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Bouvé students pass along foundational knowledge to students at Kennedy Academy for Health Careers



Team members (L-R): Coll, Mesko, Jeha and Brewer.
Photo by Mary Knox Merrill.

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For a group of Northeastern students in the **Bouvé College of Health Sciences**, “strong body, strong mind” isn’t just an age-old adage. It’s also a way of teaching.

As part of their senior Capstone project, four health science undergraduates led a holistic developmental program for students at the **Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers**, a highly regarded public charter high school for Boston students based on the Northeastern campus.

The health science students’ holistic educational approach coincided with the academy’s mission — to teach life skills that contribute to becoming productive, positive members of society, according to team member Allison Coll.

Developed under the direction of **George Atkinson**, assistant professor of health sciences, the program, named HEaLS (Home Economics and Life Skills), included a series of four interactive lectures on topics ranging from analyzing Aristotle to doing laundry. The health science students helped students at the academy develop essential, practical tools necessary to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

“We know that health is not simply the absence or presence of disease, but a combination of social, emotional, mental, and physical aspects of a person,” said team member Jeannine Jeha.

Northeastern students spent five months developing courses on topics that are often de-emphasized in public schools. A course on ethics touched on the negative implications of gossiping and cheating, while a life-skills course emphasized time management, conflict resolution, and household skills such as laundry and sewing. Another course tackled résumé-building and fiscal responsibility.

“We allowed students time to ask us any questions about our experience adjusting to college, which they found particularly helpful,” said team member Kari Brewer.

Students most enjoyed the nutrition and wellness course, which focused on the importance of maintaining a healthy and environmentally friendly diet.

“You would be surprised how passionate students are about wanting to eat better and caring for the environment,” Jeha said.

Team leaders said the goal of the project was to pass on their knowledge gained at Northeastern to future college graduates.

“Our hope is to create a generation of contributing and confident adolescents who hold their own keys to a better tomorrow,” said team member Bryn Mesko.

The academy, which was recently renamed in honor of the late U.S. senator, provides a supportive learning environment that promotes respect and embraces diversity to Boston-area students interested in exploring careers in health and health-related professions.

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