



# New Mexico HOSA IS BACK!

*“Mike, I just went to a fabulous conference on Health Academies and they even had a student service organization centered on Health! I want you to help build us one of those programs,”*  
exclaimed Linda Sink, Albuquerque High School principal.

Mike Stanton, Director of Academies and Special Programs at this large urban high school, had successfully created and supported one career pathway small learning community focused on advanced technology. Being November, he needed to move fast to get things going to open the new program by the start of school in mid-August. Soon after getting a design team of teachers at the school in place, a strategic design plan was formed giving Stanton a long list of things to do to get the program off the ground.

*“Students at Albuquerque High plus Del Norte, Manzano, Cibola, and Highland are all planning Health Academies. I’m sure we can get a number of chapters started,”* Stanton told the state director for Career and Technical Education.

*“That’s wonderful,”* she said, *“but the State can’t commit any support until the next fiscal year. If you can get a critical mass of chapters started and National HOSA approves, then go for it! And we’ll take it from there in 2007.”*

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Mr. Stanton began by looking at a model of programs of study, courses that can be a blueprint and framework for the new Academy. The States’ Career Clusters model for Health and Human Services Clusters served to help the team create clear pathways of classes for their students to follow. Next, the important aspect of connecting the health theme to the standards being taught in math, science, Language Arts, and even Social Studies classes was on the agenda. More research and some luck followed when it was learned the annual meeting of the board of directors of the National Consortium of Health Science and Technology Education was taking place in January in Albuquerque. The president was kind enough to invite Stanton to their luncheon and learn about the great tools, models, lesson plans, and expertise available for high school pathway programs focused on health. By March, over 150 students had already pre-registered to join the Health and Human Services Academy!

National HOSA started working with Stanton immediately and before he knew it, Stanton was invited to the National Leadership Conference in Nashville in June. There he was given the renewed New Mexico State Charter for HOSA and was immersed in the fabulous people, programs, and competitions. Following the NLC, Wanda Wolf, Past National HOSA Chair, came to New Mexico to train the new potential chapter advisors. What a wealth of knowledge and experience she was able to share.

Then, it really happened. The first new HOSA Chapter in New Mexico was formed with over 20 members at Albuquerque High School! Miriya Goertz, a former nurse and gifted education teacher, and Mary Ann Lee, a longtime health educator, became the co-sponsors of this energetic and courageous first chapter. Fund raisers were started, skills and competitions were practiced, and community service projects were developed.

Meanwhile, Stanton worked with an area Health Workforce Education Alliance to form the central advisory committee for each of the new chapters with a core of its members serving as State Advisory Board members. With no direct funding from the state, a \$500 donation from one of its members, the NM Hospitals & Health Systems Association, has allowed NM HOSA to plan its first State Leadership Conference. Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute and Community College will co-host the event and provide a wonderful facility. Marko Mijic, National Region I Vice President of HOSA, will attend to help provide the national connection to New Mexico’s first SLC along with Kim Smith, Assistant Director for National HOSA. And, soon to come, the first competitors at HOSA’s National Leadership Conference in Anaheim!

As Stanton gave his principal an update of the great work that had been already done, she reminded him of the challenge to also look into the addition of a student service organization to be intertwined in the Academy. A look back at the material from the November Health Careers Conference led him to HOSA as the best student service and skills organization for Health Careers. After a call to the New Mexico Public Education Department, he realized that much more work would have to be done. He learned that HOSA had at one time been in New Mexico. In fact, the state was one of the charter members in National HOSA, but not one chapter had existed in the last 20 years!

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