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****UT Southwestern co-hosts state health occupations students' conference,

More than 500 junior and senior high school students will converge on Dallas April 6 and 7 to participate in the state Health Occupations Students of America conference and competition co-hosted by The University of Texas Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School, a component of UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

The students can participate in 21 different events. The skills tests to be held at UT Southwestern begin at 8 a.m. April 7 and include First Aid/CPR, Medical Assisting-Clerical, Veterinary Assisting, Nursing Assistant, Medical Assisting-Clinical, Medical Lab Assistant and Physical Therapy Aide. Other events will take place at the Dallas High School for Health Professionals, the Park Plaza Hotel and a local dental laboratory.

These students, future leaders in health-care from 56 high schools in Texas placed in the top three in their chosen competitive event in six area conferences in February and March in Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, North Houston, Lubbock and Corpus Christi.

Students in the state-wide competition represent eight schools in the Rio Grande Valley, seven in San Antonio, three in Central Texas, nine in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, 21 in the Houston/Galveston Metroplex, four in the Amarillo/Lubbock area, two in West Texas (Midland/Odessa) and two in far West Texas (El Paso).

At the close of the state events April 7, the Allied Health Sciences School will host an awards ceremony at 2:30 p.m. in Gooch Auditorium on the UT Southwestern campus. Winners of the state competitions proceed to national trials June 20-23 in Orlando, Fla.

The Texas Association of Health Occupations Students of America began in 1972 as a state organization of students enrolled in Texas health occupations education vocational programs. Currently 7,000 students in 210 Texas public schools are enrolled in the Vocational Education Course, Health Occupations Education. Approximately 5,000 of those students are members of Health Occupations Students of America, Texas Association, which is the largest state association in the United States.

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NOTE: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School.