

# FROM HOSPITALITY TO HEALTHCARE: MAXIMIZING TALENT TO GROW THE ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE



Life's hurdles didn't stop Quontisha. She has overcome multiple challenges throughout her career journey to

accomplish her goal of working in the medical field. Through determination, hard work, and a strong educational and employer partner, she earned an industry-recognized certification and took on a rewarding career as a medical assistant.

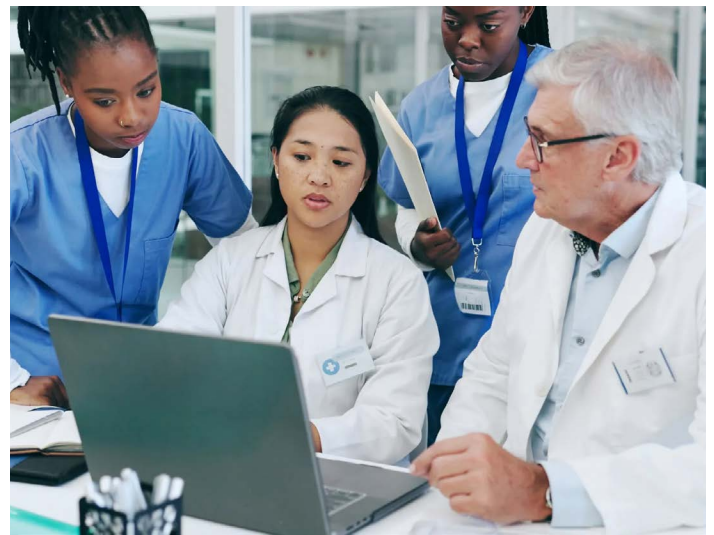
## PERSONAL STORY

Quontisha grew up in Ellendale, Delaware and came from a troubled background. When she was just 15, she became a mother and had to put school on the back burner to focus on raising her son. After dropping out of high school and getting a full-time retail job, she wasn't sure if her lifelong dream of working in the medical field would ever come to fruition.

But, in 2021, Quontisha decided to go back to school and earn her high school diploma through a program sponsored by her employer in the restaurant service industry. With her diploma in hand and work experience providing her with valuable transferable skills, she now felt capable of following her dream, illustrating the power of employer investment and partnerships with education in creating pathways to successful careers.

## THE VALUE OF CERTIFICATION

After seeing a newspaper ad for allied health programs offered at her local community college, Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC), Quontisha enrolled to earn her Medical Assistant certification from National Healthcareer Association (NHA).



After countless hours of studying and practicing skills, Quontisha passed the NHA certification exam. She has said that earning her certification opened a bigger horizon than she could have ever imagined. With [83% of employers](#) stating they would hire a candidate with nationally recognized certifications over someone without, it's clear that supporting opportunities for more individuals to obtain an accredited, industry-recognized certification in an allied health profession is a crucial part of addressing healthcare workforce shortages.

## ALLIED HEALTH SHORTAGES IN THE U.S.

Quontisha hopes her story can inspire others to pursue a health career and help fill gaps in our healthcare workforce. There are many pathways to become a certified clinician, whether you are coming from the service industry like Quontisha, hoping to build your resume before applying to

medical school, about to graduate high school, or already working in a different role within healthcare. It's important for employers to support career advancement opportunities so individuals have more access to begin or further build their healthcare career. Currently, [85% of healthcare facilities](#) report that they are facing an allied health shortage and the demand for allied health careers is projected to grow by as much as [14% over the next decade](#). With more dedicated professionals like Quontisha, we can help bridge this gap.

Furthermore, filling open allied health roles is key to supporting nurses and physicians. When fully utilized, allied health professionals, including medical assistants, can reduce burnout among healthcare providers and contribute to positive health outcomes among patients.

## NEXT STEPS

Quontisha now aspires to become a paramedic. For her – and many other allied health professionals – earning an industry certification is not the end goal of a healthcare career, but just the beginning. That's why it's so important for congressional and workforce leaders to support various pathways into healthcare careers.

Quontisha says one of the best parts about her becoming a certified medical assistant is that her son was inspired to follow in her footsteps and is now enrolled in nursing school to become a registered nurse.

By raising awareness among the public and students about the vast opportunities within allied health and enhancing and bolstering education, training, and certification programs, the U.S. can tap into a pool of professionals who may not have otherwise sought a career in healthcare. By supporting students from all backgrounds, we can not only connect them with promising careers but simultaneously alleviate the strain on our nation's healthcare system and improve patient care.

*Thank you to Quontisha and National Healthcareer Association for contributing this powerful case study to the Healthcare Workforce Coalition.*

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# CONGRESS: SUPPORT ALLIED HEALTH TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Address Significant Workforce Shortages in Our Nation's Healthcare System by Enabling More Allied Health Professionals Like Quontisha to Earn Certifications