



210 E Main  
Zeeland, MI 49464  
616-772-3843

[jed.mulderbmc@gmail.com](mailto:jed.mulderbmc@gmail.com)

[ty.potter@bymczeeland.org](mailto:ty.potter@bymczeeland.org)

By: Ty Potter

### Health & Wellness Report – February 23, 2018

This past Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, we kicked off our fifth **Skills for Life** trip of the 2017-2018 school year. This is the third year that the Bridge Youth Center has run this program, and we are excited about the opportunities this year has to offer. The gist of this program is to shine light to students about great career opportunities right here in the community. We have found that many students approaching their senior year of high school are unsure if college is the right choice for them; many are looking for an alternative method to build a career. Students tend to be oblivious to the opportunities our community has to offer. Whether that is manufacturing, construction, or health services to name a few, our goal is to visit these businesses and start networking and building relationships for students who may be interested in a specific field.

Our first of three stops on the agenda brought us to **MVP Athletic Club** in Holland. When we arrived, we were initially greeted by Alex Soukup, the member services manager. Alex acted as our facilitator and tour guide for our time spent at MVP. Alex first guided us on a tour throughout the facility, and then lead us into a conference room to open the rest of the time up for questions students may have had. The first destination that Alex lead us to was the “kids stuff” area. Kids stuff is essentially a program that takes care of young kids while their parents are working out or doing other athletics. It can be tough to find a babysitter or a day care facility for members’ young kids while they spend an hour or two at MVP. This program addresses that problem in-house and does so in a quality manner. The program accepts kids ranging in age from two months old, up to 11 yrs. old. After kids stuff, we headed down to the main floor where we got to observe a fitness class. MVP offers many different fitness classes uniquely tailored to different fitness styles. This is a great option for people who may need the extra motivation of a personal trainer. However, it is in a class setting so people can socialize with others, and it is slightly less intense than a “one-on-one” personal trainer. After observing the fitness classes, we made our way into the tennis facility. MVP has five indoor tennis courts. They offer personal tennis training, as well as, scheduled group classes ranging



in all different ages and skill levels. They employ tennis professionals that are equipped to adequately instruct and manage the tennis programs. Following the tennis facility, Alex briefly walked us through the weight room. We saw weight stations of all different kinds, and people who were lifting by themselves or with their trainer. We then started heading towards the locker rooms. While we were near the locker rooms, we passed by some spin classes that were going on. The classes were jamming out to music while riding stationary bikes. It looked very inviting and enjoyable! After walking past the spin classes, we made our way through the locker rooms and into the pool/sauna/hot tub area. Alex told us about the different aquatic classes they offer in the pool, and the value members get out of it. The aquatic center runs the same schedule as the rest of the facility. Members have a very flexible time table to be able to personally enjoy swimming laps, practicing aquatic resistance, relishing a post workout sauna session, or enjoying the hot tub.

At this point in the tour, Alex led us upstairs into the conference room to share some of the job opportunities that MVP has to offer, as well as, answer any questions students may have about health/fitness careers. MVP hires many full time, part time, and seasonal staff. Some of these positions include: lifeguards, associate managers, administration, fitness interns, sales people, instructors, and trainers. An entry level job such as a lifeguard or an assistant pays between \$9.15-\$12.00/hr. Sales positions earn partial commission with a base salary. Trainers, on the other hand, are on full commission. They are responsible for attaining all their clients in order to be successful. Trainers and sales folk often work together to gain new clients, as it is mutually beneficial. Trainers must go through training and certification to be able to start building a client base. This certification can be done in many ways. One convenient way that MVP can help certify potential interested trainers, is through a class that



their fitness manager, Mitch Neinhuis teaches. This class does not require any previous fitness experience and it is open to the public. A fitness trainer works an interesting schedule. Their clients are typically folks working the normal 9-5, so they may work from 5 a.m.-10 a.m., and then from 3 p.m.-10 p.m. in the same day. A trainer must be okay with having an unconventional schedule. Alex shared that one of the key qualifiers for any position at MVP is interpersonal skills. It is necessary to be friendly, inviting, and communicate well. At the end of the day, any

position within the company has large customer service aspects to it and you must be conscientious of this when approaching members. As an employee, you are there to serve members' needs and create an enjoyable fitness atmosphere that keeps them coming back. One of the main points that Alex drove home, along with other staff members, in terms of careers, is that life is full of twists and turns and you may be very surprised with the career that you end up in. All the employees that we had talked to had gone down interesting routes to get to where they were today. It is simply part of the journey and not

worth stressing too much over. All in all, the students were very impressed by the job opportunities that MVP has to offer, the engaging staff, and the welcoming atmosphere that was present.

Following our trip to MVP Athletic Club, we arrived at **Zeeland Hospital/Spectrum**. Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital, is a 57-bed, progressive organization conveniently located to the greater Hudsonville, Holland, and Zeeland areas. They have provided personal, compassionate, high-quality health care for over 80 years and is committed to improving the health of the communities they serve. They have a team of over 250 physicians, 425 employees and 120 volunteers who specialize in understanding and meeting each patient's unique needs. They have an excellent nurse-to-patient ratio and continually invest in the latest medical technology. They also provide high quality, award-winning care for their patients, visitors and employees. The hospital provides advanced inpatient, outpatient and testing services with genuine compassion and understanding. Chris Cannon, provided us an initial introduction and was a great host for us throughout the day. We were presented with a panel made up of people from many different departments sharing their job responsibilities and their backgrounds. The departments included; environmental services/facilities maintenance, nursing, administration, communications, and the dietary department. To start off, we were presented with great information from the environmental services department. This department is ultimately the housekeeping department for the hospital. They are responsible for maintaining clean and sanitized facilities and equipment throughout the entire building. The students were informed that this job is a big deal. The first impression of anyone that walks into the hospital is that of the environmental services department. Customers' sense of comfortability arises out of their impression of how clean and sanitized a hospital is. This department employs 24 full and part-time employees and they work 8-hour shifts, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A few employees in this department have been there for 30+ years. These jobs are a great way to get your foot in the door in the health field. Next, we were presented with the facility maintenance department. This department oversees maintaining the facility and making sure that everything works in proper order. They are made up of 7-full time employees and are currently looking to hire more. Maintenance is essential in making sure all the equipment operates properly. We were informed that they not only do reactive maintenance, but also do proactive maintenance; meaning that they tune up equipment to prevent them from malfunctioning in the future. The maintenance department has a lot of responsibility in terms of allowing the hospital to operate smoothly. A full-time facilities maintenance position offers \$14-18/hr to start, depending on experience; it includes full benefits, and even tuition reimbursement up to \$3000/yr.



Following the maintenance department, we were introduced to the Nursing department. A typical registered nurse can make anything from \$25-\$40/hr depending on experience. A nurse can wear many different hats within the umbrella of the hospital. Some nurses prefer to work up on the third floor in child birth and others prefer to work in a faster paced area like the emergency room. The main quality

that must be considered when pursuing a career in nursing is the love for people. You must have a passion to wake up every day and want to help people and make a difference. You also need to pay close attention to detail, but still not lose sight of the bigger picture. If a student wanted to pursue a career in nursing, we were educated that the best way to do that is to start as a nurse tech. This position will give you a direct connection to what nursing is all about and start to familiarize yourself with terms and procedures. Nurse Techs make about \$10.50-\$15/hr and are required to have taken a CPR certification. One of the biggest benefits in nursing is the flexible schedules. You can choose to work full time, part time, or anything in between.

After our nursing presentation, our group was introduced to the administration department. The administration side of hospital operations offers many different opportunities. Some of these positions include; receptionist, secretary, assistant, executive assistant, human resources, and marketing/communications. These positions range in pay from \$15-\$32+/hr. One of the biggest lessons the students took away from this presentation was the idea of “writing your own book” in life. This idea was presented figuratively, however, in some cases it may be taken literally. The gist of this idea is that hard work, motivation, drive, and good character will take you places in life that you had no idea you could go, along with heights you had no idea you could achieve. Life is a book and YOU should be the author of it, no one else. Our final presentation of the panel was that of the dietary department. This department includes; kitchen staff, chefs, dietitians, techs, and assistants. A registered dietitian must have a love for food and care about what patients are putting into their bodies. A college degree and internships are required to become a registered dietitian. This position involves setting up health related plans for a patient’s food intake. This also includes a lot of research and development inside the food industry to find the most appropriate accommodations for patients.

After our panel discussion, we were guided on a tour throughout the facility. We started by walking through the administrative side of things. We visited the HR department, quality control, administration, and the communications department. We got to talk to the folks behind the scenes that play a big role in making sure the hospital runs smoothly. After walking through the administrative offices, we were lead to the surgical area of the hospital. Although we could not directly walk into the area of surgery, we were able to look down the hall and say hello to some doctors and nurses. Following the surgical area, we were lead to the emergency department. This is another area where we obviously had to keep our distance, but it was cool to see the layout of the department. After ER, we headed down to the basement. In the basement we were able to see the pharmaceutical area, the IT department, purchasing, shipping/receiving, and storage. This is the part of the hospital that is overlooked, however, still very essential to the day-to-day operations. After touring the basement, we climbed up a bunch of stairs to make it to the third floor. On the third floor, we walked through the family birth center. The students were most excited about this stop, as there were many cute babies on this floor. Finally, we made a quick stop to the urgent care department where we saw some of the physical therapy rooms and other recovery areas of that nature.

After our tour, we were all getting hungry. We made our way back to the conference room where we had pizza waiting for us. While we were enjoying our lunch, Chris answered any questions our students may have had about our tour or anything regarding the hospital. Once we had finished eating, it was time for us to head out to our next location.

Lastly, we made our way over to the **Careerline Tech Center/EMS program**. When we arrived, we met with the assistant teacher Steve Stegeman. Steve brought our group into a classroom and gave us a summary of what the EMS program consists of and what a career as an Emergency Medical Technician looks like. The program they teach is a 1-year long course that involves a lecture along with a lab section and then a final certification test after the completion of the course. Steve shared that there are various benefits in getting your EMT certification. It not only is great part and full-time job, but also allows you to get your foot in the door at a first-responding company. An EMT must learn the basic skills of “situation awareness” and conflict resolution”. Work as an EMT can be very intense and fast paced as you are dealing with very serious situations at high stakes. Having an EMT cert. is beneficial in many other fields besides EMR. Many nurses, police officers, firefighters, and doctors complete an EMT course because it is an advantage to understand how to deal with medical patients outside of a hospital and in



many different situations. Dealing with patients in special situations broadens your grasping of how the human body operates in time of trauma. Along with benefitting other career paths, many students that are enrolled in the paramedic school are EMT’s on the side as a part time job. To become a paramedic, you must have your EMT cert. anyways, so it is the perfect part time job while in Paramedic school. EMT’s and paramedics work side by side with each other as first responders to medical related accidents. The paramedics handle the more intricate and detailed medical procedures, while the EMT’s perform the basic

procedures. The average EMT makes approximately \$14/hr. Whereas, a paramedic can make anywhere from \$42,000-\$80,000 a year. Paramedic school is a 2-year program that costs about \$8,000 in total, a great investment. The schedules of an EMT and a paramedic are also very flexible and simple for that matter. Full-time as a paramedic is 3, 12 hr. shifts a week or 36 hours. They can work either day or night shift and are required to work every other weekend. There is currently a shortage of paramedics in the market, so jobs are out there! Another benefit as a paramedic is the independence and the ability to work outdoors. You work in teams of two with either an EMT or another medic and do not have to worry about the responsibilities of many other coworkers.

At this point, we completed our time with Steve in the classroom. Steve took the group down the hall and into the lab where the student of the program where set up in all different stations and preforming different procedures on dummies. We could witness first-hand how to give proper CPR, put on splints, and provide alternative pathways for breathing. We were split up in small groups of four and could interact with the students as they handled their procedures and ask any questions along the way. It was a very cool opportunity, Steve was kind enough to let us try for ourselves too! The students were intrigued at how articulate the procedures were and how much pressure an EMT must deal with at every scenario. Being responsible for helping a human life in times of trauma is remarkable and a very serious position to be in, sometimes we take that for granted. To conclude, the students really enjoyed all the knowledge they learned about the EMS field with Steve. They now better understand a different avenue of medical health.



*Special thanks to MVP Athletic Club, Zeeland Hospital/Spectrum Health, and the Careerline Tech Center/EMT Program for giving us the chance to visit your facilities and learn about career opportunities in the health & wellness field!*

**Student Comments:**

“I loved the hands-on experience we had at the tech center!” -Sophomore, Zeeland East

“It was so cool to be able to tour MVP, I had no idea that they offered fitness classes and personal training. It makes me want to get a membership myself” -Junior, Zeeland East

“The hospital was my favorite visit. I loved seeing all of the different components that go into providing health care.” -Senior, Zeeland East

“I want to be a nurse but do not know which direction to go. The tour definitely gave me a visual of what the job will potentially look like.” -Junior, Zeeland West

“MVP seems like they have a lot of good opportunities to get your foot in the door and then start working up in the company.” -Senior, Zeeland West

“A paramedic actually makes pretty good money!” -Sophomore, Zeeland East

“I’m a sophomore now, but the EMT program is definitely something I am going to investigate for next year” -Sophomore, Zeeland West

“Touring the hospital really helped me decide what kind of medical environment I want to work in!” - Junior, Zeeland East

“The patient simulation at the tech center reminded me that I cannot do blood!” -Sophomore, Zeeland West