



HEALTH CARE CRISIS

By: Marko Mijic, Region I Vice President

Health care is a prominent issue that affects people worldwide. Everyone makes a visit to the doctor or dentist and many fill their prescriptions at the local pharmacy. However, in the United States the health care system is failing and citizens are becoming the number one victim. With health care premiums at an all-time high, many low and middle class Americans have to decide whether a prescription or food on the table is more important. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2004, sixteen percent of our population was uninsured, which categorizes an estimated 45.8 million people. Out of the sixteen percent, twelve percent are children under the age of eighteen who are not receiving proper health care. This vividly illustrates that we must invest our time and money in health care. As a nation that prides itself on a strong and advanced health care community, many are left behind. What becomes even more disturbing is the number of people who have neglected their rights.

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Health care has been a debated topic at state and federal levels, and as future health care providers we must make sure that we are aware what HMO's (Health Management Organization) and our federal government are doing to better the health care crisis in our country. We have the best health care in the world and we need to be using it to benefit all members

of our society whether they are rich or poor. For many, the health care system is a very complex topic that can be discussed in length, however, we as the future pipeline of health care professionals must focus on results and ensure that all protected.

FIRE FIGHTING Occupations

By: Sierra Jenkins National HOSA President Elect

Thousands of lives are affected everyday by fires, vehicle accidents, and other emergencies. Fire fighters help protect people by rapidly responding to various emergencies. In most cases, fire fighters along with first responders are the first to arrive on an emergency scene to provide care. While on duty, fire fighters must be prepared to respond to any emergency that arises. Fire fighting is complex and dangerous and takes an extreme amount of organization and teamwork. It is all about working well with others and never leaving anybody behind. Firefighters work in many different environments that include: urban and suburban areas, airports, chemical plants, and rural areas such as grasslands and forests. Some fire fighters also work with hazardous materials units to assist with control, prevention, and clean up of materials. These are only limited examples of what fire fighters do, because there is so much more to the job then can be explained, every emergency is different.

When the alarm sounds, fire fighters must rapidly respond no matter the hour or weather conditions. Fire fighting does come with the risk of injury, death from cave-ins, toppling walls, and traffic accidents when responding to calls. They are also exposed to flames, smoke, and other hazardous materials. Fire fighters dress in protective gear to protect them from the heat and hazardous materials.

Fire fighter applicants must pass a written exam, tests of strength, physical stamina, coordination, and a medical exam that includes drug testing. Most fire departments require a training center or academy. Through classroom instruction and practical training, the rubrics include: fire fighting techniques, fire prevention, hazardous material control, local building codes, and emergency medical procedures, including first aid and cardiopulmonary. They also learn how to use axes, chains saws, fire extinguishers, ladders, and other fire fighting and rescue equipment. Almost all fire departments require fire fighters to be certified as emergency medical technicians.

Fire fighters work more than 50 hours a week. In some companies fire fighters work a 24 hour shift and then are off for 48 hours. According to what position a fire fighter holds determines their salary. Salaries range from \$41,000-\$68,000.

