Hello and welcome to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Podcast Series on Allied Health Occupations for Young Adults. My name is Sara Hastings and I will be the host of this podcast series. The allied health field has great promise for employing young adults served by the workforce system. Understanding more about specific occupations in allied health is a first step in determining what the opportunities are in the field. This podcast series highlights young adults who are in training or who have been trained and are working in different allied health occupations. These young adults will discuss how they chose to enter this occupation, what kind of training they needed and what type of work or continued training or education they plan to do in the future. This series provides practical information about allied health occupations in order to assist both young adults and workforce staff in developing a career plan.

Today we will be speaking with Tiffany Moran. Tiffany is a CNA/CHHA who finished her program from the Reconnections Academy in Los Angeles.

Tiffany, thank you for talking with us today.
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So, why don’t you start off by telling us a little bit about yourself and about how you ended up being a CNA?

My name is Tiffany Moran. I'm 21yrs and currently working as a cna. I was born in the US but because I needed some treatment that was not able to get in this country I had to go to El Salvador to live with my aunts and my grandmother. I studied from kindergarten all the way to 7th grade in El Salvador. I came back to the US when I was 13 and successfully finished middle school. I went to Los Angeles high school and graduated on 2007. After finishing high school I went straight to college. I completed two years of college but with no so good grades so I had to take time off. After a yr off I started looking for a job since I didn't know what direction to take. Unfortunately I was not able to get a job; it was then that a friend told me of an organization call YO Watts where they help young adults prepare themselves for a job in many different areas. To my luck they had teamed up with Reconections Academy, another organization that helps many people train and get a job. It was them who told me about getting a career in health care and since being a nurse was one of my options I the opportunity and took the class.
After completing the course I had not trouble finding a job. On the last day of training the teacher who was also the nursing director of the facility where we completed the training gave out applications to anyone who was interested in working there. I took one of the applications, went to the interview and got hired.

That’s great. Congratulations on finishing the program and becoming employed. So, can you tell us, what is an CNA/CHHA and what does an CNA/CHHA do?

CNA stands for Certified Nursing Assistant and CHHA stands for Certified Home Health Aid. What I do as a CNA is to attend the resident’s needs; this includes feeding, showering, dressing, changing their diapers, keeping their rooms looking nice and many other things that will make them feel nice and comfortable. The job of a CHHA is not that different. Both do the same skills but the chha has a one on one relationship with the patient. A chha may have to do other things like going grocery shopping, driving patients to doctors appointments and keeping the patient company. Also depending on the needs of the patiens a chha may work from one hour to about eight.

Great. That sounds like CNA’s do a lot. So for you, what would a typical day on the job look like?

I work the morning shift which is from 7am-3pm. Depending on my assignment I may have one-eight residents to care for. From 7-8am I pass out breakfast and feed the residents that need assistance. From 8am-11am I have to shower about 3-4 residents, put diapers on incontinent residents, give mouth care, assist with dressing, make beds and make sure that all of my residents go to the activity room where they will get a snack and an opportunity to socialize. For residents that are bed ridden or cannot walk I have to transfer them to their wheelchair or geri-chair. If a bed ridden resident will stay in bed for the day I must make sure to reposition the resident every two hour to prevent bed sores. After my lunch break I assist residents with their lunch after that I take wheelchair, bed ridden and incontinent residents back to their room so they can be cleaned up and left in their beds to rest. Before leaving I must chart in my residents care information so that we can keep track of their conditions. Also during the day I must pay attention to my resident condition and report any changes to my charge nurse.

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Wow. That sounds like really exciting work. So, if I wanted to become an CNA what kind of training would I need? Tell us what your program was like?

Well, in order to work as a cna in California, A high school diploma is not needed to obtain a cna/chha license you only need to be 17 and older. Also I had to meet two requirements. First attend the 160 hour course which consisted of 60hrs in the classroom and 100 hrs in training which we had to do in a convalescent home – which is where the elderly are taken care of). During the 60 hr on the classroom we learned how do most of our skills like washing hands, doing beds, transferring patients from bed to wheelchair, repositioning and what we might expect to see once we got to the facility where we would do our clinicals. Also another big part of the class focused on learning the residents right and the different types of abuse the residents might experience in a convalescent home.
The second requirement was to pass both the skill test (where we performed the nursing skills the tester asked) and the written exam. For the skills test we had to perform 5 different skills in front of the tester and explain everything we were doing, the written exam focus mostly on resident rights and abuse. To obtain the chha license we had to attend class for an extra 40 hrs and pass a test given by a registered nurse.

So, you also had a externship or a work experience. Tell us about that:

My work experience was part of the course and it took place in a convalecent home. There with the help of an experienced cna we learned how to do the different skills and got to practice them Like bed making, changing diapers, repositioning, transferring, grooming, giving showers, giving mouth care, dressing and others.

That’s great! So what do you like most about being CNA?

What I like about being a cna is that I get to talk to many different types of people and I get a chance to make them feel good. I like how I get to see a resident recuperate, and how a resident that doesn't talk much will respond to my questions after i expend some time with them. The pay in a nursing home in southern CA tends to start from $9/hr, and in a hospital it goes from $12 up. But to get a job at a hospital, one must have some experience (most hospitals require a minimum of one yr experience in a convalecent home). The pay of a chha is higher and since they work with private patients they get the opportunity to get many jobs and have a higher income.

That’s pretty cool. So, what are your plans for the future?​

I plan to continue my education and earn a bachelor in science of nursing and eventually ear a master in nursing. But for the moment I will work for about a yr before going back to school.

Well, Tiffany, that all sounds really great. Thanks so much for taking the time to talk with us. We really appreciate hearing from you.

To learn more about occupations in allied health, visit [www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org/) , Just click on “explore careers”, then “browse” and you can search for any allied health occupation you’re interested in. The website gives you a ton of great information about the tasks and activities you’ll perform in a job, what sort of skills and requirements are needed, and what the wages and employment trends look like in your state. Again. That’s www.careeronestop.org

Well, I hope this information was helpful in your search to finding the right career for you. Thanks for listening today. Goodbye.