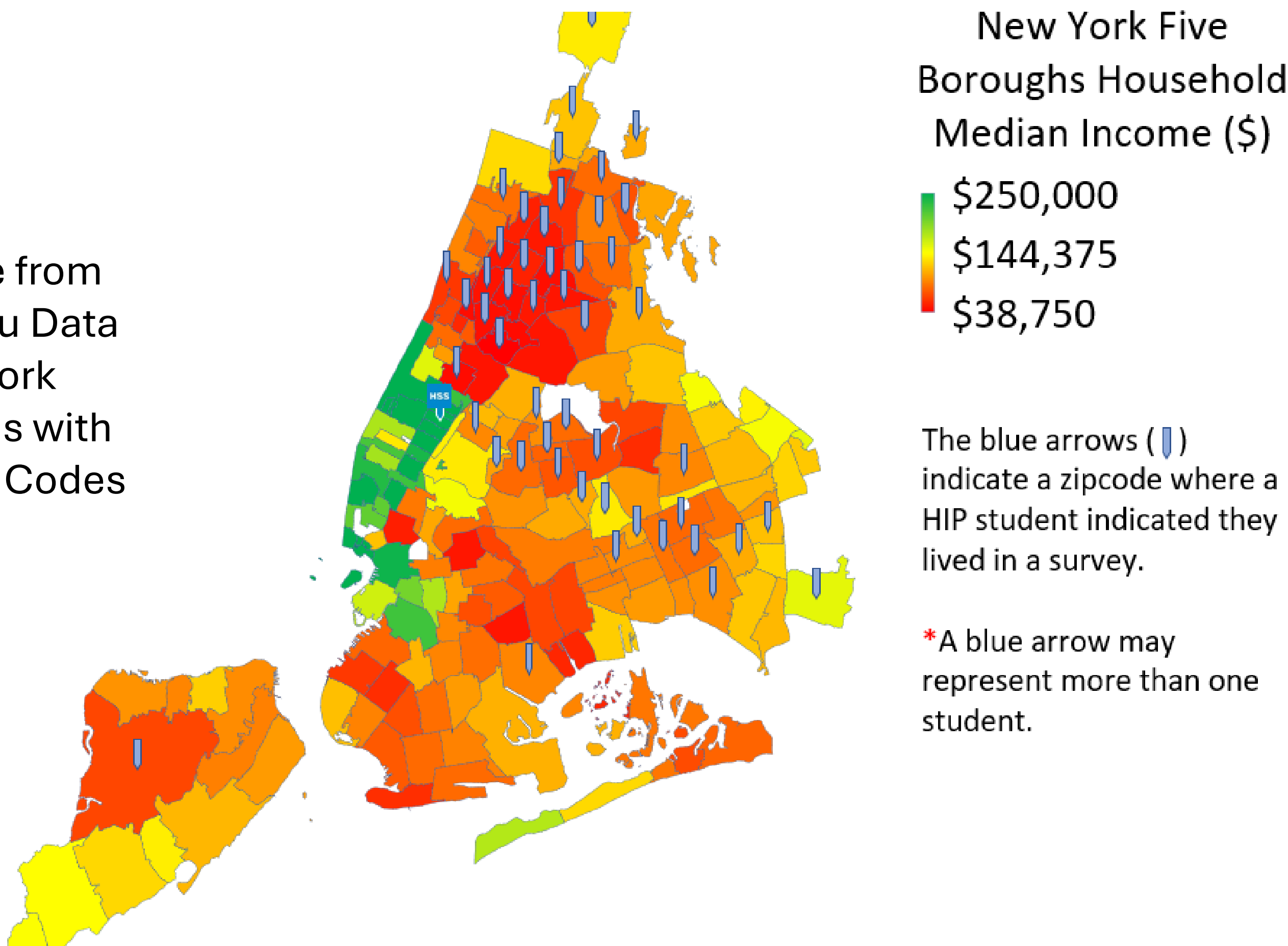
- Pre/post surveys showed increased interest in STEM and healthcare careers.
- Most students strongly agreed HIP met expectations and positively influenced their career aspirations.

Methods



Figure 1. Key Steps for Developing a Healthcare Immersion Program

Figure 2: Median Household Income from U.S. Census Bureau Data (2023)14 for New York City’s Five Boroughs with HIP Participant Zip Codes Included.



Results

- 141 total students: 28 (2023), 63 (2024), 50 (2025).
- 75% from the Bronx; others from Queens (17%), Manhattan (5%), and nearby areas (3%).
- Ages 14–18 (average 16 ± 1).
- ~81% female participants.
- Only 10 Black male students across all years—highlighting an outreach gap.
- Students were primarily recruited from economically disadvantaged schools and communities, aligning with HIP’s mission to expand access for those with limited enrichment opportunities.
- Grade levels: 30% sophomores, 40% juniors, 30% seniors.

Discussion

- Equity Impact: HIP successfully engaged its target population, with 80%+ of participants from socioeconomically disadvantaged Bronx schools, showing the effectiveness of place-based outreach.
- Key Insights: Socioeconomic disadvantage—more than race/ethnicity—emerged as a major factor influencing access to career pathways. Strong female participation (81%) indicates the program’s ability to engage young women in STEM.
- Gaps Identified: Very few Black male participants, highlighting the need for targeted outreach and mentorship for this subgroup.
- Limitations & Future Needs: Small sample size, self-reported data, and no long-term tracking limit conclusions. Continued expansion and follow-up studies are needed to assess lasting career impacts.