

# Health Science

**The Health Science Career Cluster includes careers in which you help keep people healthy and treat those who are not. Work directly with people by conducting research on diseases and other important health information. This field allows you to work in diverse environments such as hospitals, medical and dental offices, or labs [careertech.org].**

**C**indya Umaña Amador, PT, DPT, knew she wanted to go into the medical field, but it was a high school physical therapy and sports medicine class that guided her to physical therapy.

“This class really kind of opened up my eyes, and I was like, ‘Oh, OK, this is something. I can see myself doing this,’” she says about the class she took sophomore year.

Today, Cindya is a licensed physical therapist for Fox Rehabilitation, a private practice that includes physical, occupational, and speech therapists. She makes house calls and helps senior patients improve their movement and manage their pain. That can mean working on balance by playing catch with a patient or helping them walk with or without a cane. Her favorite part of her job is tailoring treatments to individual patients, while the most challenging is dealing with ageism.

“Everyone says, ‘Oh, he’s 80. He shouldn’t be able to do that anymore,’ but sometimes age is just a number,” says Cindya, who also is contracted as a physical therapist at Spring Arbor of Leesburg, an assisted-living facility.

She advises high school students who want to become physical therapists to volunteer and travel to expose themselves to the different areas of physical therapy.

by Veronica Garabelli



Photo by Mark Rhodes

## What they make

Occupation	Employed in Va. <sup>1</sup>	Median wage <sup>2</sup>	Predominant level of education
Registered nurses	59,445	\$62,750	Bachelor's degree
Licensed practical nurses	21,876	\$39,390	Associate degree
Home health aides	10,378	\$20,600	High school diploma
Medical assistants	10,456	\$30,400	Associate degree, certification
Dental assistants	8,455	\$34,950	Associate degree
Pharmacy technicians	8,919	\$28,240	Associate degree, certification
Pharmacists	7,364	\$122,170	Bachelor's degree, certification
Medical and health services managers	6,759	\$90,280	Bachelor's degree
Physical therapists	5,130	\$81,410	Bachelor's degree
EMTs and paramedics	4,449	\$30,180	Associate degree
Dental hygienists	4,295	\$81,110	Associate degree
Medical laboratory technicians	3,825	\$37,340	Bachelor's degree
Medical laboratory technologists	4,131	\$54,570	Bachelor's degree
Medical records technicians	3,697	\$34,920	Associate degree
Dentists	3,457	\$158,680	Bachelor's degree, certification
Psychiatric technicians	4,368	\$25,230	Associate degree
Speech-language pathologists	2,878	\$74,320	Bachelor's degree
Occupational therapists	2,479	\$81,310	Bachelor's degree
Physician assistants	2,090	\$87,170	Bachelor's degree, certification
Physical therapist assistants	1,901	\$55,940	Associate degree
Respiratory therapists	2,328	\$56,590	Bachelor's degree

<sup>1</sup>2012 <sup>2</sup>2013

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Virginia Employment Commission, Trailblazers

## Cindya Umaña Amador, PT, DPT

Licensed Physical Therapist, Fox Rehabilitation and Spring Arbor, Leesburg

**High school:** Wakefield High School, Arlington County Public Schools

**CTE studies:** Physical/Occupational Therapy; Sports Medicine



For more information about career planning, visit the CTE Resource Center's Web site.

